

**London Borough of Barnet
Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy**

Version Control

Item	Reason for Change	Version	Author	Date
1.				
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1. Overview

- 1.1 This Policy will provide a framework for the fair allocation of suitable temporary accommodation within and outside of the London Borough of Barnet. This policy applies to the allocation of temporary accommodation secured under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- 1.2 Whilst all accommodation we provide is self-contained, there is an insufficient supply of affordable, local, temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation may therefore be;
- In borough, out-of-borough or out-of-London
 - Short term or long term
- 1.3 Taking into account all known and relevant facts relating to the household, including dependent children, officers will endeavour to place all households within or as close as possible to the London Borough of Barnet. This policy outlines which households will have priority for the differing units of accommodation that become available.
- 1.4 This policy does not prevent a household from considering other housing options, including asking the Council for advice, support and assistance in relocating to more settled accommodation or making their own accommodation arrangements.

2. Prioritisation

- 2.1 If the local authority has a duty to secure accommodation, an assessment will be carried out to determine the requirements of the household including the children. The assessment will determine whether the household has:
- Priority to be located in the London Borough of Barnet
 - Priority to be located close to the London Borough of Barnet
 - No priority to be located either within or close to the London Borough of Barnet
- 2.2 The award of an 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' location priority does not guarantee the provision of temporary accommodation within those areas, rather priority for such accommodation should it be available and suitable for the needs of the household.
- 2.3 Where the household is in receipt of welfare benefits, this may place additional constraints on the availability of affordable accommodation, including constraints on its type and location.
- 2.4 In accordance with the Children's Act the Council will have due regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to

schools and education, medical care, social work, other key services and other support.

2.5 The Council will have due regard to matters concerning public safeguarding and protection and will work with all relevant organisations to ensure the suitability of accommodation.

2.6 The Council will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010 in ensuring that the needs of households with protected characteristics are met in determining the location of the temporary accommodation.

3. Priority for accommodation within the borough

3.1 Priority for available in-borough accommodation will be given to certain households who the Council has assessed as having a particular need to be housed within the London Borough of Barnet. Households who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will be considered as having a priority for accommodation within the London Borough of Barnet:

- Those who are receiving treatment for a physical or mental health condition from a specialist hospital unit which cannot be transferred to another NHS service or where they are at a critical point in their treatment.
- Children subject to a Child Protection Plan in the London Borough of Barnet which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to a child's welfare.
- Children subject to a Statement of Special Educational Needs in the London Borough of Barnet which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to the child's welfare.
- In accordance with the criteria set out within the Allocation Scheme, those who have a longstanding arrangement to provide essential care to another resident of the London Borough of Barnet who is not part of the household.
- Other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional need which cannot be met outside of the London Borough of Barnet.

3.2 An 'In-borough' priority does not guarantee an in-borough placement, but should suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give that household priority over others without this assessed priority.

4. Priority for accommodation close to the borough

4.1 'Close to Borough' priority is defined as priority for accommodation located within a specific travelling distance of the London Borough of Barnet by public transport.

4.2 Applicants or their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 'Close to Borough' priority:

- Those who are continuously employed within the London Borough of Barnet for 16 hours or more per week in a role which cannot be transferred to another area. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport from their place of employment which is in accordance with the DWP guidelines on reasonable travelling times for employment
- Women who are on maternity leave from employment and meet the above criteria will also be prioritised for placements close to the London Borough of Barnet. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance by public transport from their place of employment.
- Children who are enrolled in GCSE, AS, or A level courses in the London Borough of Barnet, with public exams to be taken within the current or next academic year. Wherever practicable the Local Authority will seek to place such households within 75 minutes journey time to and from school using public transport, this is in accordance with timescales recommended by the Department for Education for children of secondary school age.
- Other exceptional circumstances, where applicants demonstrate an exceptional need to be housed close to the London Borough of Barnet.

4.3 Such priority does not guarantee a placement within the suggested travelling distance of the London Borough of Barnet by public transport, but should suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give the household priority over others without that assessed priority.

5. No priority for accommodation within or close to the borough

5.1 Applicants who meet none of the 'In-borough' or 'Close to Borough' criteria may be offered properties further afield than 90 minutes travelling distance of the London Borough of Barnet by public transport, when no suitable property is available within these areas.

6. Priority for long term temporary accommodation

6.1 Long term temporary accommodation is accommodation provided or managed by the Council, a Registered Provider or private company on behalf of the Council.

6.2 Priority will be given to households who;

- Have been accepted as requiring assistance in accordance with s.193 of the Housing Act 1996
- Have other exceptional circumstances that the Council considers appropriate to be offered long term temporary accommodation

6.3 Short term temporary accommodation is accommodation managed by a private company and paid for on a nightly basis. This type of accommodation will normally

be given to households who have been accepted as requiring assistance in accordance with s.188 of the Housing Act 1996.

7. Multiple priorities

- 7.1 Where there are multiple priorities identified i.e. where there are conflicting schooling, medical and employment needs it will be determined by the Council as to which priority it chooses to give weight to in the event that not all needs can be met.

8. Move on from temporary accommodation

- 8.1 Where the Council determines that a placement does not meet the legally defined standards of suitability as a result of incorrect information from the temporary accommodation provider at the time of placement, through a change of circumstances or through the production of new information it will seek to make an urgent offer of alternative accommodation as soon as one that is suitable and affordable becomes available.
- 8.2 Where the Council determines that a placement does meet the legally defined standards of suitability but considers that an alternative offer of accommodation would better meet the needs of the applicant and their household it will seek to make an offer of alternative accommodation. Such an offer will only be made in the event that a property which is suitable and affordable becomes available and which is not required for a household who have been assessed to have a more urgent need for the placement.

9. Notification of placements outside Barnet

- 9.1 Where a placement is made outside Barnet, notification will be made in accordance with s.208 of the Housing Act 1996 to the host borough.

10. Monitoring

- 10.1 The Council continuously monitors the numbers in temporary accommodation to help ensure that budgetary pressures can be monitored and reported upon and that data regarding housing needs can be used to procure appropriate temporary accommodation. Monitoring will include data regarding the protected characteristics of households and where they are placed.