



---

# Housing Allocations Policy – Flexi Care

---

Strategic Housing Services

---

March 2012

---

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Version Control  | Version 2  |
| Status of Policy | Awaiting cabinet approval  |
| Sponsor          | James Doe, Assistant Director Planning<br>Development and Regeneration |
| Author/Reviewer  | Julia Hedger, Group Manager, Strategic Housing                         |
| Approved         | Date approved by Cabinet   |
| Review Date      | One year after above date  |
|                  |  |

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This Policy covers the letting of Flexi Care housing for older people either provided by the Council or a Registered Provider. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.
- 1.2 Flexi Care housing is one of a number of options for older people, thinking of moving, who are in need of some personal care and/ or support, but who want to retain a degree of independence and are able to live safely on their own.
- 1.3 Flexi Care housing is usually a group of homes built on the same site, sometimes a mixture of flats and bungalows, providing specialist accommodation and planned care and support services delivered 24 hours a day. Occupants of Flexi Care accommodation let through "Moving with Dacorum" are secure tenants with full security of tenure.
- 1.4 Applicants for Flexi Care housing services will be assessed and prioritised in accordance with the Housing Allocations Policy, unless otherwise stated in this Policy.

## **2.0 Eligibility for Flexi Care Housing**

- 2.1 Flexi Care scheme units will be offered on the basis of the applicant's assessed care, support and housing needs.
- 2.2 The assessment will be carried out by a qualified member of Hertfordshire Adult Social Services and Dacorum Borough Council's Housing Services.

## **3.0 To be eligible applicants must:**

- Be over 50 years of age. Where a home is occupied by husband and wife or by two occupants in the same household, one person may be aged under 50.
- Have had a Community Care assessment which identifies Flexi Care housing as a suitable option for meeting identified care and support needs.
- Wish to retain, or regain, their independence.
- Be a resident of Dacorum or be able to demonstrate a local connection to the area.
- Have completed an application to the "Moving with Dacorum" housing register.

*Applicants may:*

- *Be frail or physically disabled.*
- *Exhibit some cognitive dysfunction, possibly with short term memory loss and some disorientation, provided they will be able to cope with the independent living aspects of Flexi Care and be likely to derive psychological benefit from living in this setting in preference to, for example, residential or nursing care.*
- *Suffer from depression or some other mental illness, which is effectively managed through appropriate treatment and support and be likely to derive psychological benefit from living in this setting and be able to cope with the independent aspects of Flexi Care.*

- *Benefit from living in this setting rather than a more specialist one.*
- *Have a degree of learning disability.*

#### **4.0 Applying for Flexi Care Housing**

- 4.1 People interested in moving into Flexi Care housing must complete a “Moving with Dacorum” housing application.
- 4.2 Where an applicant’s first point of contact is with “Moving with Dacorum” they will be asked to complete the housing application and advised of a referral to Adult Social Services to arrange a care and support assessment.
- 4.3 Where an applicant’s first point of contact is the Adult Social Services then they will be advised to complete a housing application form and “Moving with Dacorum” advised accordingly.
- 4.4 Applications will be assessed according to their care and support need and placed within the appropriate “Moving with Dacorum” Flexi Care band of Low, Medium or High care and housing support needs.

#### **5.0 Assessment**

- 5.1 To qualify for Flexi Care housing an applicant must meet the Hertfordshire County Council’s Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) eligibility criteria. Applicants will be assessed by Adult Social Services and Dacorum’s Housing department, under the assessment procedure to determine housing, care and support needs. The Assessment will determine whether the Applicant or Applicants have low, medium or high care and housing related support needs.
- 5.2 It is the aim of the service that each applicant should be subject to **one single assessment** to determine housing, care and support needs.
- 5.3 Assessment information will include:
- Up to date information on an applicant’s personal care needs, as well as full information on health, social needs, family support, any issues regarding lifestyle, culture or religion.
  - Information about how care and support needs are currently being met including information from hospital, paid and unpaid carers and other key professionals.
  - Why Flexi Care is the housing option being selected.
  - Aims and objectives of placement including any rehabilitative targets; the person’s own aspirations and wishes.
  - Risk assessments.
  - Any equipment or adaptation needs.

## **6.0 Community Mix**

- 6.1 In order to meet the aims and objectives of individual Flexi Care schemes, there is a need to maintain a balanced community. This means having occupants with different levels of care and support and a variety of needs.
- 6.2 There will be some occupants with care needs equivalent to those found in residential care and others with only housing support needs.
- 6.3 The guideline for such a balanced community should be 33.3% of occupants having high needs, 33.3% with medium and 33.3% with low needs. The level of need is determined by the amount of care hours required, i.e.:
- High needs equate to over 10 hours of care/support per week.
  - Medium needs equates to between 5 and 10 hours of care/support per week.
  - Low needs mean between 3.5 and 5 hours of care/ support per week.

## **7.0 Maximum dependency**

- 7.1 As a general rule applicants whose needs exceed those which can be met in residential care will not normally be eligible for Flexi Care. An applicant should not have, on the basis of medical or other professional opinion, on entry to the scheme:
- A level of physical or mental frailty exceeding that which can reasonably be met by the care provision within the Flexi Care scheme.
  - A requirement for frequent nursing care beyond the level available from the community nursing service.
  - A requirement for specialist health services which cannot be provided in a community setting.
  - A level of physical or mental frailty which is likely to cause serious disruption or risk to other tenants including:
    - Bedridden, immobile and unable to contribute physically to their own care, persistently wandering,
    - Physically aggressive.

## **8.0 Choice Based Lettings**

- 8.1 Flexi Care properties for rent will be advertised and let through “Moving with Dacorum” unless the following circumstances apply:
- 8.2 An Applicant is being let a property via a Direct Offer in accordance with the Housing Allocations Policy (Section 8.2.Excluded Dwellings).
- 8.3 The property has adaptations, or is purpose built with features and therefore only suitable for Applicants with very specific needs. This property will initially be excluded from the letting cycle in order to achieve the best match with an Applicant.

## **9.0 Advertising vacant properties**

9.1 Any advert for Flexi Care property to let will make it clear that:

- Only people who have an assessed need as eligible for Flexi Care housing can bid for it.
- Priority will be given to a particular care group. However, if no one in that care group bids for it then bidders in other care groups will be considered.

9.2 The Team Leader Housing Options will be responsible for determining whether or not a property should be included in the lettings process.

## **10.0 Offering Flexi Care Housing**

10.1 When Flexi Care accommodation becomes available the “Moving with Dacorum” Panel will consider all **eligible** applications.

10.2 The panel will consist of at least four senior members of staff to include a member of Adult Social Services from the Adult Care Team, Team Leader Housing Options and Team Leader Housing Services. In addition, there will be a standing open invitation to the local Primary Care Team.

10.3 Applications will usually be considered in order of their priority on the “Moving with Dacorum” housing register.

10.4 The panel will take into account the care and housing support needs of the applicant and also the needs of the whole community in each scheme

10.5 In considering which applicant to whom a vacancy can be offered, the panel will not necessarily make an offer to the person with the highest priority, as the balance of the existing community will be taken into account when making a recommendation.

10.6 In the event of an emergency, any member can convene a meeting by giving the other members 48 hours notice. Should this not be possible, they can if necessary gain their agreement via email, or by telephone, however, the same conditions apply in that all members must be in agreement with their proposal.

10.7 Following an offer, tenancies will be granted by the Council.

## **11.0 Moving On**

11.1 Where possible every effort will be made to enable occupants to live in their homes for life.

11.2 Occupants with deteriorating physical or mental frailty will be able to maintain residence in their home as long as care provision can be increased in line with their needs and/or additional community services can be made available.

- 11.3 If an occupant's needs change to the point that they can no longer be met by a combination of the services provided at the scheme, and those available from outside, relevant staff will discuss the situation with the occupant and his/her family and work towards a mutually acceptable solution.

## **12.0 Monitoring of Lettings of Flexi Care Housing**

- 12.1 The monitoring of lettings in Flexi Care housing will include:
- Void levels.
  - Refusal of offers by applicants (and reasons given).
  - The balance of care and housing related support needs within schemes.
- 12.2 This monitoring will be the responsibility of the Team Leader Housing Options, and it is expected that the Scheme Manager, and Team Leader Sheltered and Supported Housing will provide any necessary statistics and information.

## **13.0 Equality and Diversity**

- 13.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all our customers. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or any other grounds set out in our Equality and Diversity policy.
- 13.2 When applying this policy we will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities.
- 13.3 When applying this policy we will take the necessary positive action to reduce discrimination and harassment in local communities.
- 13.4 This policy and any other related publications of Dacorum Borough Council are available on request in other formats (e.g. in an alternative language, in Braille, on tape, in large type).