CHOICE HOMES @ PEMBROKESHIRE HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY

October 2026

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 – Introduction

Choice Homes @ Pembrokeshire is a partnership between the social housing landlords who operate in Pembrokeshire. The partnership consists of Pembrokeshire County Council and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) including ateb, Wales & West Housing Association, Barcud, and Codi (formerly Pobl) (the Housing Partners). At the time of writing the Housing Partners manage the approximate 9,931 houses, flats and bungalows located in various towns and villages throughout Pembrokeshire that are classed as social housing.

This allocations policy sets out how applications who join the scheme are assessed, how applications are prioritised into bandings and how the decision is reached to allocate social homes. The policy also sets out the criteria regarding who is eligible to apply to join the Register.

The following legislation provides the framework that the allocations policy must comply with, and which has been taken into account when creating this allocations policy:

- Housing Act 1996; Housing (Wales) Act 2014
- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness (2026)
- Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Act 2026

Since the implementation of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, the official terminology surrounding housing and renting has changed, e.g. tenants are now contract-holders. To ensure that this document remains user-friendly, this allocations policy may use such terms interchangeably.

The Housing Partners are committed to providing equality of opportunity and all applicants and tenants will be treated without discrimination. We will deal with all applicants reasonably and will not discriminate on the grounds of a person's race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion or belief, cultural background, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or illness, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

This allocations policy will be continually monitored and updated to incorporate any feedback from its implementation and any legislative changes that will impact its operation.

The Housing Partners will provide reasonable assistance to applicants and tenants requiring help to join the register.

1.2 – Purpose of policy change

The pressures on the housing and homelessness sectors in Pembrokeshire have increased significantly in all areas. We have seen unprecedented increases in the number of applicants presenting to our homelessness services, the number of people being placed into temporary or emergency accommodation and the number of people on our social housing register.

The housing crisis that we are now in, along with the new legislation that we are working under, has highlighted the need for the previous allocations policy to be reviewed and updated. This allocations policy has been created collaboratively with the Housing Partners to more accurately reflect the priorities needed to address the issues we are facing. The Partners retain the right to amend this policy in line with any relevant legislation changes.

The impact of the lack of affordable housing in the county has been particularly highlighted over recent years which has contributed in part to the high numbers of people accessing the social housing register. The term 'affordable housing' is a broad umbrella term for housing which includes social rent, intermediate rent (up to 80% of local market rent), shared ownership, Rent to Buy and discounted market sale homes. These collective types of housing options make up the range of affordable homes that housing partners and other housing providers may offer to those who can afford these options. The intention in the review of this policy is to also consider the broader affordable housing options available in the county, and where these may be an option to certain cohorts of housing register applicants. The intention in this is to establish an Affordable Housing Register which sits alongside the Social Housing ChoiceHomes@Pembrokeshire Register detailed in this Policy.

1.3 – How Choice Homes @ Pembrokeshire works

Applicants who apply and are accepted onto the scheme will join the ChoiceHomes@Pembrokeshire Register (the Register). The Housing Partners will manage the Register as a partnership. This means that applicants will need to complete only one application form to seek properties owned by any of the Housing Partners.

When an applicant is accepted onto the Register they will be placed into one of five bands. Which band will depend on the applicant and their household's assessed housing need, based on the information provided on their application form and any other supporting evidence. The bands are A, B, C D & E with the applicants in Band A having the highest priority and those in Band E having the lowest. As explained above, there will also be an Affordable Housing Register for those who may not be in immediate housing need and are eligible for some affordable housing schemes such as shared ownership. More information on the bandings can be found in **Section 2.4 – Being placed into bands.**

When a property is advertised, applicants on the Register who would like to live there can apply (make a 'bid') for the property. The short list of eligible applicants will be ordered with the applicant with the earliest effective date and the highest band at the

top of the list. If an applicant places a bid on a property and subsequently refuses that offer, this may impact an applicant's ability to bid. More information on the bidding process can be found in **Section 4: Placing a bid.**

1.4 – Effective Date

The effective date is the date from which an applicant's priority within their current housing band is determined. Where applicants are placed within the same band, allocations will be prioritised according to effective date, with priority given to applicants holding the earliest date.

An applicant's effective date will be the date on which their current band was awarded.

The effective date does not determine an applicant's level of housing need or banding status, but is used to establish priority amongst applicants within the same banding.

Effective Date following a Change in Banding

Where an applicant's housing band is amended following a reassessment of their circumstances, a new effective date will be assigned from the date on which the revised banding decision takes effect. This provision applies to all changes in banding, irrespective of whether the applicant is moved to a higher or lower priority band. Upon a change of band, any previously held effective date will cease to apply and will be replaced by the new effective date.

The registration date, which is the date the completed application form is received is used to decide between tied positions.

SECTION 2: JOINING THE REGISTER

2.1 – Eligibility

Anyone aged 16 years and above can apply to join the housing register but certain people, by law, are not allowed to be allocated accommodation. These include:

- Most people who are subject to immigration control, i.e. they need the permission of the UK Government to enter and remain in the United Kingdom;
- People who have not made their usual home in the UK, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or the Irish Republic.
- People who are or whose household members are guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant (Anti-Social Behaviour and other prohibited conduct).
- Any other categories of people who the Secretary of State or the Welsh Government has, or may in the future, decide are not eligible for housing.

For those applicants who subsequently become eligible to be allocated accommodation, the registration/effective date of their application will be the date they became eligible (this date will be used to determine their position within the bands relative to other applicants).

If applicants are uncertain whether they are eligible for to join the Register or require further information, they should contact the Housing Service at Pembrokeshire County Council.

An applicant awaiting a Multi Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPP) assessment will not be able to join the Register until such an assessment has been carried out and any recommendations have been adhered to.

Any young person aged 16 or 17 who requests assistance with rehousing will be referred to the Council's Children's Services for an assessment of their needs. 16 & 17 year old applicants who accept an offer of accommodation through the housing register will be offered a Minor's Licence which will automatically convert to a Secure or Standard Occupation Contract on their 18th birthday.

2.1.1 Residential Criteria

Residential criteria are applied to support the effective allocation of limited social housing resources and to sustain local communities. These criteria provide priority to applicants with an established local connection to the area, whilst balancing this with our housing duties, equality legislation, and the requirement to give reasonable preference to eligible households with identified housing need. The criteria will be applied fairly, transparently, and consistently to achieve balanced and sustainable housing outcomes.

The Residential Criteria include those who:

i. Are currently resident in Pembrokeshire and have been a permanent resident in Pembrokeshire for the last 5 years, or

ii. Have lived in Pembrokeshire for a continuous 5-year period in the last 15 years

2.2. Additional Connection Criteria (previously called exemptions)

Housing partners recognise that, in exceptional circumstances, it may not be appropriate to apply the residential criteria above. The following applicant groups will therefore be considered:

a) Applicants who need to move to a specific area of Pembrokeshire to provide or receive essential support, care or assistance may be considered outside the residential criteria, provided the following conditions are met:
   - The applicant or family member requires a move to a specific area of Pembrokeshire to provide or receive essential support, care or assistance.
   - The support, care or assistance is necessary to enable the recipient to maintain independent living and to reduce or prevent reliance on statutory health or social care services.
   - The support, care or assistance provided amounts to a minimum of 10 hours per week on an ongoing basis.
   - The family member providing or receiving the support, care or assistance has lived continuously in Pembrokeshire for at least 10 years.
   - Satisfactory evidence is provided to demonstrate both the need for the support, care or assistance arrangement and the level being provided.

   For the purposes of this provision, family members will normally include parents, grandparents, siblings, and adult children, although other family relationships may be considered, where an equivalent relationship can be demonstrated.

b) Serving members of the British Armed Forces, or relevant family members of their household (see Appendix 1), who are currently stationed outside of Pembrokeshire but were resident for 5 years in Pembrokeshire prior to their service in the British Armed Forces.

c) Serving members of the British Armed Forces, or a relevant family member (see Appendix 1), who are stationed in Pembrokeshire and who are due to be discharged from the forces within the next 6 months.

d) Applicants fleeing domestic abuse, who either have a verified support network in Pembrokeshire (parents, grandparents, siblings, or adult children who have lived in Pembrokeshire continuously for the last 10 years) or have been placed into a refuge and/or supported accommodation in Pembrokeshire.

e) Applicants approved to foster/adopt in Pembrokeshire, should they need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child. This includes special guardians and family and friends, carers who are not foster carers, but who have taken on the care of a child because the parents are unable to provide care.

f) Applicants released from prison who require a move to Pembrokeshire as part of their rehabilitation.

g) Applicants who are to be rehoused as part of arrangements set out by the Multi Agency Public Protection Panel (MAPPP).

h) Applicants who need to move to Pembrokeshire to be nearer to specific work or training opportunities. Applicants who currently reside in Pembrokeshire and whom have permanent employment for at least 16 hours per week will be considered to have a residential connection.

i) Applicants who are or have previously been in the care of Pembrokeshire County Council and are aged 25 or under

j) Applicants who need to move to Pembrokeshire and are at risk of hardship. Decisions on such applications will be decided on individual circumstances.

k) Applicants who are currently resident in Pembrokeshire, but who do not meet the residential criteria **and** are in high housing need will be considered on case by case basis, assessed on individual merit.

2.3 – Applicants who may have special conditions attached to their application

Partnerships are in place between relevant agencies to manage high risk offenders in the community.

The Housing Partners will have due regard for the safety of residents to ensure a responsible approach is taken to housing such offenders.

An applicant who is recognised to be a person who presents a significant risk to others, or themselves, will not be able to bid for accommodation until the MAPPP has assessed the risks associated with them. The Housing Partners will co-operate in considering suitable accommodation options in these cases. The applicant must accept any recommendations from the MAPPP. No accommodation will be allocated if the applicant refuses to consent to a risk assessment being completed.

Some applicants who are identified via the MAPPP may not be able to bid for properties in the normal way. Suitable offers will be identified, and where necessary, offers will be made under **Section 4.7 – Allocations made directly to applicants.**

Consideration will be given to the applicant's support package, the availability of suitable accommodation, as well as the risk of re-offending. Further consideration will be given to the location of possible accommodation. This will take into consideration the type of offence and the risk to the local community if the offender is rehoused.

2.4 – Being placed into Bands / Housing Need

Applications joining the Register will be assessed and they will be awarded priority for allocation by being placed in a 'band'. Applicants in Band A will have the highest priority and Band E will have the least priority. Within each of the bands, applications will be placed in effective date order giving priority to applicants that are in the highest band with the earliest effective date.

The Housing Partners may review an applicant's banding at any time. If an applicant's banding is changed, they will be notified of this in writing.

Applicants have the right to request a review of the decision of which Band to place them in. For more information on this, please see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

Band A

Applicants will be placed in this band if they have a Residential Connection to Pembrokeshire and meet one or more of the following reasons for housing need:

a) The applicant is a tenant of a Housing Partner in Pembrokeshire, is under-occupying the property and wishes to move to accommodation that has fewer bedrooms.
b) An authorised Environmental Health Officer or Housing Standards Officer has deemed the property in Pembrokeshire either uninhabitable or in major disrepair and it is unreasonable for the applicant to remain in the property as there is a serious risk to their health, who is not an owner occupier or an owner not occupying
    i. A property can be deemed uninhabitable if it lacks basic amenities such as kitchen, bathroom, inside toilet, or running water supply.
    ii. A property will be deemed as being in major disrepair if it has major structural defects such as subsidence, flooding, collapsing of the roof, or having living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, and there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a reasonable timescale.
    iii. The local authority has served a Prohibition Order under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, and the Council is satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within a reasonable and proportionate timescale and, as a result, continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose, in the Council's view, a serious risk to the applicant's health.
    iv. The property is subject to a Demolition or Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for redevelopment.
    v. Exceptional circumstances due to significant problems associated with the tenant's occupation of a dwelling in the private rented sector and there is high risk to the applicant or their family's safety if they remain in the dwelling/area.
    vi. The above lists are not exhaustive, and each application will be assessed on their individual facts.
c) The applicant in Pembrokeshire is experiencing extreme harassment or threats of violence which can only be reasonably alleviated by moving out of their existing accommodation. The level of harassment needs to be severe, and evidence of

legal proceedings and/or confirmation from the relevant housing partner will be required. Decisions on these cases will be decided by the Housing Partnership.

d) The applicant has been awarded a high medical need as set out by the criteria below in Section 2.6.
e) Applicants who are in 1 bedroom accommodation that is managed by one of the Pembrokeshire Housing Partners who have an assessed need of two or more bedrooms and wish to move to accommodation that meets their assessed need.
f) Applicants who are currently occupying an adapted property managed by one of the Pembrokeshire Housing Partners for which they have no need.
g) Applicants who are in hospital or residential care who are medically fit for discharge but are unable to leave due to their accommodation in Pembrokeshire, no longer being suitable.
h) Applicants approved to foster or adopt in Pembrokeshire, and require a larger home to accommodate a child or young person. Or applicants who currently have a child or young person placed with the household by social services, this can include a kinship placement and require a larger home.
i) The applicant lives in 'move on' accommodation or supported housing in Pembrokeshire and has been assessed by their current support/housing provider as being ready to move to alternative accommodation. Applicants in "move on" accommodation will be able to join the register, but their application will be set at "pending" status until confirmation is received from their supporting agency that they are ready to move to alternative accommodation subject to panel approval.
j) Applicants in Pembrokeshire who are intending to move in with another Housing Partner tenant and will be relinquishing two properties.
k) Homeless applicants to whom the Local Authority has accepted a Duty to Secure Accommodation, unless found to be deliberately manipulating their circumstances and will be placed in B&B accommodation.
l) For applicants who are in a property managed by one of the Pembrokeshire Housing Partners that could be adapted, but for whom it would be advantageous to move to an already adapted property, will be placed on the Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register (PAHR) and also in Band A.

Automatic bidding

Applicants in Band A have been assessed as being in the highest need for housing and as such will have bids automatically placed on their behalf by the system in order to maximise the opportunity of being successfully rehoused.

Auto bids are bids placed on behalf of the applicant by the computer system. Bids will be placed on properties that match the applicant's assessed bedroom need and within their selected lettings areas. This will be discussed and agreed with the applicant prior to commencing. Refusal of an offer of a contract made through the bidding process may impact the applicant's ability to place further bids.

If an applicant, in any band, decides they want to place a bid on a property that has one bedroom in excess of their assessed need – for example an applicant who is assessed as requiring one bedroom decides to bid on a two-bedroom property. The

applicant will have to place the bid on the two-bedroom property themselves, this bid will not be placed automatically by "auto bidding" on their behalf

If a Band A applicant decides to opt out of the automatic bidding process they will be placed into Band B. Band A applicants who choose to do this can opt back in to automatic bidding at any stage, if their assessed need remains in Band A they will return to Band A. However, if their banding has reduced during the time they opted out of auto bidding they will remain in their current band when opting back into auto bidding.

Opting out of the automatic bidding process will not be an option available to homeless applicants with a full homeless duty/Section 75.

Applicants in Bands B, C, D & E are able to opt in or out of automatic bidding and this will not impact their banding.

Band B

Applicants will be placed in this band if they have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire and meet one or more of the following reasons for housing need:

a) Applicants to whom the Local Authority has accepted a Duty to Secure Accommodation but have been found to be deliberately manipulating their circumstances.
b) An authorised Environmental Health Officer or Housing Standards Officer has deemed the property as unsatisfactory, but it is reasonable for the applicant to remain in the property. The applicant must be able to evidence that they have already raised these issues with their landlord to resolve. The Private Sector Housing Standards and Enforcement Team would consider contacting the landlord/managing agents about carrying out remedial actions but may not necessarily trigger an enforcement notice being served. Examples are as follows:
    i. Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) there is one or more Category 1 hazard present at the property that needs to be addressed through the actions of the landlord/managing agents or the applicant in reasonable and proportionate timescales.
    ii. Under the HHSRS there is a cumulative effect of Category 2 hazards (at least 8 or more in rating bands F to D) present at the property that need to be addressed through the actions of the landlord/managing agents or the applicant in reasonable and proportionate timescales.
    iii. A household with dependent children is living in unsatisfactory conditions that cannot be addressed by the Private Sector Housing Standards and Enforcement Team actions in a reasonable and proportionate timescale excluding owner occupiers
c) The applicant has been awarded a medium medical need as set out by the criteria below in Section 2.
d) The applicant needs to move because they have suffered a change in circumstances and can no longer afford to live at their current accommodation.
e) An applicant has been found to be threatened with homelessness under homelessness legislation and is engaging with homelessness services.

f) Applicants in Housing Partners accommodation or privately rented accommodation in Pembrokeshire that has two or more bedrooms less than their assessed need.
g) Applicant or household member who are or have previously been in the care of Pembrokeshire County Council who have a connection to Pembrokeshire or who have an evidenced support network available in Pembrokeshire.
h) Applicants who have been assessed as Band A but have opted out of automatic bidding.

Band C

Applicants will be placed in this band if they have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire and meet one or more of the following housing need reasons:

a) The applicant is sharing accommodation with family and/or friends and/or others who will not be rehoused with the applicant. This does not include applicants who are lodgers.
b) An authorised Environmental Health Officer or Housing Standards Officer has deemed the property as safe for continued occupation based upon the current household occupation.
    i. Category 2 hazards under HHSRS that could be minimised through the actions of the landlord/property managing agent and/or the property occupant(s) actions.
c) Household lacks one bedroom
    i. Utilising the HHSRS and where the hazard specifically relates to overcrowding and space, please refer to the section of this policy on overcrowding and overcrowded households for more information and guidance on banding allocation.
d) The applicant has been awarded a low medical need as set out by the criteria below in Section 2.6
e) An applicant or household member would benefit from a “Home for Life” but does not need any other adaptations and is not registered on the Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register.
f) The applicant needs social housing in a specific area of Pembrokeshire because of a need to move to either give or receive support to or from a family member. The family member will need to have lived in Pembrokeshire for the last 10 years. The support will need to be confirmed by both parties and will be verified. A family member is considered to be a parent, grandparent, sibling or adult child.
g) Serving British Armed Forces personnel as described in section 2.1.(d) and 2.1.
h) Applicants who meet the criteria for Band A, but do not have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire

Band D

Applicants will be placed into Band D where, they have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire but do not have an identified housing need sufficient to qualify for Bands A-C. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

a) Applicants, or a member of their household, who meets the criteria for age restricted housing and are able to financially resolve their own housing needs, who have joined the housing register for the sole purpose of applying for age restricted housing.
b) Applicants living in accommodation considered suitable and reasonable to occupy.
c) Applicants who do not have an identified housing, medical, welfare, safety or affordability need.
d) Applicants who are not homeless or threatened with homelessness within six months.
e) Applicants who do not require specific property features, adaptations, or urgent relocation.
f) Applicants who may wish to move for personal preference, lifestyle choice, or general relocation reasons.
g) Applicants who have the financial resources to meet their housing needs independently via market rent or purchase:
    - Any applicant who, following assessment and in the opinion of the Housing Partners, has sufficient financial resources to meet their own housing needs through purchase or market rent will be allocated to Band D. These applicants may also be encouraged to consider applying to the Affordable Housing Register (see section 2.9 Affordable Housing Register).
      Considerations of 'sufficient resources' include, but are not limited to:
        - Annual income
        - Residential property equity
        - Savings
        - Trust funds
        - Any other assets

    An affordability assessment will be undertaken taking into consideration income/resources plus expenditure. For example, The Partners will assess the ability of the applicants to be able to afford a bond, rent in advance and a minimum of 12 months rent in a suitable property in the private rented sector in Pembrokeshire.

    It is noted that there may be circumstances where applicants are able to demonstrate that despite sufficient funds, they are unable to access alternative housing options beyond social housing. These instances will be considered on a case-by-case basis, by a panel of senior officers from the Housing Partners. **See Section 4.10 below.**

Applicants who do not have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire, who meet the criteria for Band B.

<u>Band E</u>

Applicants will be placed into Band E where they do not have a residential connection to Pembrokeshire and:

- Have a low level housing need that would otherwise place them within Band C; or

- Do not have an identified housing need sufficient to qualify for Bands A-C.

Applicants in Band E will generally receive the lowest level of priority for social housing allocations.

Although those who are categorised within this Band E may take the opportunity to bid for social homes, under parts Band D b)-g) above, the likelihood of being successfully allocated to social housing will be very low. Therefore, information and guidance will be available on the Choice Homes @ Pembrokeshire website which will signpost to further housing options available in the county.

Banding Matrix

For ease of reference the housing need and residential connection matrix is illustrated below:

Housing Need	Residential Connection	No Residential Connection
High	Band A	Band C
Medium	Band B	Band D
Low	Band C	Band E
No Housing Need	Band D	Band E

2.6 – Applicants who deliberately worsen their circumstances

Where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately made their housing situation worse in order to gain a higher priority on the Register, they will be assessed based on the circumstances before their situation changed. These applications will be assessed by the Partner's Panel. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

i. Applicants who have allowed family members or others to move into their property, who previously had suitable accommodation or the financial means to secure their own accommodation, and this has resulted in the property being overcrowded.
ii. Applicants who have moved from previously suitable or more suitable accommodation which it was reasonable for them to continue to occupy, into a less suitable property.
iii. Applicants who have transferred their assets to another family within the last 10 years from the date they make their application to the Register. Assets can include, but is not limited to property, savings or investments.
iv. Giving up affordable and suitable private rented accommodation which they are able to maintain, to move in with other relatives or friends, creating a situation of overcrowding and/or sharing of bathroom/kitchen and/or a split household.
v. Requesting or colluding with a landlord and/or family member to issue them with a Notice.

2.7 – Medical Need

Medical need is awarded to applicants and/or household members who can demonstrate that their medical condition, either physical or mental, is being adversely affected by their current housing situation and that a move to more appropriate accommodation would benefit them.

Assessment of medical need is made by the Housing Partners following receipt of medical information, evidence of any relevant benefits and a list of medication. Supporting evidence and reports from medical professionals will be taken into account if provided, but the Housing Partners will not pay for these. Assessment for priority will be made upon a long-term health condition basis and not in response to a temporary condition. The Housing Partners will also consider measures that could be taken to make the current home more suitable.

The Housing Partners may refer an application and medical information to a medical professional for further advice and guidance where the nature and impact of a medical condition on the applicant's housing circumstances is not immediately apparent. However, the final decision will rest with the Housing Partners.

When an applicant indicates there are medical issues affecting a member of the household the Housing Partners will consider the effect of the medical issues faced by individual household members on the whole household and make the following awards:

High

i. Degenerative or terminal illnesses or conditions either physical or psychological that have progressed to a point where the applicant or member of the household is unable to function effectively in their current home and cannot access basic facilities due to this.
ii. Applicants who are in a property managed by one of the Housing Partners that could be adapted, but for whom it would be advantageous to move to an already adapted property.
iii. For those with a high medical award, being rehoused is **essential** to alleviating the condition.

Medium

i. Degenerative illnesses or conditions either physical or psychological which could be improved by rehousing, but the severity of the illness does not mean that the applicant or household member is unable to function at this time.
ii. The applicant or household member may have some difficulty gaining access to basic facilities within their home.
iii. For those with a medium medical award, being rehoused will assist in alleviating the condition.

Low

i. The applicant's or household member's medical condition is having a negative impact on their health and a move to an alternative property will improve this.

Applicants requiring a specific type of property, e.g. ground floor accommodation, in accordance with their medical need will only be allocated this type of property. If applicants consider they can manage a different type of property, their medical assessment will be reviewed.

A medical condition, however severe, will not be taken into account in the banding of the application if:

- Moving to different accommodation will not improve or alleviate the condition.
- The applicant already lives in suitable accommodation; or
- It is reasonable and practical to improve the current accommodation within a reasonable time, such that it becomes suitable for the applicant or a member of their household.

Applicants requiring an adapted property as a result of their medical need can join the Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register (PAHR), see below **Section 2.8 – Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register.**

2.8 – Age Restricted Housing (including Older People's Housing, Independent Living Schemes and Sheltered Housing)

Age Restricted Housing in Pembrokeshire (which may be called Older People's Housing, Independent Living Schemes or Sheltered Housing) includes age-restricted, self-contained accommodation that enables people to live independently in a smaller, more manageable home with a certain level of support. There is a mandatory service charge for such properties. These properties are normally reserved for those aged 55 years plus, but this may vary depending on the demand for each scheme or specific circumstances.

To be eligible, applicants will normally need to:

- Meet the age restriction of the scheme
- Be able to self-evacuate the building, as appropriate in the event of a fire

Extra Care Housing is intended to bridge the gap for those who are not safe or able to remain living in their own home but could remain independent if living within Extra Care Housing due to the support and facilities available.

Extra Care Housing is primarily allocated based on a care and support assessment, but it is also considered whether an individual can continue to live in their own home independently, so the pathway has both a care and support as well as a housing dimension. Extra Care Housing will not be advertised unless the waiting list has been exhausted.

Allocation of PCC Sheltered Accommodation

Pembrokeshire County Council's sheltered accommodation is designed to provide a safe and supportive living environment for those aged over 55 who would benefit from the advice, monitoring, and reassurance offered by a Sheltered Housing Assistant (Warden).

There is a mandatory charge for this service. Sheltered accommodation will therefore be allocated to applicants who have an identified need for the support services provided.

2.9 – Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register (PAHR)

Pembrokeshire Housing Partners currently operate an Accessible Housing Register for applicants who require specialist housing. Housing available via the PAHR includes disabled adapted properties.

To be eligible for the Pembrokeshire Accessible Housing Register, applicants will need to have an assessment and referral from an Occupational Therapist or other qualified medical professional such as a GP.

To ensure that applicants bid on properties that will meet their physical needs, properties with adaptations will be categorised by the following criteria (See **Appendix 2**):

- **Level 1**: has adaptations to enable an internal wheelchair user to reside at the property, including but not limited to wheelchair access the property, widened doorways, hoists, rise and fall kitchen, level access shower
- **Level 2:** has adaptations but is unsuitable for an internal wheelchair user to reside.
- **Level 3:** some mobility issues which could be accommodated with adaptations, such as a stair lift and or a level access shower room.

To ensure that applicants are bidding on appropriate properties, those on the PAHR will be categorised by the following criteria:

- **Level 1:** indoor wheelchair user or those with a degenerative condition
- **Level 2:** outdoors wheelchair user who requires ground floor access but are able to move independently once inside the property.
- **Level 3:** some mobility issues but could be accommodated with adaptations, such as a stair lift.

The above list is not exhaustive, and each application is assessed on an individual basis.

Applicants on the PAHR Level 1 will not be shortlisted for general needs homes, but Levels 2 and 3 PAHR applicants will be considered for a “Home for Life” and general needs properties that are suitable to be adapted.

A “Home for Life” is defined as a house or flat that incorporates a number of specific features designed to ensure that the house or flat is accessible and adaptable, so that it is able to meet the needs of most households.

2.10 – Affordable Housing Register

Housing applicants who want to be considered for affordable housing as well as social housing (see section 2.1 above) can also apply to be included on the Affordable Housing Register.

'Affordable Housing' is a general term used to describe a range of housing options some of which are already offered by our housing partners which are detailed below, and each have different criteria including income thresholds required.

The Housing Partners plan to learn from best practice and adopt a suite of Low Cost Housing Options (LCHO) which support households into affordable home ownership. There may be some cross over of applicants who will match the criteria for the general social housing register and the Affordable Housing Register. The following are different types of affordable housing products that are available via Welsh Government (for further information see https://www.gov.wales/buying-selling-property), or each housing partner in their new housing developments may offer their own product.

Intermediate Rent: The Affordable Housing Register will be for schemes that have intermediate rent. Intermediate rent is a rent value that is above social housing rent and below market housing rent. Households must be able to afford the housing costs (rent and any service charges) and these should equate to no more than approximately 30% of the applicants' income

So, for example in general terms:

- Households must be able to afford the housing costs ('rent' inclusive of any service charges) and these should equate to no more than approximately 30% of your income. e.g. £16,000 x 30% = £4,800 / 12 (months) £400pcm - therefore the affordable rent would be in the region of £400pcm.
- Gross Household Income must be between £16,000 - £45,000 (you will need to check against the below re: minimum income required for size of property.
- Income required (Income has been calculated taking the average rents per intermediate rent property per landlord into consideration).
- 1 bed - £16,000 - £45,000
- 2 bed - £20,500 - £45,000
- 3 bed - £22,600 - £45,000
- 4+bed - £27,000 - £45,000

Rent to Own: The Welsh Government supports the purchase of a home for those who do not have sufficient funds for a mortgage deposit. Criteria apply.

Homebuy: This is a scheme supported by the Welsh Government to help buy a property on the open market. There is more information about this scheme in the Help to Buy – Wales Buyers' Guide published by Welsh Government.

Shared Equity: Shared equity is offered on properties purchased directly from a developer, housing association / local authority or re-sale properties. Criteria apply.

Shared Ownership: An Applicant is able to buy a percentage of the home and pay rent on the remaining percentage. Conditions apply and may differ according to the scheme in place.

Discounted 106 Properties: A developer builds homes and sells them on at a discounted price that is lower than the open market. The discount is agreed during the planning process. The Applicant will be required to comply with the eligibility criteria of the Section106. (Council Legal Document) e.g. local connection. Further criteria apply.

As local affordable housing products become available especially on new development sites, further information will be provided on the Choice Homes website, and individual housing partner's web pages.

2.11 – Bedroom Eligibility and 'One Up'

Applicants are entitled to one bedroom for each of the following within their households:

a) A married couple or two people cohabiting as if they were married
b) Civil partners or two people cohabiting as if they were civil partners
c) Each person aged 16 or over not falling within sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above
d) Two children of the same sex under the age of 16
e) Two children regardless of sex under the age of 10
f) Any additional child who cannot share with another child

For example, a married couple with sons 12 and 6, and daughters 5, 3 and 1 would have an assessed need of four bedrooms:

Married couple	1 bedroom	4 bedroom property required
Sons aged 12 and 6	1 bedroom	
Daughters aged 5 and 3	1 bedroom	
Daughter aged 1	1 bedroom	

Children who do not permanently reside with the applicant and who stay only as part of an access or contact arrangement will not be considered part of the household for the purposes of assessing bedroom entitlement. As such, access or contact children are not entitled to a separate bedroom within the housing allocation policy. Applicants are expected to make reasonable sleeping arrangements during contact periods within their existing accommodation, and any contact arrangements will not be taken into account when determining eligibility for additional bedrooms

Where an applicant or a member of their family is pregnant, the expected child will be considered from 4 months prior to the expected date of birth. Foster children over the age of 3 will be entitled to a separate bedroom in line with Fostering Services National Minimum Standards.

An additional bedroom may be awarded on medical grounds where a household member has a verified medical condition or disability that cannot reasonably be accommodated within the standard bedroom entitlement. This may include circumstances where a person requires a separate room for essential medical equipment, needs overnight care, or where sharing a bedroom would significantly exacerbate their condition or compromise their health, safety, or wellbeing. Any award will be subject to the provision of appropriate medical evidence from a relevant healthcare professional and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure the allocation reflects the household's demonstrated medical need.

Applicants are eligible for properties that match their assessed bedroom need or have a maximum of one bedroom more than their assessed bedroom need, known as 'One Up'. Where a bedroom override has already been awarded to the application these applications will only be eligible for homes matching the override.

An allocation will only be made of a One Up property provided that the Housing Partner is satisfied that the applicant is able to afford the rent and utilities, having regard to the costs of renting and running the property and the applicant's means. The affordability of the property will be assessed at time of allocation.

Applicants on the Register under-occupying a social housing property and who wish to move to a property with fewer bedrooms are placed in Band A. Bids placed by these applicants will only be assessed as Band A if the bid is on a property matching their assessed bedroom need. These applicants will be able to bid on a 'One Up/Down' property; however, such bids will be assessed as Band D. Unless there are other circumstances causing their application to be in Band A.

If a contract holder of a housing partner has a banding increase solely due to under occupying their current property and if they bid on a property one bedroom in excess of their assessed need this priority will not be taken into consideration when allocating a property.

To ensure the most efficient use of our housing stock while providing applicants with greater flexibility and choice, we allow households to "bid" on properties that have one bedroom more than their assessed housing need.

How Priority is Applied

While we encourage choice, priority is always given to applicants whose household size directly matches the bedroom count of the property. This is managed through a tiered ranking system within each priority band:

• **Primary Priority:** Applicants whose assessed need **exactly matches** the number of bedrooms in the property will be ranked first according to their Band and effective date.

• **Secondary Priority:** Applicants bidding for a property with **one additional bedroom** above their assessed need will be ranked beneath all "matching need" applicants within that same Band.

2.10 How Overcrowded Households are Determined

A household is living in overcrowded housing if their current accommodation is too small for the size of their family. In order to be eligible for an overcrowding assessment, applicants will need to provide evidence of the permanent address for each individual in their household. Any person over 18 will need to provide evidence that they have resided at the address for the previous 6 months.

Under the Welsh Housing Quality Standards 2023, the Bedroom Standard states that a separate bedroom is required for: (this is different to the bedroom entitlement in this policy)

- An adult couple who are married, in a civil partnership, or cohabiting as if they were (double bedroom)
- Any person aged 21 years or more (single or double bedroom)
- Any two persons aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom)
- One child under 10 years of age and one person aged between 10-20 years of the same sex (twin bedroom)
- One or two children under 10 years of age, not necessarily of the same sex (single or twin bedroom)

Overcrowding assessments will be undertaken by an authorised Environmental Health Officer and/or Housing Standards Officer and will utilise the above Bedroom Standard and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System guidance. Please note, this guidance is different from the bedroom entitlement of this policy.

If there are medical reasons for a household member to require a separate bedroom space, documentary evidence of the medical diagnosis from an appropriate medical professional must have been provided prior to the overcrowding assessment of the property so the assessing Officer is aware of this information, and it can be taken into consideration as part of the assessment.

2.12 – Rural Communities Policy

This policy allows provision for applicants with a local connection to a rural area to be given an additional preference in respect of properties available for letting in that area in order sustain rural communities and assist those who require or provide support. Up to 1 in 5 properties will be available for letting under the Rural Community Connection Policy. See **Appendix 3** for definitions of Rural / Urban.

For the purposes of this policy, a rural area is those areas specified for the purposes of s.157(1) Housing Act 1985 in the Schedule to The Housing (Right to Acquire and Right to Buy) (Designated Rural Areas and Designated Regions) (Wales) Order 2003.

The following criteria will determine whether an applicant or a member of their household has a connection to the rural area. The criteria listed below is in a cascading order (or level) of priority of connection.

Levels Of Connection to Rural Communities Area

1. Have lived in the area as their only or principal home for the last 3 years.
2. Have a family member living in the area who gives or receives support. Evidence of support will be needed. Family member being grandparent, parents, siblings, adult children and they have lived in the area continuously for the last 10 years.
3. Have permanent employment (at least 16 hours) in the area for the last 12 months, including zero-hours contracts.
4. Have a child in school in the area for the last 12 months.
5. A member of the coastal emergency services, for a minimum of 12 months such as the coastguard, either paid or unpaid in the area
6. Do not live in the area currently but have previously lived in the area for at least 5 of the preceding 10 years.

The following steps are carried out during the allocations process when a property is advertised under the Rural Community Connection Policy:

a) Applicants with a local connection to the rural area in which the property is situated and their assessed needs match the property type will be given priority over applicants who do not have connection to that area.
b) Applicants with a Level 1 local connection will then have the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** applied to them.
c) If no-one with a Level 1 local connection bids for the property, the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** will be applied to those with a Level 2 connection.
d) This process will continue until the shortlist of applicants meeting the rural community connection has been exhausted
e) If no-one with a local connection bid for the property, the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** will be undertaken with those applicants who have placed a bid.

2.13 – Urban Communities Policy

This policy allows provision for applicants with a local connection to an urban area to be given an additional preference in respect of properties available for letting in that area in order sustain urban communities and assist those who require or provide support. Up to 1 in 15 properties will be available for letting under the Urban Community Connection Policy.

The following criteria will determine whether an applicant or a member of their household has a connection to the Urban area. The criteria listed below is in a cascading order of priority (or level) of connection.

Levels Of Connection to the Urban Communities Area

1. Have lived in the area as their only or principal home for the last 3 years.
2. Have family member living in the area who gives or receives support. Evidence of support will be needed. Family member being grandparent, parents, siblings, adult children and they have lived in the area for continuously for the last 10 years.

3. Have permanent employment (at least 16 hours) in the area for the last 12 months, including zero-hours contracts.
4. Have a child in school in the area for the last 12 months.
5. A member of the coastal emergency services, for a minimum of 12 months, such as the coastguard, either paid or unpaid in the area
6. Have previously lived in the area for at least 5 of the preceding 10 years.

The following steps are carried out during the allocations process when a property is advertised under the Urban Community Connection Policy:

a. Applicants with a local connection to the rural area in which the property is situated and whose needs match the property type will be given priority over applicants who do not have connection to that area.
b. Applicants with a Level 1 local connection will then have the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** applied to them.
c. If no-one with a Level 1 local connection bids for the property, the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** will be applied to those with a Level 2 connection.
d. This process will continue until the shortlist of applicants meeting the rural community connection has been exhausted
e. If no-one with a local connection bid for the property, the process in **Section 4.3 – Offers of accommodation** will be undertaken with those applicants who have placed a bid.

2.14 – Local Lettings Policy

The policy recognises that partners may wish to include policies designed to tackle local housing issues through the use of local letting policies. All local lettings policies will be based on a confirmed evidence base. Furthermore, Housing Partners may adopt a local lettings policy, in consultation with the local community, in accordance with the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) Section 167(2E) which could be for the purposes of:

a) Meeting demand of a particular group or where housing need is particularly high.
b) Schemes that are having a significant impact on tenants' quality of life.
c) Create community cohesion on new developments with consideration to Welsh language speaking communities and sustainability.

This list is not exhaustive.

When new properties are built or acquired with the financial support of the Council (such as a Community Land Trust) to secure affordable housing, a separate local lettings policy may be put in place to allocate those properties.

Some properties may be eligible for a local connection allocation in perpetuity and as such will be allocated this way.

SECTION 3: SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

3.1 – Advice on completing application

Applicants must be on the Register before they can bid for homes. Applications must be made online at www.choicehomespembrokeshire.org.

If an applicant has any difficulty understanding or completing the online application and requires assistance, this can be obtained from the Housing Department of Pembrokeshire County Council.

The online form must be completed in full and proof of identity will be mandatory. The application will not be registered unless the form is fully completed and any necessary supporting documents have been provided.

If at any point information comes to the attention of the Housing Partners which will affect an applicant's banding or right to be on the Register, the applicant will be notified in writing of the change of banding or removal from the Register.

If an applicant on the Register signs a contract for a property let by one of the Housing Partners, their current application will then be complete and will be removed from the Register. This will not apply if the property is supported or temporary accommodation.

3.2 – Verifying applicants' information

At any point before an applicant becomes a contract holder checks may be carried out by the Housing Partners as a minimum to:

- Confirm information provided on the application form.
- Confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria for the property they have been offered.
- Verify there are no current, or previous, rent arrears or other breaches of tenancy.
- Verify there is no current, or previous, property damage.
- Verify there has been no harassment/anti-social behaviour or relevant criminal activity.
- Ensure the applicant can afford the rent charged for the property.

Such checks may occur when assessing the application, during the annual review process and also upon the allocation of a property.

3.3 – What happens if an applicant's circumstances change?

It is important that the information provided by the applicant is accurate and kept updated at all times.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the Housing Partners of any changes to their information, including but not limited to, address, household members, or health conditions. An applicant will need to upload this information to their Housing Online account.

Where the Housing Team has been notified that the applicant's circumstances have changed and are awaiting updated information, the applicant will be suspended from the Register. If the updated information is not provided within 2 months of the notification, the application will be removed from the Register. The applicant will be given written notification of this decision and have the right to request a review.

If a member of the applicant's household makes a separate application to join the Register in their own right, they will no longer be considered a part of the applicant's household and will be removed from the application.

3.4 – What happens if an applicant provides incorrect information?

Knowingly making a false statement in connection with an application or knowingly withholding information which the Housing Partners have required is an offence with no minimum penalty Applicants who deliberately make false statements may have their applications removed from the Register and their landlord can seek to recover possession of any property let to them as a result of an allocation.

Applicants who have been removed from the Register will normally be disqualified from re-joining it for a minimum period of 5 years. The Housing Partners may reduce this period having regard to the social, financial, and medical circumstances of the applicant and members of their household.

Applicants have the right to request a review of a decision to remove their name from the Register, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

3.5 – Suspension from the Register

The Housing Partners may suspend or exclude an applicant from the Register where satisfied that the applicant, or a member of their household, committed unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant.

The applicant does not need to have been a tenant of one of the Housing Partners when the unacceptable behaviour took place.

Unacceptable behaviour is behaviour that would have amounted to anti-social behaviour or prohibited conduct under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016. Examples of this include causing a nuisance or annoyance, damaging the property, or breaching a condition of their tenancy.

In deciding whether the behaviour is serious enough to make the applicant unsuitable to be a tenant, the Housing Panel will take into account how much time has elapsed since the behaviour was committed and the applicant's recent behaviour.

An applicant who is suspended from the Register will be notified in writing of the suspension and its length and may request a review of that decision, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

3.6 – Annual application review

Each application on the Register will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure that information is current and up to date. Applicants will be sent or emailed a review form which they must complete and return. If the applicant does not return a completed form within 4 weeks the application will be cancelled. Applicants will then need to complete a new online application if they wish to be considered for housing and the new effective date which is the date the new application is received will become the date used to determine an applicant's position within their band relative to other applicants. Applicants who have been removed from the Register have the right to request a review of this decision, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

SECTION 4: PLACING A BID

4.1 – How properties are advertised

Properties are currently advertised on the ChoiceHomes@Pembrokeshire website, social media platforms, at the offices of the Housing Partners and by email to different agencies and organisations that support vulnerable groups. Applicants are able to opt in to having the email of available properties sent to them each week. Other ways of advertising may be developed during the life of this policy.

4.2 – How to place bids

Applicants may place a manual bid for a property by contacting one of the Housing Partners or bidding on the ChoiceHomes@Pembrokeshire website.

Auto Bids are bids mandatory for applicants in Band A and optional for applicants in Bands B, C and D. Auto Bids are placed on behalf of the applicant by the computer system. Auto Bids will be placed on properties that match the applicant's assessed bedroom need and within their selected lettings areas. This will be discussed and agreed with the applicant prior to commencing Auto Bidding.

Applicants may also bid on properties that have a maximum of one bedroom more than their assessed bedroom need. All applicants will need to place manual bids on properties that are One Up.

Bids must be placed before the closing date which will appear in the advertisement for the property.

There is no limit to the number of bids an applicant can place each week.

4.3 – Offers of accommodation

After the advert closes, the Housing Partner, who is the landlord of the property will compile a shortlist of eligible applicants who have bid for the property. The shortlist will identify the order of applicants in the highest housing band (A is highest, D is the lowest) and who has the earliest effective date in the band.

The "effective date" is the date that the application was placed in its current band at the close of the bidding cycle. If the change in banding indicates that the applicant no longer has a housing need as defined in **Section 2.4 Being Placed Into Bands** their application will be closed and removed from the Housing Register. This will not apply to applicants who have joined the housing register for the sole purpose of being allocated age restricted or extra care accommodation.

Applicants will be contacted by the relevant Housing Partner to inform them they are being considered for a contract for the property.

Applicants may not be considered for a property if they, or a member of their household, owe either.

a. 4 or more weeks rent on their current home to a social housing provider

   If a contract holder of a community or social housing landlord has arrears totalling more than 4 weeks rent of their current property, they will not be eligible for an offer of accommodation. The Housing Partners however may consider making an offer if the applicant has a payment plan in place to reduce their debt and have adhered to this for at least 12 months. Each application will be considered on a case by case basis.

   OR

b. More than £100 in other charges

   OR

c. Have a debt to a social housing provider for a previous contract or tenancy.

Applicants who have accrued rent arrears solely as a result of an under-occupancy charge (also known as the 'bedroom tax') may be considered for an allocation. Applicants must be able to evidence that they have been actively bidding on properties that are considered by the Housing Partners to be affordable and that they are part of a repayment plan that is in place to reduce the arrears and this has been adhered to for at least 12 months. Considerations for such allocations will be done on a case by case basis.

If an applicant is successful on a property that has one bedroom in excess of their assessed need an affordability assessment will be made by the Housing Partner before offering the property to the applicant. If the Housing Partner has reason to believe the applicant cannot afford the property, they will bypass this applicant. Applicants who have been bypassed on affordability grounds have the right to request a review of this decision, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

4.4 – What happens if an applicant refuses an offer of accommodation?

Applicants who refuse, in the opinion of the Housing Partners, a suitable offer + suffer a consequence in relation to their ability to place further bids. This will be considered on a case by case basis.

The **first** suitable offer refused by an applicant will result with a written warning of the consequences should they refuse another suitable offer of accommodation.

If the applicant then refuses a **second** suitable offer their application will be suspended for a period of 6 months, in which time they will be unable to place any bids. One month before the end of the suspension the applicant will be contacted by the Housing Partners to ascertain whether there are any changes in their circumstances and if the applicant wants to be reinstated onto the Register. The application will be made live, and the effective date will restart from this date.

If the refusal of an offer is considered to be reasonable based on information provided by the applicant, the offer will be withdrawn and not regarded as a refusal.

Applicants who refuse an offer and have had a homeless duty accepted by Pembrokeshire County Council will have their refusal considered in accordance with homeless legislation.

Applicants have the right to request a review of the decision not to accept their reason for refusing the offer as reasonable, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review**

4.5 – Withdrawing an Offer

A Housing Partner may withdraw an offer at any time if the Housing Partner is not satisfied that:

a) the applicant is eligible for an allocation; or
b) the information supporting the application is not true.

There may be other reasons for withdrawing an offer, such as the current contract-holder withdraws their notice to leave the property.

Applicants have the right to request a review of a decision to withdraw an offer, see **Section 4.10 – Right to review.**

4.6 – Once an offer has been accepted

Once an applicant has satisfied any verification checks under **Section 3.2 – Verifying applicant's information** and has accepted an offer of accommodation, the Housing Partner involved will explain to the applicant the process of taking up their new contract.

Once an applicant's contract commences with one of the Housing Partners as a result of an allocation under this policy, their application will be removed from the Register.

4.7 – Allocations made directly to applicants

Whilst the majority of allocations will be made via the bidding process, Housing Partners may allocate via a management transfer if an applicant has been identified as having a need for housing which cannot be met through the bidding process.

Such allocations must be recommended by one of the Housing Partners to the Partners Panel and agreed by each Housing Partner. Each case will be considered on its individual merit. Examples of this include:

- where there is exceptional hardship
- for the effective management of housing stock
- where the safety of residents is a concern

- where an applicant who is a contract holder of a Housing Partner has been temporarily decanted to alternative accommodation to enable building works to be carried out, the Housing Partner may at their discretion grant the applicant a secure contract of the alternative accommodation provided it meets the applicant's housing needs and are supported by the housing partners
- Changes to existing contracts with the Housing Partners which fall outside of this policy in line with The Renting Homes Act (Wales) 2016
- Housing Partners are able to offer a management transfer to an applicant who they have served with a notice of possession in order to carry out work and cannot reasonably do so without obtaining possession of the dwelling as set out in Schedule 8, Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (Estate Management Grounds).

4.8 – Contract holders (tenants) needing a transfer

Contract holders wanting to move/transfer their contract to another property within Pembrokeshire can make an application to the Housing Partners. Contract holders must meet the residential criteria in Section 2 in addition to the following criteria:

- their current home is in satisfactory condition
- they do not owe any current or former debt to any of the housing partners

If a contract holder has arrears totalling more than 4 weeks rent on their current property or a debt of any amount to another social housing provider or social landlord, they will not be eligible for an offer of accommodation. The Housing Partners however may consider making the applicant an offer if they have a payment plan in place to reduce the arrears and have adhered to this for at least 12 months.

Social housing tenants also have the opportunity to register with HomeSwapper. This is a website for social housing contract holders to arrange transfers with other social housing contract holders with the permission of their respective landlords. This process was previously known as mutual exchange. For further information please go to www.homeswapper.co.uk

4.9 – Transfer Incentive Scheme

The Housing Partners will seek to operate a Transfer Incentive Scheme which is a scheme that promotes contract holders to move to properties that are more suited to their needs. Those who would benefit most from this scheme include:

- Tenants who have one or more bedrooms that they no longer need and are interested in downsizing
- Tenants who would benefit from an adapted property or age restricted housing
- Tenants who are currently in an adapted property who could move to a new home without adaptations

For more information, please see the Choice Homes Website www.choicehomespembrokshire.org

4.10 – Right to review

During the process decisions will have to be made by the Housing Partners in relation to applications. If an applicant does not agree with any of these decisions they should, to begin with, contact the Housing Partner who made the decision to try to resolve the issue.

Applicants who are still dissatisfied have the right to request a review of any decisions made by the Housing Partners under this policy. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Admission to the Register
- Suspension from the Register
- Removal from the Register
- Assessment of banding
- Reduction in banding
- Eligibility for an allocation
- Bedroom eligibility
- Withdrawing an allocation on affordability grounds
- Refusals of offers
- Any other decision about the facts of the applicant's case

A request for a review for any of the above decisions must be made within 21 days of the original decision, except for withdrawing an allocation on financial grounds. Requests for a review of withdrawing an allocation on financial grounds must be made within 2 working days of the withdrawal. In the request the applicant should explain why the decision is wrong and provide any additional evidence that may be relevant to the review. The review will be undertaken on the basis of all facts known at the time of the review. The Housing Partners aim to give the applicant written notification of the review decision within 4 weeks of the date the request for the review was made, except in the case of withdrawing an allocation on financial grounds, which will be made as soon as is practicably possible due to the nature of the review. Reviews will be undertaken by a panel of senior members of staff from the Housing Partners who were not involved in the original decision.

APPENDIX 1

A person is prescribed as a relevant family member for the purposes of section 343B of the Armed Forces Act 2006 where, in relation to a service member or former service member (A), the person is any of the following—

a. A's spouse or civil partner.

b. a child of A or of A's spouse or civil partner.

c. a relative of A or of A's spouse or civil partner where the relative is one of the following—

i. a member of A's household.

ii. wholly or mainly financially dependent on A or A's spouse or civil partner; or

iii. someone for whom A or A's spouse or civil partner has assumed regular and substantial caring responsibilities.

d. where A is deceased, anyone who was a relevant family member of A under sub-paragraphs (a) to (c) immediately before A's death.

(2) In this regulation—

"child" means a person under the age of 18 years.

"relative" in relation to A or A's spouse or civil partner, means—

a. a parent, stepparent, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, grandparent, step-grandparent, great-grandparent, step-great-grandparent, grandchild, step-grandchild, great-grandchild or step-great-grandchild of A or of A's spouse or civil partner;

b. the brother, sister, uncle, great-uncle, aunt, great-aunt, niece, great-niece, nephew, great-nephew or first cousin (whether of the full blood or of the half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) of A or of A's spouse or civil partner; or

c. any person who (no longer being a child) was the responsibility of A or A's spouse or civil partner when they were a child.

(3) For the purposes of this regulation, references to A's spouse or civil partner includes—

a. a person whose relationship with A is akin to a relationship between spouses or civil partners.

b. a former spouse or civil partner or a person whose relationship with A was formerly akin to a relationship between spouses or civil partners.

4 For the purposes of this regulation, a person is a child of a person (P) if—

a. P is the parent of the person; or

b. the person is the responsibility of P.

5. For the purposes of paragraph (1)(c), references to a person being a member of A's household includes references to a person who would be living in the same household as A but for the fact that A is temporarily living at another address for service reasons.

6 For the purposes of paragraphs (2)(c) and (4)(b), a child is the responsibility of A or A's spouse or civil partner where—

(a)A or A's spouse or civil partner has parental responsibility for the child within the meaning of section 3 of the Children Act 1989(**1**); or

(b)the child is someone who otherwise meets the criteria in paragraphs (1)(c)(ii) and (iii).

APPENDIX 2

Accessible Housing Register Applicant/Property Classification

Accessible housing register assessment (person)	Property Category	
Level 1 Indoor wheelchair user or those with a degenerative condition which means that it is likely they require a wheelchair for indoor use in the future.	**Category 1** Wheelchair accessible properties that are suitable for internal wheelchair users including Homes for Life (this excludes flats on the first floor or above).	
Level 2 Outdoor wheelchair user, requires ground floor accommodation but is ambulant indoors with the use of walking aids if necessary **OR** Some mobility issues but could be accommodated with adaptations such as a stairlift, level access shower.	**Category 2** Properties that have had some adaptations that are suitable for a disabled person with some ambulant ability but who is not an internal wheelchair user e.g. level access shower, grab rails, small ramps.	
Level 3 NOT FOR PAHR applicants GENERAL NEEDS REGISTER ONLY, OR WHERE IT HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED THAT AN ADAPTATION CAN BE CARRIED OUT TO MEET A DISABLED PERSONS NEEDS	**Category 3** Properties that do not have any adaptations at the time of survey but are suitable to be adapted in the future to meet the needs of a disabled person, with some ambulant ability but not an internal wheelchair user.	
Level 4 NOT FOR PAHR applicants GENERAL NEEDS REGISTER ONLY	**Category 4** Properties that are not suitable for adaptation due to level of adaptations that would be required to meet a disabled persons' needs. Therefore, it is considered that adaptations (internal or external access) is not reasonable or practicable. (Exceptions may apply, if minor adaptations such as grab rails, small ramps are already in place or may be installed to meet a current occupant needs).	

APPENDIX 3

RURAL & URBAN COMMUNITY GROUPINGS

St Davids, Llanrhian, Solva Solva AX0 AW0 St David's AV0 Llanrhian AU0 AU1 AT0 AN1 AN0,	**Burton Hook Llangwm** Burton BWO, Rosemarket BVO, Johnston BO0, Freystrop BT0, Hook BU0, Llangwm BU1
Newport, Dinas, St. Dogmaels Newport AJ0, Dinas AK0, St Dogmaels AB1 AB0 AA0	**Lamphey, Carew, Manorbier, Penally** Lamphey DV0 DU0 Carew DQ0, Jeffreyston DP0 Manorbier DT1 DT0 Penally DS0
Rural East Boncath and Clydau AG0 AH0 AF0, Cilgerran & Eglwyswrw AE0 AC0, Crymych & Mynachlog-ddu AD0 BE0, Maenclochog BD0 BD1 BF0 BF1	**South West Coast** Hundleton EA0 Angle EB0
Rural Central Camrose BJ0 BJ1, Letterston AY0 AS0 AZ1 AZ0, Rudbaxton BH0 Spittal BA0, Wiston BB0 BG0 BG1	**Tenby** North DL0, South DL1 DL2
Preseli/Bro Gwaun Cwm Gwaun AP0 AP1, Puncheston AQ0 AQ1, Scleddau AO0 AO1 AR0	**Saundersfoot** Amroth & Saundersfoot North DH0 DH1 DJ1, East Williamston DO1 DO2, Kilgetty & Begelly DN0 DB1, Saundersfoot South DJ0, St Florence & St Mary Out Liberty DR0 DR1 DK0
West Coast The Havens BL0, Nolton & Roch BK0 BK1	**Narberth Rural & Narberth Town** Lampeter Velfrey DB0 DB1, Llandewi Velfrey DA0, Martletwy DD0 DF1 DF0 DE0 BS0, Narberth Rural DC1 DC2 DG0 Narberth DC0

Dale, Marloes, St Brides (St Ishmaels) Dale CE0, Herbrandston CB0, Marloes & St Brides CD0, St Ishmaels CC0, Thornton BN1, Tiers Cross, BN0, Walwyns Castle BM0	

Milford Central BZ0, East BZ1 BZ2, Hakin CA0, Hubberston CA1 CA2, North BZ3, West BZ4
Haverfordwest and Merlins Bridge Castle BQ0 BQ1, Garth BR0 BR1, Portfield BR2, Prendergast BQ2, Priory BQ3 BQ4 BQ5, Merlin's Bridge BP0
Pembroke Dock Bufferland DW0B, Bush DW3, Central DW2, Market DW1, Pennar DW0 **Pembroke** Monkton & St Mary South DX2 DX1, St Mary North DX3, St Michael DX0
Neyland East BX0, West BX1 BY0
Fishguard North East AL0, North West AL1, Goodwick AM0