



Dublin City Council Housing Allocations 2019

Proposal to Deal with Homeless families with Historical priority.

The Housing Allocations Scheme adopted by City Council Elected members on 14th May 2018 made a significant change to the prioritisation of homeless households. The potential benefit of that change has been discussed at the Housing Strategic Policy Committee on a regular basis.

Early indications are that the change has resulted in the duration of the time spent in homelessness decreasing. We are aware that more in-depth analysis is required to confirm the drivers of that change and this will be the focus of an independent evaluation as committed to by management.

This report proposes a specific and short- term housing strategy for the remaining **families** (445) in emergency accommodation who were given homeless priority before the change was implemented. While the number of this particular cohort of families cannot increase, we are very keen to speed up a decrease in this number and their exit into social housing. At the current rate of allocations to these families it will take some years to resolve their very unsatisfactory situation.

Analysis of 2018 Lettings to Homeless Households:

With 24% of lettings to homeless households made in 2018 we exceeded our stated minimum target of 21%, with the vast majority directed to **Band 1 Housing List** (households in emergency accommodation pre - May 2018) and a lesser but increasing number of lettings to **Band 1 Transfer List (Homeless Hap)**.

	Band 1 - Housing	Band 1 – Transfer (THAP)	
Singles/Couples	165	13	178 or 12% of overall lettings
Families	145	26	171 or 12% of overall lettings
Total	310	39	349 or 24% of overall lettings

Notwithstanding this, there remained 495 families with homeless priority in emergency accommodation on April 1st 2019.

The feedback from City Council, Homeless Executive staff, and NGO providers is that many but by no means, all of these families will have expressed an intention to remain in emergency accommodation until they are reached for an offer of social housing. The reasons for this are well understood, however our primary goal is to support shorter experiences of homelessness, where prevention has not succeeded.

We have aligned all City Council and Homeless Executive housing and support services to concentrate on supporting families through:

- Expansion of Prevention Service.
- Expansion of HAP Place-finding service for Homeless Families
- Providing case-by-case high quality housing advice through the recruitment of a new team of Housing Support Officers (recruitment process underway)

In addition to this, we are now proposing a specific and short -term strategy to expedite social housing allocations to families with historical priority under the old Scheme of Letting Priorities. Apart from the well-documented effects of prolonged stays in emergency accommodation on children, it will end the two-track approach (pre - and post - Scheme changes). While we are fully satisfied that the changes to the Scheme of Letting Priorities implemented in June 2018 was the correct approach, the full benefit and effects will not materialise until this particular cohort of families with the historical/legacy priority are housed.

1st April: 495 Families with Homeless Priority

Of the families with historic priority, a number are under offer.

Minus	Number	Comment
Housed	23	Includes all lettings that have already been signed for, and February and March cases that have not yet signed.
Under Offer	10	
Nominated (AHB/HAA)	16	This includes Iveagh and Parkside that have not come in yet, Orchard Meadows and others.
Cancelled App	1	Left, gone to other LA

Once the above exits are taken into account, the remaining 445 families have the following requirements.

Active Cases (including deferrals)	B	D	E	H	J	K	L	M	N	P	
2 Bed	139	48	56	23	35	11	0	4	0	0	
3 bed	35	9	22	8	12	10	2	3	0	2	
4 bed	8	3	3	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	
5 bed	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total	183	62	83	34	49	22	2	7	1	2	

Most of these households have up to three areas of preference but only the first is represented on the table above.

We are proposing to set aside 50% of all void properties being refurbished, or in the pipeline for such work in order to positively target the families who are currently in emergency accommodation and who have a historical priority in particular those longest there. As

Elected Members are aware, Dublin City Council receives 50% recoupment of refurbishment costs on void properties, but if this proposal is approved then we will seek 100% recoupment from the Department for all restored voids used for the purpose of expediting the housing of households with historic priority.

The breakdown of potential void properties currently in the pipeline is as follows:

Houses	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Central	9	3	4	16
North central	1	20	6	27
North West	18	23	8	49
South Central	19	11	1	31
South East	3	5	2	10
Total	50	62	21	133

Apartments	2 bed	3 bed	Total
Central	63	2	65
North central	7	2	9
North West	16	0	16
South Central	56	0	56
South East	44	2	46
Total	186	6	192

It is clear there will be a significant non-match between supply (From voids) and demand in some areas, none more so than the demand and supply of two bedroomed units in the North Central Area.

To succeed will require us to engage individually and intensively with the remaining families to consider their available options through social housing or possible alternatives supported by HAP. It is also proposed to ring-fence the small sized units coming from void restoration for single persons currently accommodated in hostels (some for a long time)

This proposed use of restored void properties is for a six month period with a full review being brought to the Housing SPC at that stage. All other aspects of the allocations scheme will remain in place.

The restored void properties in question do not include Acquisitions, Part V units or units provided by Approved Housing Bodies.

This proposal and all the issues relating to it was discussed at length by the Housing Strategic Policy Committee at its meeting held on Thursday the 11th of April.

While management did seek a higher percentage level of voids to be ring-fenced for this specific purpose the SPC agreed the following which I am now strongly recommending to the Elected Members of the City Council for approval:

For a six-month period the Housing Department will set aside 50% of all restored and suitable DCC social housing properties (former voids) for families currently residing in emergency accommodation, but only for those who had a homeless priority before the Scheme of Letting Priorities was changed in May 2018.

During this same period the small units that come on stream following void restoration (50%) will be set aside for single persons who are currently residing in

emergency accommodation (Hostels) and who also had Homeless priority before the Scheme of letting Priorities was changed in May 2018.

The Housing Department will report to every meeting of the SPC on progress from this initiative and on the impact that it is having on the general allocation scheme and the other categories of applicants.

This specific and short-term initiative will begin from May 2019 and continue to the end of October 2019 at which stage, it will be reviewed by the SPC, with a view to ending or extending it.

100% recoupment of refurbishment costs on void properties used for this particular purpose will be sought from the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government.

The same refusals policy as outlined in the Scheme of Letting Priorities will apply to this initiative i.e. two reasonable offers.

All other aspects of the current Allocations will continue as before.

**Brendan Kenny
Assistant Chief Executive
6th April 2019.**