

Allocations Policy

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Implemented November 2020

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 One Manchester's (OM) Allocations Policy will be used for the allocation of social housing stock in its ownership and management. It seeks to balance the needs of customers, obligations to our partners and the regulatory conditions in place for housing associations and our aim to sustain and develop thriving communities.
- 1.2 OM provides good quality housing services for residents and prospective tenants by seeking to offer a choice of home as far as possible, prioritising housing need and the use of allocations policies that are fair, transparent and reflect the diversity and requirements of our customer groups.
- 1.3 OM monitors demand for its properties and ensures that all applicants can register for our properties easily and that all applicants are fairly and consistently assessed.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 This policy aims to clearly set out guidelines on how anyone looking for a home with OM will be considered and how our properties are allocated and let.
- 2.2 Our policy aims to be fair and simple to understand. It is based primarily on a need to move and how long the applicant has been waiting, but also recognises applicants contribution through paid employment and volunteering, and prior connection to a local area supports families with children in primary school education, incentivises the release of under-occupied homes, tackles overcrowding and rewards those who contribute to their neighbourhoods or have a specific connection to a neighbourhood. OM aims to be flexible while ensuring the best use of its stock.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1 OM works with the local authority to enable it to fulfil its statutory obligations and regulatory requirements by a Nominations Agreement. This requires OM to allocate at least 50% of its vacancies to the local authority for nomination of applicants who are prioritised according to their own rules, i.e. *Manchester City Council Part VI Scheme for the Allocation of Social Housing*. ("the MCC Scheme").
- 3.2 OM are therefore entitled to allocate up to 50% of vacancies to applicants according to the additional rules set out in this policy, which is intended to complement and be read alongside the MCC Scheme.
- 3.3 Regardless of which policy is used to prioritise applications, the rules of property type and size entitlement set out in this policy will apply.
- 3.4 This policy is only concerned with the allocation of OM's social housing stock. It does not cover the letting of market rent properties, or assignment of tenancies by mutual exchange or tenancy succession.

4.0 The Policy

PART 1: APPLICATIONS

4.1 How to apply for a One Manchester tenancy

4.1.1 OM is a member of Manchester Move which is an arrangement between Manchester City Council and most social landlords in Manchester (“the Partnership”). The Manchester Move system makes it easy for people to look for social homes in one place by operating the Manchester Housing Register (“the Register”) - a common housing register which enables people to look for social homes across the city in one place.

4.1.2 All who wish to apply for a home with OM are required to complete an online application through the website at manchestermove.co.uk.

4.1.3 The application process has three stages:

1. **The pre-assessment questionnaire.** This is to determine if the applicant qualifies to join the register and identify which housing options are likely to offer the best chance of moving to a Manchester home most quickly. A personalised plan is created including private renting, low-cost home ownership and mutual exchange options in addition to social renting
2. **The full application form.** All qualifying applicants then have the option to pursue an application for social housing. They will need to provide details of their household, their current circumstances, their requirements, their reasons for moving, and other details required to assess their application.
3. **Submission of documents for validation.** After submitting the online registration form applicants will be issued with an application number to log in to their Manchester Move account and access their Personal Application Pack. This will explain which partner landlord holds their application, what supporting evidence they are required to supply to them to validate their application, and how to submit it.

4.1.4 The Manchester Move website includes a list of the current Manchester Housing Register landlords. Any applicant currently living in a property rented from one of those landlords will have their application held by that landlord. All other applicants will be randomly assigned a landlord to hold and assess their application. It does not matter in any way which landlord this is as all assessments are carried out consistently across the Partnership. Applicants can bid for OM properties whoever holds their application.

4.2 Validation of applications

4.2.1 After registering on Manchester Move applicants will have to provide the following for their application to be validated:

- two forms of identification for every adult in the moving group, of which one must include their National Insurance Number
- proof of address for every adult in the moving group
- proof of child benefit for every child in the moving group, in the name of one of the adults in the moving group
- if a member of the household is pregnant, the MATB1 maternity certificate
- if overcrowded, the same evidence as above for all other members of the household

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- full and accurate responses to any supplementary requests for information

4.2.2 Applications where no documents have been submitted within 31 days of registration will be removed.

4.2.3 Once an application has been submitted we will allocate the applicant to a band within 20 working days of receiving ALL the information required to process the application.

4.2.4 Where there is a need to visit an applicant or make further enquiries to confirm an applicant's circumstances the application will not be made live to enable bidding or receive offers until such a time as the applicant's circumstances have been confirmed. If there is a need to visit an applicant, or for an interview to be arranged to clarify details contained on the form, arrangements will be made and confirmed with the applicant within 7 days. We will then confirm any final allocation to a band in writing within 28 days of any such interview, visit, or the completion of further enquiries. This will normally be by email if an email address has been provided.

4.3 Change of Circumstances & Reviews

4.3.1 Applicants whose situation changes must log into their Manchester Move account and report a change of circumstances online. Depending on the change being reported this may require the application to be reassessed and further evidence supplied.

4.3.2 Applicants will also have to routinely confirm their details are up to date and accurate via the Manchester Move website. This review is usually requested each year the applicant remains on the register, via a prompt when logging in to their account. If not completed within the first month of becoming due there will follow a three month period of 'hibernation' during which time the applicant will be unable to bid but can still complete the review. Applicants failing to review their applications after this period will be removed from the Manchester Housing Register. Once removed they would then need to submit a new application.

4.4 Housing Options Advice

4.4.1 When looking for a place to live the option of waiting for a social housing tenancy may well not be practical or indeed the most appropriate option given someone's personal circumstances. By providing a comprehensive service covering all available options in the neighbourhoods that we manage - tenancies with other social landlords, licensed private rented property, shared and low cost ownership, or mutual exchange - OM can give our customers accurate and realistic information and options for their housing requirements.

4.4.2 In discussing housing options we are also aware that this is one piece of a larger jigsaw. Applicants will also wish to know and understand what the options are in terms of work, training and education for them and their children as well as other facilities and opportunities in our neighbourhoods. OM will work with the local authority, other agencies and partners to give comprehensive advice and assistance which allows customers to make informed decisions about all their requirements.

4.5 Applications from Board members, One Manchester staff or close relatives

4.5.1 Applicants will need to declare on their application if they are, or are a relative of, a Board or staff member of OM or any of the housing register partners. Applicants will be asked again at the time any offer is made. The term relative includes: anyone living with the applicant as a partner or member of their household; natural/adoptive/step parents; grandparents; aunts; uncles; sisters;

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brothers; children; daughter and son in laws; estranged spouses or partners regardless of whether they live as part of the applicant's household.

- 4.5.2 Board members must declare any interests in a rehousing case in the OM's Declaration of Interests Log.
- 4.5.3 Staff and Board Members of OM must be aware that undue canvassing of members of staff responsible for the allocation of homes might be considered as improper or as harassment.
- 4.5.4 Staff and Board Members of OM and their relatives are as entitled as anyone else to apply to appear on the housing register and should apply/be treated in the same way as any other applicant. However, in terms of process and to ensure that it is seen to be clear and fair, staff should follow the guidelines below:
 - a) staff members should not deal with their own applications for rehousing nor those of their partners or relatives
 - b) staff members seeking rehousing services must ensure that they exercise proper professional discretion in dealing with the member of staff handling their application
- 4.5.5 OM staff and Board members cannot receive any non-contractual benefits as a result of their association with the company. Staff and Board members are required to declare any potential conflict of interest and staff members are also required to complete a notification form when granting a tenancy to an applicant who is or related to a member of staff or Board member.
- 4.5.6 Staff making allocations in such instances must evidence the Band and queue position of the applicant and seek the written authorisation of the Executive Director of Customers and Communities, or another OM Executive Director in their absence.
- 4.5.7 Any staff member found to have deliberately and improperly advanced their own or their relative's application ahead of qualifying applicants following an investigation will be considered to have committed gross misconduct.
- 4.5.8 A quarterly report will be provided to EMT highlighting when this discretion has been used

5.0 PART 2: ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION**5.1 Eligibility**

5.1.1 It is the law that social housing must only be allocated to people who are eligible to be rehoused. The following are not eligible:

- People who are “subject to immigration control” (unless they fall within a class prescribed by regulations as eligible).
- People who are not subject to immigration control, but are nevertheless prescribed by regulation as being “persons from abroad” (this may include British citizens).
- Any other person as prescribed by the Secretary of State.

5.1.2 Persons from abroad can apply to be rehoused, but their eligibility must be verified before they can be allowed to join the housing register. At the point of applying all applicants are asked for information about their housing history and legal status, including whether they are persons from abroad or subject to immigration control. Manchester City Council then carries out checks to establish eligibility to become a tenant under the MCC Scheme according to the relevant legislation.

5.2 Right to Rent checks

5.2.1 ‘Right to Rent’ checks were introduced by the Immigration Act 2014 (‘the Act’) whereby the landlord must not authorise an adult to occupy premises under a residential tenancy agreement if the adult is disqualified as a result of their immigration status. (Section 22 of the Act)

5.2.2 There are various types of tenancy agreements (called ‘excluded agreements’) that the Act does not apply to and therefore the landlord in relation to these excluded tenancies does not need to carry out the Right to Rent checks. Schedule 3 of the Act lists the current excluded tenancy agreements, one of which is an agreement that provides accommodation in social housing pursuant to Part 6 or 7 Housing Act 1996. Part 6 includes where a local authority nominates a person to be an assured tenant of a private registered provider of social housing (s.1592(c)).

5.2.3 This means that any tenancies allocated by OM through the nomination agreement with Manchester City Council using the MCC Scheme are deemed ‘excluded tenancies’. The eligibility checks carried out by Manchester City Council described in the section above are sufficient in those cases.

5.2.4 However Right to Rent checks are required for all household members before any tenancy can be granted by OM using its own policy as this falls within the scope of the Act. This means further checks need to be made by OM to ensure that any adult occupying the property is not disqualified to do so as a result of their immigration status.

5.2.5 Therefore any application which includes a member of the household whose eligibility has not yet been confirmed will be asked to provide relevant evidence at point of offer and if they are unable to do so the offer will be withdrawn and any future bids will be bypassed until they have done so.

5.3 Qualification

5.3.1 Not everyone who is eligible to apply for rehousing will qualify to join the Manchester Housing Register. A person making an application can be found not to qualify for any of these reasons:

- They do not have at least two years’ continuous residency in Manchester
- They have available financial resources and/or household income above the limits
- They own a home anywhere in the world
- Their behaviour makes them unsuitable to be a tenant

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5.3.2 Each of these reasons is described in greater detail in the MCC Scheme. OM use the same rules for qualification under its own policy as described in the MCC Scheme.

5.3.3 Certain applicants are exempt from some of the qualification criteria. For example the two years continuous residency requirement does not apply to applicants owed a homelessness duty by Manchester City Council, or ready to move on from their commissioned supported accommodation schemes. The full list of “exemptions and exceptions” can be found in the MCC Scheme.

5.3.4 The same exemptions to the qualification rules apply to OM’s policy, but additionally an exemption can be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director of Customers and Communities, or the Head of Place, for exceptional circumstances.

5.4 The Rehousing Review List (RRL)

5.4.1 The Partnership share a Rehousing Review List (RRL). This is a list of people who may not qualify for rehousing or who may not have kept to their tenancy conditions at some time in either a current or former tenancy and therefore warrant further investigation as to their qualification and priority for rehousing.

5.4.2 OM will make sure that:

- everyone added to the RRL is informed exactly why they are listed and exactly how to appeal to be removed from the list
- there is a clear and easy way to get a review

5.4.3 OM will enter people on the RRL in the following circumstances:

- Former tenants of OM who owes a housing-related debt e.g. rent arrears, court costs, rechargeable repairs, furniture charge or storage – of £100 or over
- Current tenants of OM who apply for rehousing who do not qualify for rehousing or should have a reduced priority due to housing-related debt according to the rules of the MCC Scheme
- Current or former tenants of OM where a possession order was secured for any reason who has not satisfied OM that they will keep to the terms of a tenancy agreement in future
- Former leaseholders of OM who owes a debt of over £100 to OM
- Anyone whose previous behaviour was proven to have spoilt the peaceful enjoyment of any residential dwelling and who has not yet satisfied OM that they will keep to the terms of a tenancy agreement
- Anyone who has been violent to or threatened staff, customers or agents of OM and who has not yet satisfied OM that they will keep to the terms of a tenancy agreement
- Anyone with an unspent conviction for a community offence or who is the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order or other Civil Restraining Order and who the Serious Offenders Panel are satisfied poses a significant risk to the well-being of any resident of Manchester by re-offending or breaching a Civil Order
- Anyone who intends to live with a person in one of these categories. Applicants must sign an undertaking if they subsequently decide not to live with a person in any of the above categories
- Anyone abandoning a property of OM (all costs including rent and other housing-related debt included)
- Anyone damaging an OM property (all costs of repair included)

5.4.4 Applicants who are on the RRL for housing-related debt owed to OM who have since repaid the debt can ask for their entry to be reviewed at any time. The review will be carried out within 20 working days of request.

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- 5.4.5 Former tenants of OM who are on the RRL for reasons other than housing-related debt will need to demonstrate at least two years good behaviour and sign a good behaviour undertaking before being considered again for housing with OM.
- 5.4.6 Any appeal to have an RRL entry reviewed, other than for housing-related debt, should be submitted in writing. This should include any grounds for the appeal and explaining why the person is now suitable to be a tenant. The person may be invited in for an interview. The appeal outcome will be notified within 56 days of the request or such longer period as may be agreed with the applicant.
- 5.4.7 Where the applicant is appealing against the original decision to include them on the RRL the review outcome will be determined by someone who was not involved in that decision.
- 5.4.8 A solicitor, advice worker or someone else can write comments on a listed person's behalf, as long as the listed person signs their name on the comments to show they agree with them. A solicitor, advice worker or someone else may also attend a review interview with the listed person at the listed person's request.
- 5.4.9 If someone applies for rehousing and their name is already listed on the RRL by another landlord, OM will inform them of their exclusion and who they need to contact to request a review.

6.0 PART 3: ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITISATION

6.1 The Priority Bands

6.1.1 OM use the same banding structure and definitions as described in the MCC scheme. This ensures OM recognises and responds to Manchester’s housing needs, is easier for customers to understand and avoids unnecessary complications by ensuring a continued close alignment with Manchester City Council’s policy aims.

6.1.2 There are 5 priority bands. Applications are placed in the appropriate band according to assessed need. These are summarised in the table below for ease of reference but for a full explanation of the criteria for each award please refer to the MCC Scheme:

Band	Band Description	Awards made under this band
Band 1	Reasonable Preference and Additional Preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital Discharge • Severe Overcrowding by 3+ bedrooms and needing 3+ bedrooms • Severe Property Condition where a Prohibition Order has been served • Severe Medical Need • Domestic Abuse with risk to life • Fear of Violence or harassment with risk to life • Serious Risk to a Child • Move on from Care • Foster Carers • Downsizing from social housing AND releasing 3+ beds, moving to non-family type OR Subject to ‘bedroom tax’ • Releasing an adapted property • Armed Forces • Management Discretion
Band 2	Reasonable Preference and urgent need to move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Relief Duty OR Full Duty • Overcrowding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ by 2+ bedrooms OR ○ by 1 bedroom, in a 1 bed with children OR ○ by 1 bedroom and lodging • Property Condition where a Suspended Prohibition Order has been served • Medical Need • Domestic Abuse • Abuse, Violence, Harassment • Welfare related to old age • Hardship/need to move to a particular locality to give or receive care OR to access facilities OR to work, train or study • Child protection • Move on from Supported Accommodation • Child living in an unsuitable flat • Downsizing from social housing (all other situations)

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Band	Band Description	Awards made under this band
Band 3	Reasonable Preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless Prevention Duty OR Intentionally Homeless in Priority Need Overcrowding by 1 bedroom (all other situations)
Band 4	No housing need	
Band 5	Reduced priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing-related debt Deliberately worsening housing circumstances or knowingly allowing circumstances to worsen Unreasonable refusal of 2 suitable offers Failed pre-transfer property inspection Failure to comply with a tenancy agreement Not ready to move on from care or supported accommodation

6.2 The One Manchester Award

6.2.2 OM recognises the importance of an individual's connection to the place they live and the positive contributions made by those in paid employment or volunteering, both in terms of sustaining their own tenancy and helping to create a thriving local community.

6.2.3 For that reason OM's policy additionally includes the One Manchester Award which has two distinct elements of Contribution and Connection. Any applicant can claim entitlement to either or both of these elements by answering the relevant questions as part of their application. The Connection element can be claimed for multiple different areas.

6.2.4 The One Manchester Award does not grant any additional priority or change the applicant's band. How it works is that certain properties advertised on Manchester Move under OM rules will be 'restrictively labelled' so that only applicants with either the Contribution element, or the Connection element to the area the property is located, or both these elements, are able to place bids.

6.2.5 The size, type and location of properties restrictively labelled to applicants with the One Manchester Award will be determined in accordance with OM's Local Lettings Plans which will be reviewed regularly and updated on OM's own website.

6.2.6 To claim the One Manchester Award a member of the household needs to meet any one of the following conditions:

A) Contribution element

- Currently working for a minimum of 16 hours per week
- Currently volunteering for a minimum of 10 hours per month and has been doing so for at least 6 months

B) Connection element

- Be an existing resident of an OM area
- Be a past resident of an OM area for 3 or more of the past 5 years
- Working in an OM area
- Have children in full time education in an OM area
- Have immediate family in an OM area – defined as either parents or children

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- Be providing or receiving care in an OM area

6.2.7 For the purposes of the Connection element, “an OM area” is defined as any council ward in which OM has social housing. Applicants will be entitled to bid for OM properties in that ward and the adjacent surrounding wards. This is summarised in the table below:

Ward	Adjacent Wards	
Hulme	Ardwick	Moss Side
Moss Side	Hulme Ardwick Rusholme	Fallowfield Whalley Range
Whalley Range	Moss Side	Fallowfield
Fallowfield	Moss Side Rusholme	Whalley Range
Rusholme	Ardwick Moss Side Fallowfield	Levenshulme Longsight
Levenshulme	Fallowfield Rusholme	Longsight
Longsight	Rusholme Levenshulme	Ardwick Gorton & Abbey Hey
Ardwick	Hulme Moss Side Rusholme Longsight	Gorton & Abbey Hey Clayton & Openshaw Ancoats & Beswick
Gorton & Abbey Hey	Longsight Ardwick	Clayton & Openshaw Ancoats & Beswick
Clayton & Openshaw	Miles Platting & Newton Heath Ancoats & Beswick	Ardwick Gorton & Abbey Hey
Ancoats & Beswick	Miles Platting & Newton Heath Clayton & Openshaw	Gorton & Abbey Hey Ardwick
Miles Platting & Newton Heath	Ancoats & Beswick	

So for example an applicant who lives in Levenshulme and works in Hulme can bid for properties advertised with a Connection restriction in both those wards, and also in the adjacent wards of Fallowfield, Rusholme, Longsight, Ardwick and Moss Side.

7.0 PART 4: INTERNAL MOVES AND USE OF DISCRETION

7.1 Applications from current One Manchester tenants and residents

7.1.1 Existing tenants of OM can apply to move. They are known as transfer applicants and must meet the following criteria:

- not have rent arrears or other housing related debt over the limit which disqualifies them for rehousing according to the rules detailed in the MCC Scheme
- have a current agreement with OM in place to repay any outstanding rent arrears or housing related debt
- pass a property inspection – both internal and external
- not be subject to any current or impending legal action for rent arrears, anti-social behaviour or any other reason unless authorised by the relevant manager
- not be listed on the Rehousing Review List

7.1.2 If any of the above applies the application will either be placed in Band 5 with reduced priority, or will not qualify, and any offer of rehousing made will be withdrawn, other than at the discretion of the Executive Director of Customers and Communities or the Head of Place.

7.1.3 Starter tenants who have been a tenant for less than a year can apply for rehousing. However their application will have reduced priority and be placed in Band 5 unless there has been a serious change in their circumstances since they took up the tenancy which requires addressing e.g. fear of violence.

7.1.4 Equitable tenants who are under the age of 18 can also apply for rehousing but their application will have reduced priority and be placed in Band 5 unless there has been a change in their circumstances. Once they are eligible for an assured tenancy the reduced priority will be lifted and they will be able to progress their application further.

7.1.5 Existing tenants and residents living in One Manchester homes will be assessed according to the same rules as all other applicants, as explained in this section. However OM recognises that sometimes specific exceptional housing needs or concerns may arise within its own properties which need resolving by an internal move within its own stock more urgently than the banding system and bidding process would otherwise allow.

7.1.6 The approach OM will take to ensure these cases are dealt with fairly and consistently is to convene a regular Allocations Panel comprising appropriate managers and staff from Housing Options, Place, Community Safety, Support and Wellbeing, and Income Teams to consider the full circumstances. The Allocations Panel will make a recommendation to the Executive Director of Customers and Communities or the Head of Place for discretion to be applied.

7.2 Director Discretion

- 7.2.1 For any exceptional circumstances that may arise, which will be considered on a case by case basis, the Executive Director of Customers and Communities or the Head of Place has the discretion to:
- override the criteria which would make an applicant not qualify or have a reduced priority
 - award priority under any Band or amend the Band award date
 - approve direct offers of accommodation
 - override the rules on property type, size entitlement and who can be included in a moving group
- 7.2.2 Examples of where Director Discretion may be used include, but are not limited to:
- where a personal tragedy has occurred in the home
 - where an applicant disqualified due to rent arrears resulting from welfare reform needs to downsize.
 - where there is a need to move to a very specific locality or property type which is rarely available
 - where a long-term resident family member is left in occupation of a property on the death of the tenant but does not have the right to succeed the tenancy
 - where young children are living in a multi-storey flat as a result of natural growth of the family.
- 7.2.3 For the avoidance of doubt, any Director Discretion applied under this policy will only be valid under OM's Allocations Policy and will not apply to the MCC scheme. This means it can only be taken into account for the 50% of tenancy allocations OM makes under its own rules.
- 7.2.4 Any use of this discretion will be reported to EMT on a quarterly basis.

8.0 PART 5: PROPERTY TYPE AND SIZE ENTITLEMENT

8.1 Property Entitlement

- 8.1.1 OM aims to make the best use of available stock whilst responding to local need when letting properties. It also looks to take into account the affordability of the offer made in terms of size entitlement and qualification for Housing Benefit. This can include restrictions on certain property types including restrictions on age and family composition. Properties with special features, equipment and adaptations will be matched with applicants needing such features. Applicants with children under the age of 16 will usually be considered for houses or ground floor maisonettes or ground floor flats (but not multi-storey flats). However, applicants with children under the age of 16 can be considered for accommodation on 1st and 2nd floors (not multi-storey flat accommodation) at their request.
- 9.1.2 Applicants with access to children but who are not in receipt of child benefit for them will not be considered for offers of ground floor accommodation with more than one bedroom. Such applicants can be considered for larger accommodation above the ground floor where it exists in OM's stock. Applicants' ability to afford such accommodation will be assessed.
- 9.1.3 Applications from all adult moving groups will not be considered for offers of houses unless they are a family.
- 9.1.4 OM's guidelines on property type and household criteria are as below. The bedroom entitlement is based on the Bedroom Standard, which is described in the next section. Exceptions to property type entitlement are as defined in the Incentive to Move Scheme. Overcrowding is permitted by one bedroom only where the size of property needed is rarely available or does not exist within the OM's stock.
- 9.1.5 The table below identifies the type and size of household composition that is eligible for the stated property type. Working households or others who are exempt from the underoccupation charge may underoccupy non family type property by one bedroom only and subject to an affordability assessment. These are marked by *.

Property Type	Permitted Household Composition
Studio flat	Single person
1 bed bungalow	Single person/couple aged 55+
1 bed house-style flat ground and 1 st floor	Single person or couple
1 bed house	Single person or couple
1 bed multi-storey all floors	Single person or couple
1 bed flat in a low block all floors	Single person or couple
2 bed house-style flat ground floor	Family, all adult group needing 2 bedroom, single person/couple needing carer, approved foster carer
2 bed house-style flat 1st floor	Family, all adult group needing 2 bedrooms, applicant with access to child/children*, single person/couple needing carer, approved foster carer
2 bed flat in a low block ground floor	Family, all adult group needing 2 bedroom, single person/couple needing carer, approved foster carer

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2 bed flat in a low block 1st or 2nd floor	Family, single person* , all adult group needing 2 bedrooms/applicant with access to child/children*/single person or couple needing carer, approved foster carer
2 bed maisonette ground floor	Family, all adult group needing 2 bedrooms, single person/couple needing carer, approved foster carer
2 bed maisonette 1st or 2nd floor	Family, single person* , all adult group needing 2 bedrooms/applicant with access to child/children*/single person or couple needing carer, approved foster carer
2 bed multi-storey all floors	Single person*/all adult group needing 2 bedrooms/single person or couple needing carer
2 bed house	Family needing 2 bedrooms or single person/couple needing carer, approved foster carer
3 bed flat in a low block ground floor	Family or all adult group needing 2* or 3 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 2*/3 bedrooms
3 bed flat in a low block 1st or 2nd floor	Family or all adult group needing 2* or 3 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 2*/ 3 bedrooms, applicant with access to children needing 2*/3 bedrooms
3 bed multi-storey all floors	All adult group needing 2* or 3 bedrooms, all adult household requiring 2 bedrooms plus carer
3 bed house	Family needing 3 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 3 bedrooms
3 bed house with parlour	Family needing 4 bedrooms or family needing 2*/ 3 or 4 bedrooms one of which must be on the ground floor for medical reasons
4 bed house	Family needing 4 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 4 bedrooms
4 bed house with parlour	Family needing 5 bedrooms or family needing 4 or 5 bedrooms one of which must be on the ground floor for medical reasons
5 bed house	Family needing 5 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 5 bedrooms in total
5 bed house with parlour	Family needing 6 bedrooms or family needing 5 or 6 bedrooms one of which must be on the ground floor for medical reasons
6 bed house	Family needing 6 bedrooms, approved foster carer needing 6 bedrooms in total
6 bed house with parlour	Family needing 7 bedrooms or family needing 6 or 7 bedrooms one of which must be on the ground floor for medical reasons
adapted properties	Allocated by the local authority
retirement housing/independent living scheme	Single person or couple 55 years+

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8.2 The Bedroom Standard

- 8.2.1 The statutory guidance “Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England” (DCLG, 2012) recommends using the bedroom standard to assess the number of bedrooms needed by applicants for social housing. This is the standard used to determine bedroom need in the MCC Scheme, and OM’s policy adopts the same standard.
- 8.2.2 The bedroom standard in the guidance states that a separate bedroom should be allocated to:
- a. a married or cohabiting couple
 - b. an adult aged 21 years or more
 - c. a pair of adolescents aged 10 to 20 years of the same sex
 - d. a pair of children aged under 10 regardless of sex
- 8.2.3 In addition, OM will allocate a separate bedroom to:
- e. a pair of children/adolescents of the same sex where one is aged 10 to 20 and the other is under 10
 - f. any person under 21 in any case where she or he cannot be paired with another occupier of the dwelling so as to fall within (c), (d) or (e) above
- 8.2.4 OM will treat an application with someone who is pregnant by 28 weeks or more as though having another child and allocate an additional bedroom if required under this standard.

9.0 PART 6: HOW PROPERTIES ARE ALLOCATED

9.1 Local Lettings Plans

- 9.1.1 OM will set Local Lettings Plans for each of its 12 Place areas. These will specify any particular targets or restrictions which apply to lettings in that area. Examples may include:
- A specific target percentage of lettings to working/volunteering applicants – achieved by restricting some properties to applicants with the contribution element of the One Manchester Award
 - A specific target percentage of lettings to people with a prior connection to that local area – achieved by restricting some properties to applicants with the connection element of the One Manchester Award.
 - Age restrictions which apply to specific blocks or property types in that area

9.2 Property Adverts & Bidding

- 9.2.1 Most OM properties are advertised on the Manchester Move website, for a minimum period of 6 calendar days. The advertising period can start on any day of the week. During this period applicants can place a bid for the property if they are eligible to do so. Applicants can have a maximum of 3 current property bids at any one time, across all partner organisations, although this does not include bids previously placed for adverts which have now closed.
- 9.2.2 At least 50% of OM properties must be allocated to applicants nominated by Manchester City Council, under the Nominations Agreement. This is achieved by advertising half of OM's available properties under the MCC Scheme's rules and the other half under OM's rules set out in this policy. The rules being used are clearly stated on the advert and this determines the order of priority of the shortlist of bidders when the advertising period ends.
- 9.2.3 If OM's rules are being used the property may also be restrictively labelled in accordance with the Local Lettings Plan for that area so that only applicants with the applicable One Manchester Award can place a bid. How this works is explained in detail elsewhere in this policy.
- 9.2.4 Whichever rules are used to shortlist the bids, applicants can only bid for properties they are eligible for under OM's rules on size and property type e.g. a single person cannot bid for a three bedroom house.

9.3 Offers and Refusals

- 9.3.1 After the bidding closes OM will offer the property to the highest eligible applicant on the shortlist in band and date order. If the offer is refused it will be offered to the next in line, and so on. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the property meets their requirements before placing a bid. A reasonable offer is defined as one the applicant has placed a bid for, which was advertised accurately and meets their housing needs. Any refusal resulting from a failure to properly read the information contained in the advert will not be accepted as a reasonable refusal. Two such refusals will result in the application being demoted to Band 5.
- 9.3.2 Adapted properties will be allocated to the highest eligible applicant who has been assessed to require the adaptations, even if they are not the highest bidder overall. Bids from applicants who do not need the adaptations will be bypassed. Offers will be made to qualifying applicants in band and date order.

9.4 Direct Offers

9.4.1 Some properties, at OM's discretion, will not be advertised and will be directly offered to eligible applicants. Where a direct offer is agreed at the request of Manchester City Council this will be regarded as a nomination under the terms of the Nomination Agreement.

9.4.2 Examples of where this may happen include for internal transfers such as those listed in the Director Discretion section of this policy, or where a number of properties are pledged by OM to support specific strategic initiatives to tackle homelessness, rough sleeping, or to support young people leaving care.

9.5 Offer conditions

9.5.1 Offers made by OM are provisional until a pre-tenancy assessment has been completed. OM's Tenancy Policy explains the type and length of tenancy which will be offered depending on the applicant's situation, along with the requirements of the pre-tenancy assessment. This includes a household budget assessment to ensure the tenancy is affordable and a thorough evaluation of the applicant's circumstances to ensure any support needed to help the new tenancy succeed is in place.

9.5.2 Offers may be withdrawn by OM if any condition of the pre-tenancy assessment is not met.

10.0 Equality

10.1 One Manchester will ensure that this policy is applied fairly to all our customers. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or other grounds set out in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

10.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy.

10.3 OM will monitor lettings across protected characteristics in order to identify whether any particular group/s are under-represented in lettings which will lead to a review.

11.0 Method and approach

This policy should be read in conjunction with the procedures and guidance notes and the following complimentary policies:

- Tenancy
- Anti Social Behaviour and Hate Crime
- Domestic Abuse
- Adults at Risk of Harm
- Starter Tenancy
- Tenancy Succession and Mutual Exchange

12.0 Responsibility

The Executive Director of Customers and Communities is responsible for ensuring this policy complies with legislative requirements.

Managers and staff who deal with the allocation of properties are responsible for implementing this policy.

13.0 Monitoring, review and evaluation

The following data will be reported and updated quarterly to support the development of the Local Lettings Plans for each of the 12 place areas:

- Area stock profile
- Lets by band, property type and bedroom size
- % lets to homeless households
- % of lets to applicants with the OM award – with a breakdown of contribution/connection themes.
- Management data – arrears/turnover/ASB/support/evictions
- Consideration will also be given to the inclusion where practical of externally sourced data such as GMP crime and ASB data.
- This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if changes to relevant legislation or the MCC Scheme determine that an update is required.

14.0 Legislation

This policy has been written in accordance with relevant guidance and legislation, which includes:

- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Localism Act 2011
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Immigration Act 2014