



Cumbria Choice Consultation Report – July 2010

1.0 Introduction

Cumbria Choice will provide access to social rented accommodation across the Sub Region of Cumbria. It is a partnership between the 6 local District Councils: Allerdale Borough Council, Barrow Borough Council, Carlisle City Council, Copeland Borough Council, Eden District Council, South Lakeland District Council and the 8 main social housing providers: Accent Housing, Derwent and Solway Housing, Eden Housing, Home Group, Impact Housing, Riverside Housing, Two Castles Housing and South Lakes Housing.

All the partners have agreed a common housing register and a common allocations policy. This enables people to gain access to the scheme through completing one application form and being assessed in accordance with one housing needs policy. The policy is based on 5 bands into which customers will be placed dependant on their housing need.

The changes to the way people will access social housing in Cumbria are significant and will have an impact on; new customers, existing tenants and local statutory and voluntary sector agencies and support groups (stakeholders). This is particularly so given that only two of the partner organisations currently operate a choice based lettings service.

Given the changes to the way in which social housing is to be allocated and the new housing needs policy it was recognised at

the onset that full and timely consultation with all stakeholders would be essential to the success of the Project. This led to a Consultation Plan being drawn up and agreed in the early stages of the Project. Whilst some of the proposed timescales have drifted the actions identified in the Plan have been followed and implemented.

2.0 The Consultation Plan

The consultation plan is set out in Appendix A. It includes a full list of stakeholders.

In addition to the external agencies, for the purposes of consultation stakeholders were given to include: tenants, waiting list applicants, and staff of the partner organisations, Local Authority Councillors, Registered Social Landlord Board Members and for the purposes of some of the consultation, the general public.

Consultation occurred in 2 phases; firstly prior to the writing of the Draft Allocations Policy and then secondly a formal consultation period on the Draft Policy.

In addition to specified consultation events a newsletter provided regular updates and information about the progress of the Project. Newsletters are produced and circulated to all stakeholders every 4 months.

3.0 Consultation prior to the Draft Policy

- The Tenant Panel

A tenant panel was established which consisted of Resident Involvement Officers and tenants from most of the partner organisations. The first tenant panel met on 29th July 2009 and continues to meet every 3 months. Support and enthusiasm for the project has continued throughout its development and the work of the Tenant Panel is seen as crucial to the decisions being taken. In addition the tenant panel have scrutinised the content of information/leaflets being sent out to tenants, waiting list applicants and the general public. Members of the Tenant Panel have been involved with staff in some of the working groups, for example the ICT working group.

Partner organisations have been responsible for keeping their own tenant and resident groups informed about the progress of the Project. Regular feedback on the Project is given at the Cumbria Tenant Forum by a tenant on the Tenant Panel.

Notes from the Tenant Panel meetings are in Appendix B.

- Stakeholder Events

In October 2009 three stakeholder events were held in the North South and West of the County. The purpose of these events was to meet with stakeholders, the statutory and voluntary sector agencies as well as other groups that represent and support specific minority and other needs groups, for example Awaz (the voice of BME groups in Cumbria).

Information was given about the proposed changes to the way social rented housing would be allocated and how it was anticipated that the scheme would develop and operate.

The remainder of the event was an opportunity for those groups who gave support to clients wanting to access housing to express their views and concerns and to suggest their solutions and proposals. Out of these 3 meetings came an action plan for how the Project should work with stakeholders and suggestions on actions that could be taken to ensure problems of accessibility to the scheme were overcome.

The Stakeholder Action Plan is included in Appendix C.

- Stakeholder Seminar

On the 20th November 2009 a stakeholder Seminar was organised for all stakeholders across Cumbria to attend, from staff and tenants to all external agencies. Caroline Keightley from Communities and Local Government attended to give the national picture on Choice Based Lettings.

Delegates were then given an opportunity to comment on the proposed scheme and in particular the Eligibility Criteria and the Banding system of priorities to be used within the Allocations Policy.

Appendix D – Feedback from the Stakeholder Seminar

Feedback in terms of the views and comments expressed in all these early consultation events were fed into the Project. They were taken into account in the drafting of the draft Allocations Policy that then went out to formal consultation.

4.0 The Formal Consultation Process

The period of formal consultation was 15th February 2010 to 13th April 2010. Waiting list applicants, external stakeholders and Local Authority Councillors all received a letter advising them of the consultation. Staff and tenants were advised by partner organisations through existing routes e.g. staff meetings, tenant groups.

The letter gave details of the website address where all information could be viewed as well as a telephone contact number to enquire further or request a paper copy of all the information, including the questionnaire.

The letter was available in a different format or language.

.....**people were sent letters**. It was translated into 7 languages to reflect the make up of minority ethnic groups in the County: Ukrainian, Portuguese, Mandarin, Bengali, Polish, Turkish, and Slovak. **people were sent the letter in a different format**.

The Cumbria Choice newsletter, partner organisation's newsletters to tenants and Local Authority newsletters to the public all contained information about the scheme and the consultation period. Posters advertising the consultation on Cumbria Choice were placed in all partner organisation offices. An article about the Cumbria Choice scheme and the consultation was sent to the local papers.

Information about the scheme was placed on all partner organisation websites. The information on the website and sent out (on request) included: the full draft policy, a summary guide to the policy, and a 'Frequently Asked Questions' leaflet. For those responding via the website there was a link to the questionnaire on all partner organisations' websites to the Home Group website. This site hosted the interactive questionnaire.

Printed copies of the Summary Scheme Guides and 'Frequently Asked Questions' leaflets were on display and available from the offices of all partner organisations.

The summary scheme guide, 'Frequently Asked Questions' and questionnaire are all attached to this report. The following consultation documents are included in the appendices:

Appendix E – Sample Consultation Letter

Appendix F – Newspaper Article

In April 2010 three consultation events were held again in the North, South and West of the County. Stakeholders, staff and Councillors were invited and the events enabled specific feedback to be gained on the draft policy.

The Tenant Panel in April concentrated on consolidating tenant feedback on the draft policy.

The majority of the questionnaire was a 'tick box' exercise and a lot of the answers were collated onto an excel spreadsheet and then converted to Pie Charts for ease of understanding. This document is attached to the report.

Appendix G – Feedback from the Stakeholder Events, Tenant Panel and open questions on the Questionnaire.

5.0 Amendments and the final policy

Feedback from the consultation was taken to a special all day meeting of the Project Board on 7th May 2010. This meeting looked again at the draft policy and all the feedback received. The Board then agreed certain amendments to the policy as detailed in the tables at Appendix G.

Following on from this the final policy was then sent to Andy Gale a consultant and practitioner to be considered from a legal and good practice perspective.

The Report from Andy Gale is attached as a separate document.

In response to this report a working group was established to work through his recommendations and to present their proposals to the Project Board. The Board then agreed the following amendments to the policy:

1. Legal requirements

- A section was added to the policy that defined the legal relationship between the partners – who owns the policy. It defines clearly the requirement by law for the local authorities to adopt an allocation policy and the formal status of the RSLs within the partnership.
- Section 4 – a new section was added because of the requirement to tie the priority needs categories back to the reasonable preference requirements of the Housing Act.

2. Policy changes;

- Band A – Demolition & Regeneration has been removed. Andy's advice was that this can and should be dealt with outside the policy. The rationale for this is that people should be offered 'like for like' accommodation and not be able to choose larger properties/other areas etc.
- Children leaving care will be placed in Band B and not Band C.
- Band B Homeless prevention remains in this Band but prior to being given Band B priority, customers would initially be given Band C priority for 3 months (when they accept a homeless prevention option) they would then be given Band B priority after 3 months if they were still facing homelessness. The reason for this was to prevent people from seeing a homeless application as an immediate route to a high priority Banding. (Clearly this is not the case for those who are actually homeless who will be awarded Band A priority).
- Band C – Those having been given Notice to Quit from a private tenancy – this group has been removed. They are not a reasonable preference category and any customers in the private rented sector with NTQ will be assessed under homelessness, homeless prevention or homeless with no priority need.
- Band D – This has now been split into 2 categories. Customers in Band D will be shortlisted according to any community contribution they make. E.g. Those contributing to the local economy (by being in low paid

work), those helping the community through voluntary work and those social housing tenants who have kept to the terms of their tenancy agreement by paying the rent on time and maintaining the tenancy in a good state etc. They will be placed at the top of the shortlist within Band D.

- Band E – this is a new Band and really just replaces the suspended category as Local Authorities are not able to suspend an applicant. Suspension is really just the same as exclusion and the LA can only exclude in the most serious of cases. Therefore those involved in less serious anti-social behaviour or with rent arrears below £1000 will be given reduced preference. In addition reduced preference is likely to be given to those who are intentionally homeless as well as those who do not have a local connection.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A – The Consultation Plan

Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Consultation Plan 2009

Consultation Plan

This consultation plan is concerned with all stakeholders: partner organisations, their board members, councillors, staff and tenants; and all external stakeholders. It covers consultation during the 18 month period of the project, both from the informal awareness raising and advice seeking to the formal consultation process. The expectation is that these groups will have influence over the development of the project and will remain part of the process up until the system goes live.

The plan is intended to meet partner organisations requirement to consult under Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 as well as the recommendation on consultation in the allocation of accommodation code of guidance.

The formal period of written consultation covers a 12 week period which is the time recommended by HM Government in their code of practice on consultation.

It is essential that partner organisations continue to keep their staff, board member/councillors and tenants aware of the project and undertake information sessions to these groups. It is important that all consultation is documented and an accurate record kept of all comments and queries, so that they can be properly responded to. A feedback sheet will need to be completed for any CBL consultation event held by partner organisations and returned to the Project Manager. This will ensure that the Project has an accurate record of all consultation that has taken place.

Aims

- To raise awareness of the scheme among those groups affected by the changes and engender their support for the project
- To ensure that stakeholder concerns and ideas can influence the proposals where appropriate and that feedback takes place.
- To ensure that timescales are communicated and understood by all those affected.
- To ensure that customers know how to access the system and how to apply for a property.
- To meet legal and good practice guidelines in relation to the need to consult.
- To minimise dissatisfaction or opposition to the Project.

Stakeholders

For the purposes of this plan stakeholders include; the partner organisations, Allerdale Borough Council, Barrow Borough Council and Accent HA (although not currently partners); their tenants, and staff. It also includes external stakeholders, who are listed in Appendix A.

The Process

- When to Consult

- a) Needs to take place when there is an opportunity to influence the outcome
 - b) Needs to be a formal written consultation process
 - c) Needs to be as early as possible but when there is sufficient information on which to consult
 - d) Informal consultation needs to take place prior to stakeholder event to gain understanding of issues that need to be considered
 - e) Additional consultation with specific groups e.g. homelessness service, BME groups
- Time scale of written consultation
 - a) 3 months consultation exercise
 - b) Publicise the start of the consultation exercise , so people/agencies able to prepare response and take advantage of the full consultation period.
- Clarity of scope and impact
 - a) Consultation document to be clear about the process, what is being proposed and the scope to influence the proposals
 - b) Clarity on what can be expected after consultation period ended: further involvement; training etc
 - c) Clarity on what able to influence and what already decided
 - d) Consultation document and included with this, questions on its content
 - e) An impact assessment and a race equality impact assessment to be completed
- Accessibility of consultation exercise
 - a) Consultation exercise should be assessable and targeted to those it is intended to reach
 - b) Essential to identify interested parties, early on in the process.
 - c) For diverse audience, several approaches may be needed.
 - d) What ways are available for people to participate
 - e) Document needs to be easy to understand; concise, self contained and free of jargon
 - f) Using the media will help to promote the consultation exercise and reach groups not identified

- g) Alternative versions; a young person's version; Braille; audio or visual version.
 - h) Ability for people to decide if consultation relevant to them – standard table of basic information
 - i) Use of various forms: regional; public meetings; online tools, use of partner organisations websites; focus groups etc
- The burden of consultation
 - a) Ease with which people can feedback eg answer questions on-line.
 - Responsiveness of consultation exercise
 - a) Careful analysis of responses and feedback provided to participants following consultation
 - b) All responses: those written and those from other sources; forums, meetings should be carefully considered
 - c) Following the consultation exercise need to provide summary of who responded and of the views expressed
 - d) Feedback to indicate what decisions taken in light of what was learnt
 - Capacity to consult
 - a) Need to give name of person to contact with any queries or complaints regarding the consultation process

Consultation Programme

Activity prior to formal consultation

Date	Activity	Objective	Responsibility	Co
May 09	Draft newsletter for staff and stakeholders	To inform about the start of the project	PM	Ye
29.07.09	Hold first tenant panel	Establish group and inform about role	PM &RIOs	Ye
August 09	Produce a consultation feedback	To record consultation & log comments	PM	

	sheet			
April – Nov 09	CBL awareness sessions for staff, members and tenants	Raise awareness and commitment to project	PO	Or
August 09	Produce FAQ document for staff, councillors, board members and tenant reps and tenants **	Raise awareness & reduce concerns and speculation	PM	
August 09	Brief staff on consultation process	To inform & maintain commitment to project	PO	
Sept 09	Produce second newsletter	To provide information & keep interest in project	PM	
Sept 09	Hold 3 local stakeholder meetings	To raise involvement & gain local perspective	PM & PO	
21.10.09	Hold second tenants panel	Consultation on policy and consultation process	PM & RIOs	
Oct 09	Consult with specific stakeholder groups eg BME groups	Ensure views of specific groups fed into project	PM & PO	
02.11.09	Hold Stakeholder seminar	To gain insight into any specific issues before formal consultation	PM & CWG	

** This information could also be sent out to applicants on current waiting lists as part of the review process to make them aware of the proposed changes.

Formal Consultation Period – 23.11.09 – 19.02.2010 (evaluation and feedback – March 2010)

Date	Activity	Objective	Responsibility	Con
Nov 09	Prepare Questionnaire	To gain feedback on Draft Policy	PM & CWG	
Nov 09	Media information	To raise general profile of project around the	PM & PO	

		Region		
23.11.09	Prepare policy in various formats and send out with questionnaire for consultation	For agencies to comment on policy and advise on any amendments/concerns	PM & CWG	
Nov 09 – Feb 2010	Brief boards & members on consultation process	To ensure broad acceptance of policy once completed	PO	
Nov 09	Prepare and send out section 105 notice with policy outline and feedback questionnaire	To meet legal requirements	PO	
Dec 09 - Feb 2010	Hold local consultation with staff	For staff to comment and raise any concerns/problems	PO	
Jan 2010	Newsletter	To provide information on Project	PM	
Jan - Feb 2010	Hold 3 local stakeholder meetings	Facilitate consultation and feedback process	PM & PO	
Jan – Feb 2010	Consult with specific stakeholder groups (H/less; BME)	Ensure views and feedback received from key groups	PM & PO	
20.01.2010	Hold third tenants panel	Assess consultation process & consult on methods of feedback. Inform on ICT	PM & RIOs	
March 2010	Compile and consider response to 105 consultation and feedback to Project	Ensure satisfaction with the Project	PO	
March 2010	Formally notify tenants of outcome of 105 consultation	Meet legal requirements	PO	
March 2010	Evaluate all feedback & incorporate as appropriate into policy	Ensure a comprehensive policy – supported and agreed by majority	PM & CWG	
March 2010	Send out feedback	Meet good practice code	PM & CWG	

Activity after Consultation Period

Date	Activity	Objective	Responsibility	Con
21.04.10	Hold fourth tenant panel	Consult on literature	PM & RIOs	
June – Sept 2010	Tenant road shows and tenant briefing sessions	Raise knowledge of scheme	PO	
June – July 2010	Events to raise awareness in local communities	Promotion of scheme	PM & PO	
June 2010	Send out last newsletter	Publicise launch date	PM	
July 2010	Media launch of project	Publicise new scheme	PM & PO	
21.07.2010	Hold fifth tenant panel	Consult on project publicity (literature) and their involvement	PM & RIOs	
July - Sept 2010	Briefing sessions for staff and board members/councillors	Increase involvement & commitment to project	PO	
August - Sept 2010	Hold 3 local stakeholder meetings	Keep commitment to project	PM & PO	
August – Sept 2010	Local Briefing sessions with Local specific stakeholders	Keep commitment to project	PM & PO	
21.10.2010	Hold final tenant panel	Keep involvement & commitment to Project	PM & RIOs	

Abbreviations used:

Partner Organisations	- PO
Project Manager	- PM
Consultation Working Group	- CWG
Resident Involvement Officers	- RIOs

Stakeholder List

Abbeyfield UK

postmaster@abbeyfield.com

Age Concern South Lakeland

admin@ageconcernsl.org.uk

Barnardo's

Roger Aitken
Children's Service Manager
South Lakeland Family Support Service
St Andrews
Ecclerigg
Windermere
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roger.aitken@barnardos.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

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Service Manager, Lakes Area
Lakes Area Office
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Fiona.Moncur@alzheimers.org.uk

CAB South Lakeland

Jez Such
Manager
Blackhall Road,
Kendal,
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LA9 4BT
jez.such@cabsouthlakeland.org.uk – left, no replacement as yet. 29/06

South Lakes Society for the Blind

Scott Hemsley
Stricklandgate House
Kendal
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Shelter

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Fairoak Housing Association

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Shakespeare Centre
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Citizens' Advice Bureaux
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Community Law Centre
reception@comlaw.co.uk

Age Concern
director@ageconcern-nwc.org.uk

Resolve Mediation
resolve.mediation@yahoo.co.uk

CASS
neilw@cass-cumbria.co.uk

United Response
rachelle.devlin@unitedresponse.org.uk

Glenmore Trust
mike.shand@glenmore.org

Croftlands
director@croftlands.org

Equality & Diversity groups
info@awaz.info
steveno@carlisle.gov.uk
stephend@carlisle.gov.uk

(this group e-mails the information onto a large number of people representing some of the minority groups within the county, as well as the police, NHS and Social services)

Supporting People
louise.jeffery@cumbriacc.gov.uk
(this is then emailed onto a group held by supporting people)

Cumbria Rural Housing Trust

jayne@crht.org.uk

judith@crht.org.uk

Westfield HA

lynn.h@dsl.pipex.com

Carlisle People First

liz@peoplefirst.me.uk

CADAS – Cumbria Alcohol & Drug Advisory Service

info@cadass.co.uk

Action for Blind

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Cumbria Deaf Association

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Let Go

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Probation

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Community Projects Carlisle

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Pathways

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Disability Association

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Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

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South Lakeland

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Mind in Furness
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Tel: 01229 827094
Kath.atkinson@mindinfurness.org.uk

Stonham Barrow
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Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria
Contact Dawn Sandham - Manager Tel: 01229 431366
Dawn.sandham@homegroup.org.uk

Cargomn, Barrow
Contact Janice Moore, Service Manager Tel: 01229 831686

Furness Homeless Shelter
Bath Street
Barrow
Contact Pat Chapples Tel: 01229 821134
furnesshomeless@yahoo.co.uk

CAB
Barrow-in-Furness
Tel: 01229 830367
supervisor@barrowcab.cabnet.org.uk

Project John
Bath Street
Barrow-in-Furness
Tel: 01229 832127 Contact Nikki Kell - Project Manager
admin@projectjohn.co.uk

Silverdale Street Unit
Young Peoples Hostel

Silverdale Street
Barrow
Tel: 01229 431850 - Contact Sharon Hogg - Manager Project
Sharon.hogg@accentgroup.org.uk

Age Concern Barrow
Contact Paul Brown Tel: 01229 831425

Safe
NSPCC
Phoenix Road
Barrow
Tel: 01229 838746 Contact Sue Ecott - Manager
bsafe@nspcc.org.uk

Multi Cultural Centre
Unit 14/16 The Mall
Barrow-in-Furness
Cumbria LA14 1HL
Tel: 01229 833933 contact Manager - Irene Troughton
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Social Services - Adult Services

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Nick Waterfield. County Manager, Physical Disabilities &
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Brenda Chambers, County Manager, Older People (Service
Delivery)
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Peter Woodhouse, County Manager, Commissioning and Service Development
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Paul Latimer, Lead Officer, Supporting People
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Police

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Charlie.wilcox@cumbria.pnn.police.uk

Appendix B – Notes from the Tenant Panels

July 2009

Matters raised by the Tenant Panel – 29th July 2009

- Information: this is an important aspect of the scheme and tenants want to ensure that there is good information to tenants and applicants. Landlords need to be honest and accurate about the information they give out about the property and the area. Very important that everyone has access to the information and that it is available in various formats, not everyone has access to a computer. People need to be contacted about what is available and staff need to help applicants, they cannot just wait for people to respond and deal with the system on their own.

There were concerns about older and vulnerable applicants and how information about the scheme would be passed to them. They had concerns about how we would get other agencies to support the scheme, such as Age Concern, Action for Blind etc.

- Nationwide RSLs: concern that if this policy covered the whole of Cumbria how would it affect RSLs that were nationwide. Would it mean that people applying outside of Cumbria to a partner RSL would have access to this scheme.

- Banding System: the group wanted more information on the banding system. Would an estate be banded – would it be the same band on the whole estate. There was confusion over this issue.
- Restrictions: wanted to know if restrictions would still apply. For example would bungalows for the over 55's still be kept for them.
- Availability of accommodation: tenants extremely concerned about the availability of accommodation. They felt that this scheme did not help those applicants who currently have to wait a long time for a property or those who may never get a property.
- Exchanges: How would tenants exchange to an area outside Cumbria, would this scheme help them.
- Areas of interest: people stated that in terms of the development of the scheme they would have particular interest in; the bidding and advertising process; the selection process; information associated with the scheme – keen to make sure it was in plain English. Tenants from Eden and South Lakeland said that they had been involved with some work in this area with their own landlords.
- The meeting: people felt that the meeting had gone well. They were happy with it being fairly informal. They wanted to ensure that everyone was encouraged to speak and everyone able to express their own point of view. They felt that there might be times when the Chair of the meeting should ask someone to stop speaking to give another an opportunity.
 - ✓ Wanted a basic code of conduct to be drafted for the meeting. This will be done and circulated to everyone for their comments before the next meeting
 - ✓ Agreed that Penrith would be a better place to meet as it was easier for everyone to get there.
- Influence: people wanted to know what difference and how much influence the panel would have on the development of the scheme.

- ✓ Requested that a member of the Project Board comes to a tenant panel meeting so that they are able to make their concerns known
 - ✓ They were keen to have a tenant representative on the Project Board but felt that it needed to be more than one person. Suggested that they should have a least a third representation on the Project Board.
 - ✓ Two tenants from the tenant panel willing to attend the next Project Board to hear what is discussed, particularly about tenant representation and influence.
- Other Schemes: people aware that other areas had gone through this process and thought that they could learn from other tenant's experiences.
 - ✓ Suggestion that we look at the possibility of tenants from areas with this scheme coming to a tenant panel meeting
 - Security: people expressed some concerns about the level of security on the computer system that would be used and issues of data protection
 - Bands: People were interested in the banding system, what it was and how it would work. Would like to know more about this.
 - Dates for the next meetings:

21st October 2009
20th January 2010
21st April 2010
21st July 2010
21st October 2010

October 2009

Tenants Panel Meeting – 21st October 2009

Matters Arising from the Meeting.

1. In response to the request from the last meeting a Code of Conduct had been drawn up. This was handed out to all representatives on the Panel.
2. Voting took place for:
 - i. Project Board – Joe Fielding (D&S) and Allan McIntosh (Barrow).
 - ii. ICT Working Group – Tony Slater (Barrow) and Lisa Webb (Barrow).
3. Representatives stated that they still wanted to hear from people who had been involved in a similar CBL scheme. This was raised at the last meeting and we still need to invite officers and/or tenants from another scheme who are willing to speak about their experiences.
4. Lynne from SLDC gave a talk explaining how housing providers prioritised customers for housing. It was felt that a guide setting out the proposed 'Bands' for the Cumbria scheme would be helpful.

Cumbria CBL Banding Scheme Consultation

1. The meeting then went into working groups to consider how groups of people should be prioritised and to look at the proposed Cumbria CBL scheme and to provide feedback.
2. The groups were asked to place different categories of people in a priority system. They were also asked to add in any other groups that they considered had a housing need and had not been included on the list of suggested priorities. The majority of housing need categories were given the same priority by each groups but there were some differences.
3. The groups were then asked to look at the proposed Cumbria scheme and indicate any particular groups of people with a need for housing that they felt 'Strongly' needed to be in a different Band or needed to be included.
4. The first matter that was raised was the word 'banding'. It was not liked by some of the group as they felt it was impersonal: that people were not be treated as people and were being put into 'bands' like 'animals'. Other suggestions were: category or group.
5. Areas where people disagreed with the proposed policy:

- Care Leavers should have a higher priority: Band A another group stated Band B+.
- People wanting to leave home to have their own independence (but having no other housing need) should have some priority: Band B
- Those moving from large accommodation to a smaller property to have a higher priority: Band A
- Those with more than one housing need to have a higher priority: Band A
- Those with a high Medical Need (not urgent need in Band A) to have a higher priority: B+
- Domestic Violence cases should not have as high a priority as Band A.

January 2010

Cumbria Choice Tenant Panel

Notes from the Meeting: 20th January 2010

1. An update was given by Denise on progress so far with the Project:
 - Computer (internet) provider – a decision is to be made on this by the Project Board on 21st January. An evaluation of the 2 providers, Abris and Locata had taken place in December. Tony Slater from the tenant panel had been represented on this group. The general view from the group was that Abris were the preferred supplier.
 - Allerdale & Barrow Bid – the project is still waiting for the official announcement as to whether Allerdale and Barrow have been successful with their bid for grant funding to enable them to join the Project. It is expected very soon.
 - Literature Group – a literature group has been set up to design the application form and all the guides etc associated with the project. It is requested that there be tenant representatives on this group. Donald Taylor (Eden Housing) and Pauline Charnley (Barrow Council) agreed to represent the Panel. The first meeting is at Eden Housing, Blain House, Penrith at 10am on the 16th February.
 - Consultation – the draft policy for the project will be going out for formal consultation. Tenant panel representatives were asked to raise choice based lettings at any meetings they

attended and to encourage people to complete the questionnaire. They were advised that their help would be requested in putting up posters to advertise the Consultation. Resident Involvement Officer will be sent all the relevant information and kept advised of the process so that they can pass on information to the tenant panel representatives.

- Ray advised that Joe Fielding was ill and would not be able to attend the tenant panel or be the tenant representative on the Project Board for some time. Ray agreed to take this role on. He will try to attend the meeting tomorrow. Allan McIntosh is able to attend.
2. Local Connection. Two groups looked at this part of the policy. Both groups stated that local connection was important but there were differences on the level of the connection.
- Representatives from Barrow felt that connection to the local authority area was sufficient.
 - Others stated that connection to a specific village was necessary and some felt that it should be extended to a specific estate.
 - One recommendation on the criteria was that the time people were resident in an area (to be classed as having a local connection) should be increased from 6 months to a year.
 - It was felt that the definition of close family needed to be clarified. eg. were step sisters/brothers included.
 - The special circumstances criteria needed to be clearer; otherwise it could be interpreted differently by different organisations.
3. 'Bidding' Process. One group looked at this part of the policy.
- Their view was that fortnightly advertising was preferred as otherwise the process would be too quick. They understood the need to let property quickly but felt that people would struggle with this speed of advertising. Would they have enough time to view a property and make a decision before properties were advertised again.
 - They felt that if this was a choice based process then people should be able to bid for as many properties as they wanted. They thought that there would not be that

many properties in areas people wanted so they should have unlimited bids.

- They felt that the 'personal touch' was very important and that automated telephone bidding was not necessary. They thought that young people would use text bidding.
- Properties should be advertised in local housing offices. Other places including supermarkets would be good places to advertise but only if the information was kept up to date.

4. Consultation Questionnaire. People completed the questionnaire and made the following comments:

- It was easy and straightforward to complete. There were no difficulties.
- They liked the set-out of the questionnaire with 'tick boxes'
- They understood the questions.
- They liked the size of the print – easy to read.
- They did not want any abbreviations – all words needed to be written out in full.

5. Frequently Asked Questions. In general people found this document fine. They felt it was easy to read and understand and answered relevant questions. Some amendments were requested to clarify certain points and these are to be included within the leaflet.

6. This year's meetings of the tenant panel are:

21st April 2010
21st July 2010
21st October 2010

They are all at Eden Housing, Blain House, Penrith from 10am to 12pm.

April 2010 Tenant Panel meeting - See Formal consultation feedback sheets.

Appendix C – Stakeholder Action Plan

ACTION PLAN FROM STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION MEETINGS

2009

	Proposals Made	Action to be Taken
Partnership Working		
How can we work together	1. Regular meetings	Set dates for meetings
	2. Newsletters	Currently issued every 4 months
	3. Bulletins	To consider issuing for specific pieces of news
How will you engage will the evolving policy	1. Will attend any meetings	Plan series of meetings
	2. Feed ideas into consultation process	Ensure process in place to collect & action ideas
	3. Maintain communication with Project	Establish points of contact (shared web page)
	4. Will consult with Client Groups	Develop method to feed t into Project
How much involvement do you want with the Project	1. ICT	Involvement in implementation to ensure accessibility
	2. Rural Consultation	Develop process for feedback from parishes
	3. Specific needs groups	Accessibility sub group
How can we maintain this joint working relationship	1. Communication	Plan to allow 2-way info.
	2. Formal joint working	Partnering agreements
Involvement		
What are you experiences of CBL	1. Problems	Means of raising & resolving problems
	2. Good feedback	Use Carlisle experience
	3. Questions (i) about scheme (ii) arising from the project	(i) Newsletters and updates (ii) Experience of other

		schemes
	4. Active involvement	Need scheme widely accessible to the community
What are the key jobs for the consultation group	1. Ensuring accessibility	Work to advertise scheme
	2. Link with wider groups	Use other newsletters; give talks;
	4. Ensuring all groups informed	Newsletters; simple explanation sheets; tear off slip for response
Who do you think should be on the consultation group	1. Support workers	Ensure support workers have opportunity to attend
	2. Service users	Develop methods of getting service user feedback
	3. Wider statutory & voluntary groups	(i) To ensure all agencies are contacted (ii) Ensure parish reps included in consultation
	4. Private landlords	Contact landlord forums
What do we need to communicate to the rest of the partnership	1. Changes	Regular communication to keep agencies updated
	2. Concerns	Process for feedback on specific issues e.g s106s
	3. Problems that occur with new scheme – who to contact	Need to have a central point of contact
	4. Expectation of agencies	Set up steering group with key agencies
How will the front line staff view this project	1. Positive if operates well – deals with practical concerns	Process for 2-way feedback
	3. Fear of change	(i) Keep staff involved (ii) Organisations to manage change
How will you inform your organisation about what you have learned today	1. Communication through; team meetings, managers meetings, email, intranet, newsletters	To ensure updates at all meetings and all information circulated
	2. Homelessness teams to be kept involved	To ensure information is sent out to these teams
	3. Wider feedback e.g. Trustees	To agree process of informing trustees, board
Accessibility		

What are the issues for vulnerable people	1. Exclusion	Develop clear policy with feedback
	2. Support	Look at developing floating support
	3. Access to the scheme	(i) Joint working with support agencies (ii) Well trained staff
	4. Different needs	Consult on different needs
	5. Rural Access	Look to ensure support in place
Any lessons to be learned from other projects	1. Contact with other projects	To develop links with other projects
	2. Involvement	Ensure all information is shared
What are the benefits	1. Single application form	In place to develop
	2. Choice	Ensure majority of properties advertised
	3. Low Turnover	Maximise choice to increase satisfaction
	4. Responsibility of customer - empowerment	Maximise choice and help customer to use system
	5. Transparency	Ensure clear system people understand and can see feedback on properties let
What are the downsides	1. Accessibility	(i) Liaison with other agencies (ii) Good publicity, plain English info, different formats e.g. Braille (iii) User friendly IT system Test with vulnerable clients
	2. Not County wide	Encourage Allerdale to join
	3. Abuse of system	Aim for good verification of customer details
	4. People may lose out	Need to monitor scheme ensure fair access
	5. Homelessness duty & moving people from temporary accomm.	Close working with homelessness sections and monitoring of outcomes

	6. Exclusion from all RSLs	(i) Clear policy with good feedback (ii) Good consultation
	7. Unrealistic expectations	(i) Good information on housing opportunities (ii) Strategic planning on housing development
What are the solutions	1. Support: good information and advocacy	Assess provision for this consult on info provided
	2. Monitoring	Agree monitoring aims and requirements prior to going live
	3. Advertising/awareness	Plan to detail how scheme advertised and promoted
	4. CBL Help Desk	Consider options to set up
	5. Education	Programme to educate young people on CBL
Any bright ideas	1. Input of specialist agencies	Continue agency involvement
	2. Link to housing provision and other strategies	Review CBL alongside other strategies
	3. Neighbourhood management	Use profiling and advertising criteria – local lettings
	4. Rural area needs	Develop local lettings policies
Monitoring		
Where should we be in 12 months time	1. Successful implementation	(i) Plan developed for working with others (ii) Training on CBL for agencies before it goes live
	2. Increased choice	Choice maintained as priority
	3. Flexible approach	Continue to review, develop and make changes
	4. Achievable aims	Set out scheme targets and monitor
How should we measure success	1. Feedback from customers	Process of consultation & monitoring at all stages
	2. Tenancy sustainability	Feedback & monitoring
	3. Fair access	Monitoring of outcomes

	4. Value for money	Compare with other schemes
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Issue Park

Issue	Action
People who do not have support	Take account of this in the action plan
Immediate move on	Investigate further: planned 'move on' or homelessness route
Difference of experience btw North & South re CBL	Take account of this in action plan
Is sheltered housing included in CBL – support funding	Yes: to monitor changes
Mechanism for equality impact assessment	EIA to be carried out
In the Bands 'move on' to be prioritised	Part of Stakeholder Seminar and consultation process
Need more accommodation in general	Outside project: feed back to partnership
How will individual budgets fit with CBL	Outside Project: feed back to partnership
Exclusion policy and implications for clients	Part of stakeholder seminar and consultation process

Appendix D – Feedback from the Stakeholder Seminar

Cumbria Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings
Stakeholder Seminar – 20th November 2009

Feedback from the consultation on the draft Allocation Policy

Session 1 – Eligibility

- Need to be aware that exclusion under CBL means exclusion from all providers.
- Information on eligibility through the website and in the literature must be clear.
- Need for transparency on exclusions.
- Examples of unacceptable behaviour need to be given.

- Issue for migrant workers in eligibility policy – can RSLs enter into an agreement with employers.
- Issue for those owed a housing duty but excluded from list

- Can individual RSLs deal differently with exclusions – accept applicant who might have been excluded.
- Can an assessment from the third sector on eligibility be considered – multi agency process to look at exclusions.

- Support agency role to assist with expectations of applicants.
- Can create added demand – feedback needed to inform applicant about choices for housing.

- Need to review exclusion process one system live.
- Ongoing involvement from service users/tenant groups required.

Offenders

- Concern that exclusion / suspension policy could make it harder to house offenders and those owed a homeless duty.
- Need to continue to pursue partnership working between organisations like Probation and housing services to achieve housing solutions for people with a criminal record (pointed out that Probation also care about public protection and would not hide information which could make someone a risk to a community).
- Housing people to whom a homeless team have a duty – arrears do not necessarily mean a homeless team does not have duty - and they cannot wait months for someone to pay off the arrears before they can be rehoused.

- Does the policy take account of existing protocols – Offenders and MAPPA?
- As common policy will lead to exclusion by **all** social landlords need for policy to be flexible enough to allow dialogue to deal with difficult cases.
- Policy needs to be clearer that criminal convictions /ASB are only taken into account when this clearly relates to an offence which could lead to a possession order.
- Concern that badly motivated clients of probation are poor engagers at best of times and will be difficult to motivate them to take part in CBL (especially if not a good chance of success).

Session 2 - Banding

- Banding scheme regarded as fairer.
- Requirement of 6 months in supported housing scheme too long if applicant ready to move earlier.
- Staff will need to be trained to understand self assessment of medical needs.
- Will CBL make meeting the needs of disabled people more difficult?
- Supported accommodation is an expensive resource that needs to be made available through good move-on therefore applicants should be in Band A.
- Concern for people not in top band – young couples wanting to start a family.
- Concern that policy encourages people to say they are homeless
- Home owners in Band C – those adequately housed in a cheaper part of the County could apply for housing in a higher priced area and be given priority for housing.
- Policy needs to link to other strategies – need more of a partnership approach
- Need to consider adaptations register

Rural Issues

- For rural areas – too wide a definition of local in some cases.
- Who defines the local connection?
- More prominent placing of 106s in policy.
- Banding policy should look to enhance sustainability of rural schemes.
- Lake District National Planning Authority – disparity between housing and planning legislation. Properties for local people not those in housing need.
- Need good publicity to rural areas; vacancies rare – notification to parish councils of vacancies.

Appendix E – Sample Consultation Letter

Partner Organisation Letter Head

Date as Postmark:

Dear Applicant

I am writing to advise you about changes we plan to make to the way we let our properties. The changes will not happen until the end of this year but as you are registered with us for accommodation we would like to tell you about them and hear your views.

The government wants Local Authorities to give people more choice about where they live, to simplify the lettings and to increase mobility across Local Authority areas.

In Cumbria the 6 District Authorities and 8 Housing Organisations have decided to work together to develop an allocations service that increases choice whilst providing a modern, simplified and transparent way of letting property.

1. At present properties are allocated to those on the housing register based on a points system. Under the Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Scheme, landlords will advertise their properties through the scheme and customers will then choose which homes they are interested in applying for. The points system will be replaced by a Banding Scheme for all

of Cumbria and customers will apply to one Common Housing Register.

Or

2. At present properties are advertised and allocated to those on the Housing Register according to our banding system. Under the Cumbria Choice Based Lettings Scheme, landlords will advertise their properties through the scheme and customers will then choose which homes they are interested in applying for. The current system will be replaced by a Banding Scheme for all of Cumbria and customers will apply to one Common Housing Register.

Although it will not increase the numbers of homes available, choice based lettings provide a more transparent and accountable way of letting homes, giving customers more choice in where they would prefer to live from the housing that is on offer. Customers will need to have a local connection to the area they are choosing. However 10% of properties will be offered to customers from across Cumbria.

To make sure this works well we want to hear the views of those who may be affected. Everyone from existing council or housing association tenants, applicants waiting to be housed, local residents and key stakeholders are invited to give their views.

To find out more about the Cumbria Choice proposals visit
WWW.....

If you would like printed copies of the consultation document, questionnaire and scheme guide please contact

The consultation process will run for 11 weeks from 15th February 2010, if you would like to comment you must do so by 30th April 2010.

Please accept my apologies if you have already received this letter. Where people have registered with other housing providers it has not been possible to prevent additional letters being sent.

Yours sincerely

Appendix F – Newspaper Article

NEWS RELEASE

February 2010

LANDLORDS JOIN UP TO OFFER A CHOICE OF HOMES

Fourteen affordable housing providers and local authorities are beginning to work as one to offer people in Cumbria a choice of homes to rent in the county. The initiative will give people who wish to rent a home a far wider choice of properties to bid for.

Choice Based Lettings Project Manager, Denise Waller, said: “We believe that people should have a choice of where they live. By introducing a Choice Based Lettings service throughout the region people will have the opportunity to be more flexible about where they wish to set up home.”

Currently those on a housing waiting list have to wait until they are contacted by a housing officer with an offer of a property. They cannot choose which property they are offered, they do not know what other properties may be available and they have no notice that they are about to be offered a property.

Under the new system landlords will advertise nearly all their vacant properties. This will mean that those who are registered for housing know what properties are available, can decide which properties they are most interested in and then apply for a particular property.

Consultation about changing to this new way of working will begin on 15 February and people can find out more by visiting the websites of your local authority, your local housing provider or Denise Waller on 016973 44816. Leaflets will also be available at these outlets.

Notes to Editors

Notes to Newsdesks/Reporters: For further information contact Alison Rose, PR Officer, on 0191 290 7852 or email alison.rose@homegroup.org.uk

Partners

The organisations involved in setting up the Choice Based Lettings scheme are

Accent Group
Allerdale Borough Council
Barrow Borough Council
Carlisle City Council
Copeland Borough Council
Derwent and Solway
Eden District Council
Eden Housing
Home Group
Impact Housing
Riverside Group
South Lakeland District Council
Two Castles Housing
South Lakes Housing ALMO.

The work is also being monitored and developed by Cumbria Supporting People.

Appendix G – Feedback from the 3 Stakeholder events, the tenant panel and comments taken from the questionnaire:

Local Connection

Origin of feedback	Feedback	Amendment
Eden scrutiny committee	Need to mention returning servicemen and their families as having a local connection.	✓
Tenant panel	Residency in area to be increased from 6mths to a year	Definition remains the same
Tenant panel	Better definition of family e.g. step sister/brother	..
North Event	Foster carers should be included in local connection policy	..
North Event	Local connection criteria narrow – some care leavers may have	Local connection to more than one area,

	connection to 2 areas.	accommodated in policy
North Event	Local connection very restrictive and prevents labour mobility	10% mobility across sub region
North Event	Will discriminate against offenders who want to move away from their area where in trouble before	In most areas local connection applies to Local Authority area only
North Event	Will enable people to stay in areas where they have family for support. Able to stay near work.	
West Event	Local connection important in areas of high demand – accepts limits choice	
South Event	Important for support networks.	
South Event	Can compromise housing need – restricts choice	
SLDC Councillors	Concern that people will use CBL to move to SLDC	Scheme will be monitored and subject to review
Calc	Concern that local connection can be abused – people in holiday lets to establish connection	..
SLDC Councillors	Sustainable communities very important re local connection	
SLDC Councillors	Question whether those in an area a long time will get priority over those who have moved in recently	Possible but need only to meet local connection criteria
Crht & Lake District planning	Concern that if property not offered to local people – future development will be compromised	Scheme will be monitored and subject to review

General

Origin of feedback	Feedback	Amendment
North Event	Some applicants (those with learning disabilities) should be able to make 2 nd application with another person – need to share accommodation (more than one choice of person to share with)	Cases will be dealt with outside policy
West Event	Difficulty with references from private landlords and the type of references given – can the reference be relied upon – does it lead to inequality. Some landlords	Subject to monitoring and review

	charge	
South Event	Private landlords can charge – sometimes information poor quality and takes a long time to receive it	..
Carlisle Access Group	Access issues to be more part of the policy – detailed actions to help people access scheme – separate appendix	Separate accessibility policy to be linked to allocations policy
Carlisle Access Group	Certain people (vulnerable) to be emailed/sent properties specific to them	✓
Carlisle Access Group	Certain people to be given extra time to view a property (2 days too short a period to respond to offer)	Outstanding issue which may be decided by individual partners

Eligibility

Origin of feedback	Feedback	Amendment
D & S Staff	Concern that prisoners can only access accomm after release from prison.	✓
South Event (Haverigg Prison)	Concern that prisoners not considered for accommodation until released	✓
Cass	At what point can prisoners register – suggest 6mths before release date. Need to know then if excluded/suspended	6 months prior to release
Cass	Accept the exclusion policy but need to ensure that it is monitored. Currently people excluded where offence would not lead to loss of tenancy.	Will be monitored
Cass	Want suspension to be time limited – forces organisations to give reasons for continued suspension	Customer able to re-apply at any time – amended to reduced preference
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov)	Needs to be clearer that criminal convictions and ASB only taken into account when could lead to possession order	Noted – part of joint working
North Event	A number of comments as to the relevance of police checks	Noted – part of joint working
South Event	Police checks expensive – who pays – may still not get housed – only a	Information sharing protocol with Police

	check on the past not the future – why necessary if have reference from landlord. How long would it take.	
West Event	Need to be clear when police checks required and who bears the cost.	Noted
North Event	Some criteria are subjective and risk prejudicing systematically against certain groups	..
North Event	Concern that the scheme will not maintain consistency in operating exclusion policy across the partnership	To be monitored
West Event	Senior person needs to make decision on eligibility	✓
West Event	Exclusion means the most vulnerable left homeless	Not accepted – part of joint working
North Event	How far back is debt considered for exclusion/suspension	Not time limited
West Event	Transfer tenants should not move with debt	✓
West Event	Exclusion for serious debt illegal – can only suspend	Incorrect

Bidding

Origin of feedback	Feedback	Amendment
Tenant Panel	Preferred fortnightly adverts, otherwise too quick	To remain weekly – will monitor
North Event	Concern over the amount of time available to bid	..
North Event	Need better accessibility for people to computers	Noted
North Event	Improved support to help people bid eg. proxy bidding	✓
Calc	Term bidding implies financial transaction – very misleading.	Noted – ‘express an interest’ used
Carlisle Access Group	Wants 2 week bidding cycle	Noted – will monitor
	<i>In general all comments about ‘bidding’ related to issues of accessibility which will form part of the implementation of the scheme. They were not policy issues</i>	

Banding

Origin of feedback	Feedback	Amendment
Tenant Panel	Care Leavers should have a higher priority	✓
South Event	Care leavers should be in Band B not C	✓
North Event – Cumbria Youth Support Services	Considerable contact and concern from this service that care leavers only in Band C	✓
Tenant Panel	Priority to be given to those wanting to leave home	Limited priority but community contribution
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov)	Concern for young couples starting a family	Limited priority but community contribution
North Event	Priority for young people wanting to get on housing ladder	Limited priority but community contribution
South Event	Does not take account of young people 18 – 25 yrs	
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov)	6 months in supported housing too long if person ready to move on	Noted – too monitor
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov) - Croftlands	Supported accom expensive resource – need people in move on accommodation to be placed in Band A	Noted – too monitor
Cass	Move on accommodation is essential to operation of supported housing projects. County Council supporting people commit large amounts of money to these projects. Concern that projects will grind to a halt if not given Band A for move on.	Noted – too monitor
D & S Staff	Forces personnel – CLG & MOD new guidelines on access to accommodation for the forces	Noted – too monitor
South Event	What about ex-servicemen with mental trauma – where are they in banding	Included but not specifically – to monitor

North Event	Concern that the homeless (no roof) only in Band C	Noted – too monitor
North Event – homelessness officers	Where does homelessness prevention fit in	✓
South Event	What band are those with learning disabilities in.	No specific band
North Event	Where do people with learning disabilities living with older parents (no longer able to cope) who has to move fit in	According to policy or as special discretionary move
Learning Disability partnership Board	How do people with LD apply for housing when 2-3 people need a home tog with 24 hr support	Outside CBL
D&S Staff	Key worker status (affordable homes) – what band	Within homeless
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov)	Concern homeowners in adequate housing able to gain priority if apply for hsing in high priced area	✓
Stakeholder Seminar (Nov)	Sustainability of rural areas – properties for local people not those in housing need	✓
Stakeholder Seminar	Cumulative Need – clarity req. possibility of some combinations being illogical	✓
North Event	More priority/help for ex offenders and those leaving prison	✓
North Event	Where do those in tied accommodation fit in	No specific Band – according to circs. – homeless etc
South Event – Renewals officer	Properties in disrepair: Band C does not mention disrepair at all; unsure about definition in Band A	✓
Law Centre	Src. 167 1996 H. Act: reasonable preference to non-statutory homeless. States they should be in band B not C	Not clear
Law Centre	More explicit on how those with learning Disabilities will access scheme/housing	Noted

The Questionnaire

Consultation Feedback Report

Feedback	Policy Amendment	
	YES	NO
Views on the Lettings Policy		
Single professional people that have no problems i.e. do not get pregnant every year, are not in abusive relationships or in trouble with the law will have no chance of getting any decent affordable accommodation in the area.		
i have been waiting 13 years to get moved,i am disabled,but single mums,get first choise....because im a single male ill get put to the back of the list..		
Everyone should be equal, whether they are homeless, disabled or just want a new home		
AS there are so few disabled properties or ones that could be made suitable it seems unfair that an increase in the eligible applicants will happen. I have been waiting 6 years, the last one being an urgent referral and this new scheme puts disabled people at a disadvantage.		
Many local people need realistically affordable housing. Private rents are too high and many landlords will not accept tenants who are eligible for housing benefit, no matter how small their entitlement.		
The needs of disabled people unless more suitable properties are being built. The scheme will make waiting time for suitable property possibly even longer.		
Single parents (ie the non resident parent) like myself who have regular custody of children but are totally disregarded when it comes to housing needs. My case is typical, I have my 2 children every weekend (Friday to Sunday) and most school and bank holidays....I have a son and a daughter but only get considered for a 2 bedroomed property. As society is more and more fragmented surely this needs to be addressed, my son and daughter should have a room each when they are here and not force me to sleep on the sofa		
you might aswel close your books to anyone who are in band B to D cause you will only house needy causes...		
IT SEEMS THAT CURRENTLY PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE NOT TO WORK ARE GIVEN PRIORITY OVER THOSE OF US (INCLUDING MYSELF) WHO DO WORK AND WANT TO BE RE-HOMED FOR GENUINE REASONS. I WORK IN A HOSPITAL PHARMACY AND RECENTLY HAD TO CALL OUT THE LOCAL POLICE AS A MAN WHO LIVES ON THE SAME STREET HAD BEEN 'WATCHING' ME AND HARRASSING ME. THERE IS ALSO DRUGS ON MY STREET AND BECAUSE OF WHERE I WORK I DO NOT FEEL SAFE. I HAVE ASKED TO BE RE-HOMED BUT I CURRENTLY ONLY HAVE 29 POINTS AND THEREFORE		

FEEL LIKE MY SAFETY DOES NOT COME FIRST.		
The whole problem of housing association and council lettings is that only a few people select the new tenants or buyers. This can easily be corrupted. Also, elderly people who may have dementia would find it extremely difficult to select or bid.		
.	Policy Amendment	
Housing needs not included in the Lettings Policy	YES	NO
There should be priority given to couples wanting their first home.		
housing for disabled		
Affordability - renting privately is unaffordable in the local housing market		
stop selling off council housing		
There will always be housing needs that have not been anticipated by housing authorities. There should be flexibility in the scheme to allow for the unexpected		
autistic people		
Wheelchair users should be given priority for suitable property as this is very limited.		
Are any housing needs placed in too high a Band?		
All...!!!!		
RE-HOMING DUE TO THE CHOICE OF NOT WORKING		
All of them should be in an equal band		
Band A (3) - people suffering severe harassment from neighbours		
Band A (5) - statutorily overcrowded		
disabled , incapacity		
Are there any housing needs in too low a Band?		
local connection and need		
connection to the area by family members		
being from out of the area it may be that some one may need to move to the area but is unable to afford the bonds or prices to move		
Medical needs		
Band C (5) - those needing to move to another area (for work or support)		
Band C (7) - households in poor or unsuitable		

accommodation		
Band C (8) - people with medical or social need		
autistic people		
People with a medical and social need even though it isn't considered urgent.		
drug addicts , ex convicts , trouble makers		
	Policy Amendment	
Any other comments on the Lettings Policy	YES	NO
I feel STRONGLY that this way is so unfair and will only cause a carry on someone who has been on the list for years CAN AND WILL be bumped by someone who has just joined. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO EXPLAIN HOW FAIR THIS IS...!!!!!!!		
No other than I am looking to move to Morecambe as my grand children are there and I desperately want to be closer as my daughter would be grateful for an extra pair of hands. Also my current council property is under occupied i have a 3 bed and I only require a 2 bed now - but would prefer a large garden so I can grow my own veg etc!		
this is a great way of advertising properties that you have to rent		
Need to check annually on every landlord, so they treat the lettings policy, not just for them selves		
Single people get a raw deal		
every year people living in HA or Council housing should be sent a letter telling their point score (per person or couple) even if they don't want to move		
I am very pleased about the proposed changes. My present accomodation is in Copeland but the nearest village/town is in South Lakeland. I would hope to be housed in south Lakeland.		
I think this policy is going to be unfair on disabled people as it will increase the numbers of people for suitable property which is wrong when so few suitable properties exist		
not really given information as to how people get the houses they've been given .		
Re: the bands for housing needs		
There does not seem to be any specific mention of a change in financial circumstances as the cause for applying for housing. Is this included in 'medical and social' needs?		
I would just like to point out that I think I'll be penalised by the policy means that I've been on the rehousing list for almost 2 years. I'm second on the list I'm told to accordig to the points system but that won't be taken into account. (can't		

understand the person's writing...)		
I have made positive and negative responses, but actually feel that lettings policy should not be changed.		
page 18 last paragraph under item (f) did not make sense		
page 20 item (e) SECOND SENTENCE - NEEDS TO STATE THAT A NEW addition to household does not include a baby that is born to tenants as deliberate overcrowding.		
page 25 - 4.5 re advertised properties need to monitor why ? no applicants could there be other circumstances affecting this ie local unease about the area history of asb and neighbourhood?		
page 22 3.4 last bullet point does this mean a tenant will be housed to a property which has been used by others for crime (drugs) or asb - if so would this not put a vulnerable tenant into a previously high problem property.		
Just that the current one I am part of in Riverside acknowledges that I have a need to be moved but have been trying to move for over 4 years and never get told where I am on the scale of things (am I at the top or bottom of the list). I apply regularly online for properties but never get any feedback (it could be included in the next weeks online advert letting people know which ones had gone and to which group in need) I was advised to take the first property offered when I was homeless and was greatfull for any house at all but seem now stuck here where I don't want to be.		
I hope it works it is a sensible venture that with the correct "manpower" really shoud improve the situation.		
I think it is a great idea, but should not be on a point system, rather a 'needs' system, for instance, work, family, schools etc.		
Comments on the clarity of the Scheme		
too many landlords get away with too mant things, they should be the upperhand at it is ter property.		
This system means that people will have to constantly apply weekly/fortnightly for accommodation. it is quite ridiculous to expect people to do this for a long length of time. There will be some properties in certain areas that have a poor reputation that will not have many applicants.		
What will you do with the difficult to let properties?		
Would like to see property advertised on line as is the case on the wirral. Not clear if this will be the outcome with the cumbria choice scheme.		

Comments on one scheme for the whole of Cumbria		
As i explained earlier this is just not fair you are picking and choosing who gets houses...!!!		
The people that should get priority are the ones applying for accommodation close to where they work. This reduces commuting miles.		
For disabled people as said in previous answers it is wrong unless more suitable properties are to be built		
I feel that it is going to make it more difficult for people to be allocated houses as there will be more people from all agencies combined.		

It is important for people to move easily around Cumbria				
Strongly Agree	Agree	No View	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28	34	6	3	0

Total of 71 replies