

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

LOCATIONAL PRIORITY POLICY

General

The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for the fair allocation of the limited supply of affordable temporary accommodation within and close to the London Borough of Lewisham. This policy applies to temporary accommodation secured under Part 7, Housing Act 1996 and under Part 3, Children Act 1989.

The award of in-borough or 90 minutes travel priority does not guarantee the provision of temporary accommodation within those areas. Where the household is in receipt of welfare benefits, this may place additional constraints on the availability of affordable accommodation, including constraints on its type and location.

Nothing in this policy should prevent a household from considering other housing options, including asking the Council for advice, support and assistance in relocating to more settled accommodation.

In-borough priority

1. Priority for available in-borough accommodation will be given to certain households who have a compelling need to be housed within Lewisham.
2. Such priority does not guarantee an in-borough placement, but should suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give that household priority over others without that assessed priority.
3. Applicants and their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for in-borough priority:
 - a. They are receiving treatment for a physical or mental health condition from a specialist hospital unit which cannot be transferred to another NHS service or they are at a critical point in their treatment.

- b. They have a longstanding arrangement to provide care and support to another family member in Lewisham who is not part of the household. Carers will need be in receipt of Carer's Allowance and/or the person they care for must be in receipt of middle or high rate DLA care component or the daily living component of PIP.
- c. Children subject to a Child Protection Plan in Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to a child's welfare.
- d. Children subject to an Education Health and Care Plan in Lewisham which cannot be transferred to another local authority without causing serious detriment to a child's welfare.
- e. Other circumstances which demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need that cannot be met outside the borough.

90 minutes travel priority

- 4. Priority for accommodation within 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport ("90 minutes travel priority") will be given to certain households who have a compelling need to be housed within that area.
- 5. Such priority does not guarantee a placement within 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport, but should suitable and affordable accommodation be available within that area, it does give the household priority over others without that assessed priority.
- 6. Applicants or their household members to be housed with them who satisfy one or more of the following criteria will qualify for 90 minutes travel priority:
 - a. They have been continuously employed within 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham for 16 hours or more per week in a role which cannot be transferred to another area. Applicants must have been employed in this role for six months prior to the date of application and remain so employed. Women who are on maternity leave from employment and meet the above criteria will also be prioritised for placements within 90 minutes

travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance from their place of employment, by public transport. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance, by public transport, from their place of employment at the time of application.

- b. Children who are enrolled in GCSE, AS, or A level courses in Lewisham, with public exams to be taken within the next this academic year. Wherever practicable we will seek to place such households within 90 minutes travelling distance of their school or college, by public transport.
- c. Other exceptional circumstances, where they demonstrate an exceptional and compelling need to be housed within 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport.

No locational priority

- 7. Applicants who meet none of the above criteria will be offered properties further afield than 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport, when no suitable property is available within Lewisham or within 90 minutes travelling distance of Lewisham by public transport.
- 8. The Council will have regard to the principal needs of any children in the household, and to the need to safeguard and promote the children's welfare. In particular, regard will be had to any disruption to schools, medical care, social work other key services and other support. However, due to the scarcity of temporary accommodation nearer to Lewisham, of themselves these factors will not normally confer locational priority.