Your Guide to the Housing Register

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INTRODUCTION
We have a list of people who have applied to us for housing, called the Housing Register. We have rules about who can join the register, who gets priority for housing and how applications are dealt with. These rules are our legal duty under the Housing Act 1996 and the Housing Act 2004.

IMPORTANT: Anyone who wants a Council home or to be nominated for a Registered Provider home in Stevenage must fill in an application online to see if they are able to join the Housing Register

Equal Opportunities
We aim to ensure that all people have equal access to our services and are not treated less favourably on grounds that cannot be justified.

YOUR APPLICATION
To help us to let our homes to people who need them the most, we have a points scheme based on housing need. Applicants on the Housing Register will be awarded points and then placed in either Band A or Band B of the register. You will find more details of the points scheme and bands later in this guide.

Can I apply for housing?
You can apply to join the Housing Register as long as you are at least 16 years old, unless:

• you are subject to immigration control
• you have not given us all the information we need or have given us false or misleading information
• we are satisfied that you or someone who lives with you has behaved badly enough to make him or her unsuitable to be a tenant

Please contact the Lettings Team (see How to contact us on page 21) if you are not sure if you qualify to join the Housing Register.

IMPORTANT: If you give false information on your application form, or withhold information we have reasonably requested, we may cancel your application and you may be liable to prosecution. If you are housed because you gave us false information, you may also lose your home
Local Connection
If you have a local connection you will be registered in Band A. You have a local connection if:

• You have lived in Stevenage for six of the last twelve months
• You have lived permanently in Stevenage for three out of the last five years
• You have permanent employment in Stevenage for at least 16 hours a week
• You live permanently in a Social Services residential home in Stevenage
• You are a student studying away from home but normally live in Stevenage
• You normally live in Stevenage but are temporarily living away from home:
  ᵃ Receiving medical or respite care
  ᵃ Living in supported housing
  ᵃ In prison
  ᵃ Keeping to bail conditions
  ᵃ Serving in HM Forces

You will not have a local connection if you are living in Stevenage temporarily, for instance on holiday or receiving hospital treatment here. If you do not live or work in Stevenage you can still join the Housing Register but you will be registered in a lower band of the Register.

**IMPORTANT:** **YOU** will be required to provide proofs that you have a valid local connection before considering you for an offer of a new home.

The Banding System
Once we have accepted your application to join the Housing Register, your application will be placed in either the main section of the register (Band A) or the reserve section of the register (Band B).

Your application will be in Band A if:

• You have a valid local connection (see above) and there are no other reasons why you should not be in Band A
• You have been accepted onto the register by the Senior Officer Housing Needs Panel
• We have accepted a duty to house you under Homelessness legislation

Your application will be in Band B if:

• You do not have a valid local connection
• You are a Council or RP tenant from outside Stevenage
• You are already a joint tenant of a property
• You are a homeowner or former homeowner

**IMPORTANT:** Applicants in Band B will be considered for a property only if there is no demand from applicants in Band A.
Joint applications
If you are married or are civil partners, or have lived together for at least 6 months with your partner you can make a joint application to join the Register.

How do I apply?
You can pick up an application pack from the Customer Service Centre (CSC) at Daneshill House, or telephone us and we will send one to you. The application form can also be downloaded from our website www.stevenage.gov.uk.

The application pack contains all the other information you need to complete the application form correctly. It is very important you answer all the questions and that the information you give us is correct. You must also provide the ORIGINAL documents of ALL the proofs of identity, residence etc that we ask for.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have not provided ALL the proofs we asked for, we will send the proofs that you did provide back to you. Your application will not be registered until you return ALL the proofs we need. ONLY original documents are acceptable.

You must also provide the ORIGINAL documents of ALL the proofs of identity, residence etc that we ask for - once you have completed a form you should bring the proofs in to the Customer Service Centre (CSC) so that your original documents can be photocopied and handed back to you immediately. If you are unable to bring them in person, you can post them to the Lettings Team.

**IMPORTANT:** Please make sure that you are given a receipt for all your documents and that you keep the receipt in a safe place for future reference.

How will you deal with my application?
Once we have received your application and ALL the proofs we need, we will decide if you are able to join the Housing Register. If you are able to join the housing register your application will be registered, your points will be worked out and we will decide if your application will be in Band A or Band B, and your application will be validated. This can take up to 10 working days. We will then write to you and tell you how many points you have and what band you are in. If you do not get this letter, or if you think the details are wrong, you should contact the Lettings Team urgently. If you are not able to join the Housing Register, we will write and tell you why.

**IMPORTANT:** Please keep your confirmation letter in a safe place. It is your proof that you have a Housing application.
Applications On Hold with time points
Sometimes even if you are on the Housing Register and have been given points, you will not be considered for housing at certain times. We may place your application ‘On Hold’ if, for example:

• You have rent arrears with Stevenage Borough Council or any other Council or Registered Provider, either now or from a previous tenancy
• The condition of your present home means that you are in breach of your tenancy agreement with Stevenage Borough Council or another Council or Registered Provider
• We ask you to return an annual review form and you do not respond
• You update your application but do not provide the necessary proofs
• You are sent to prison – your application will be ‘On Hold ‘from the date of your conviction until you contact us on your release. You are not eligible to accrue time points for the time spent serving a custodial sentence.

There are other reasons why an application may be on hold. If we decide your application will be on hold, we will write and tell you why. While your application is on hold you are not eligible for properties through the HOME4U scheme.

Applications On Hold without time points
Sometimes we will not consider you for housing and will put your application on hold without time points. The application will not receive points when it is put on hold if, for example:

• You write and tell us that you not do want to be housed for the time being
• You have asked for a home that is of a size or type that you are not entitled to
• You have no housing need as you already have a home that is adequate for your needs eg 1 bed flat to 1 bed flat
• You do not reply to an offer of housing or when we ask you to contact us to discuss your application
• You are in the process of buying a home (including exercising your Right to Buy)
• You are in breach of your tenancy agreement with us, or with another Council or Registered Provider.
• You have unreasonably refused two offers of accommodation made under choice based lettings (CBL). (The normal deferral period for this is twelve months.)

There are other reasons why an application may be deferred. If we defer your application we will write and tell you why.
Cancelled Applications
You can cancel your Housing Register application by writing to the Lettings Team. We will cancel your application and remove you from the Housing Register if, for example:

- you fail a suitability test
- you provide false information or withhold information.
- You are re-housed from the Housing Register or re-housed by way of a mutual exchange.
- We ask you to return an annual review form and you do not respond within the specified time period
- You buy a home (including exercising your Right to Buy)

There are other reasons why an application may be cancelled. If we cancel your application we will write to you at your last known address and tell you why.

What happens if I intentionally make my housing situation worse?
If you deliberately make your housing situation worse and consequently gain more points or make yourself eligible for the offer of a home, we will not give you the extra points or priority for 12 months.
This will include, for example, failing to seek larger accommodation if your family size increases.

What happens if I am not a British citizen?
British citizens and nationals from the European Economic Area who have a right to live in the U.K. may join the Housing Register (There are some restrictions depending on the country of origin).

People from outside these areas who have been granted “indefinite leave to remain in or enter the U.K.” and who have “recourse to public funds” can normally join the Housing Register.

People outside these groups cannot normally join the Housing Register.
If you are not a British citizen we must ask for information and supporting documents from you so that we can decide if you are eligible to join the Housing Register.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How does Home4U work?
HOME4U is the choice based lettings scheme that we use to let our available homes.

Once your application has been validated you can log onto the HOME4U website and look at the properties available in the town. All available properties are advertised every Thursday. The adverts include wherever possible a picture, along with a short description of the property.

If you find a property you would like to move to then as long as you are eligible for it, you can ask to be considered for it - this is called ‘bidding’.
You can bid for properties in several different ways - via the website (www.home4u.org.uk), an automated telephone line, or by text message. Once bidding has closed all the bids for each property are put in order of band, points total and registration date. If you are at the top of more than one list you will be invited to choose which property you wish to be offered after the usual checks have been made.

All offers of sheltered accommodation are subject to a Sheltered Housing Assessment.

**IMPORTANT:** If you are accepted onto the Housing Register, you will be sent the Home4U Scheme Guide which explains in more detail how the scheme works.

**What type of home can I bid for?**

You will be considered only for a home that is right for your household. The table below tells you the size and type of home that will normally be offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Property</th>
<th>Family Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio flat</td>
<td>Single person without access to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-bedroom flat</td>
<td>Single person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single person with access to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couple with no children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couple with access to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-bedroom flat</td>
<td>Family with one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Related non-married couple (e.g. brother and sister)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couples with medical priority for separate bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-bedroom flat, maisonette or house</td>
<td>Family with one child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-bedroom house</td>
<td>Family with two children of the same sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-bedroom flat, maisonette or house</td>
<td>Family with two or three children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large three-bedroom house</td>
<td>Family with three children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-bedroom house</td>
<td>Family with four children (two of each sex or four of one sex)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family with four children (three of one sex and one of the other) or with a 10 year age gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four or five-bedroom house</td>
<td>Family with five or more children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered Studio flat, one-bedroom flat or bungalow</td>
<td>Single person aged 60 or over or in need of specialised disabled accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered One-bedroom, two person flat or bungalow</td>
<td>Couple where at least one is aged 60 or over or in need of specialist disabled accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheltered Two-bedroom flat or bungalow</td>
<td>Couple where at least one is aged 60 or over with medical priority for separate bedrooms, or family in need of specialist disabled accommodation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**How long will I have to wait?**
We cannot really answer this because your waiting time will depend on
- which band you are in
- how many points you have
- the size and type of home you are waiting for
- the area you want to live in
- whether or not you are bidding
- the supply of suitable properties
- the demand from other applicants

There is a ‘feedback’ section on the Home4U website which should help you understand the housing situation in Stevenage. You will be able to see how many properties of each type and in each area are available, how many people bid for them and the band and points level of the successful applicant.
Home4U does not increase the number of Council homes available so people may still have to wait a long time to be housed. If you decide that you may not be successful, you can look at other ways to solve your housing situation. Contact Housing Advice at Stevenage Borough Council for more advice.

**How do I keep my application up to date?**
If there are any changes to your household, accommodation or personal circumstances you must contact the Lettings Team at Stevenage Borough Council and let us know. It is very important that we know about any changes as it may affect your band, points level, or the type of home you can move into. You may be requested to provide proofs to confirm the changes.
From time to time we review applications. If you do not respond to a review we will send you a reminder after 21 days. If you do not respond within another 21 days we will cancel your application.
We will write to you at your last known address and tell you we have done this. We will send the letter by recorded delivery.

**IMPORTANT:** Remember, it is up to you to make sure that the information we hold about you and your household is correct and up to date.

**What if I am homeless or about to become homeless?**
We can give you help and advice and in some cases we may be able to provide you with emergency or temporary accommodation. Please contact our Housing Advice Section (see *How to contact us* on page 21 of this booklet) to discuss your situation.
Homeless applicants who have been found temporary accommodation by Stevenage Borough Council are included in the Home4U scheme and must bid for properties.
BIDDING, OFFERS AND NOMINATIONS

Who can provide me with a new home?

The Council and Registered Providers (RPs) participate in the Home4U scheme. RPs are currently the only providers of new social housing in the town and work in a similar way to the Council. (‘Registered Providers’ include Housing Associations and also used to be known as RSLs)

All RPs are currently participating in the Home4U scheme and when these properties are advertised, it is made clear in the advert. RP properties are sometimes offered on different types of tenancy, which will be explained in the adverts.

In your application you can also tell us if you would be interested in shared ownership. This is where you buy a share in a home (usually 50%) and rent the remaining share from a RP. A frequently asked questions sheet about shared ownership is included in your application pack and you can find out more on our website www.stevenage.gov.uk or at www.leavalleyhomes.co.uk. Telling us now that you may be interested does not commit you in any way.

What will happen before I can be made an offer of a new home?

We may visit you at your present home before you can be offered a new home through the Home4U scheme. You are free to bid for properties before you have had a home visit. Home visits may occur after you have appeared at the top of a bidding shortlist for a property.

**IMPORTANT:** If we visit you at home this will not necessarily mean that you have appeared at the top of a shortlist. It could be a long time before you have enough points to bid successfully on a property.

During this home visit we will make sure that all the information we hold about you and your household is correct and up to date. If necessary we will ask you to provide us with more information.

If you are a tenant of the Council waiting for a transfer we will inspect your present home when we visit. You must maintain your Council home to a reasonable standard. This means that your home must be clean, in a good decorative condition and a good state of repair. If you have gardens they must be trimmed and tidy and free from rubbish.

If we decide that your present home and garden have not been maintained to a reasonable standard we will put your application on hold. We will tell you what you need to do in order to put things right and will arrange to visit you again after an agreed time. Only when we are happy with the condition of your present home will we consider you for a new home.
We have already told you that if you are a tenant of the Council or a Registered Provider waiting for a transfer and you have rent arrears, your application will be put on hold until you tell us your arrears are cleared. If this is the case we may still visit you to ensure that your home has been well looked after. If it has not you will have to both clear your rent arrears and put things right in your home before we will consider you for a new home.

**IMPORTANT:** You will be able to transfer to a new home only if you have been a good tenant in your present home.

What happens after bidding for a property has closed?
After bidding has closed, a shortlist is created for each property. Bids are prioritised in band, point and registration date order.

Following this (and any eligibility checks), the eligible applicant at the top of the shortlist will be invited to view. Most empty properties will be having repair work done at the time of the viewing so a Stevenage Borough Council employee will accompany you.

At the viewing we can tell you what repairs will be done, when we hope you can move in, and answer any of your queries.

After you have viewed the property you will be asked to sign a declaration accepting or refusing the offer.
- If you refuse at this stage, you are free to continue bidding on other properties when available
- If you accept the property, you will be offered a tenancy to start at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime you will not be able to bid for other properties.
- If you accept at this stage and then later refuse it, you will be considered to have made an *unreasonable* refusal. After two unreasonable refusals we may put the application on hold for 12 months.

If the person who was top of the shortlist refuses the property, it is offered to the next person on the list, and so on.
THE HOUSING REGISTER POINTS SCHEME

When you join the Housing Register, you will be given points for your housing circumstances. The details are set out below:

Please note this is intended only as an outline guide to Stevenage Borough Council’s Allocations Scheme. For a full copy of the Allocations Scheme please phone our Customer Service Centre on 01438 242666 or look on the Stevenage Borough Council website at www.stevenage.gov.uk

The purpose of this guide is to help you calculate how many points you are entitled to under the rules of the Allocations Scheme. Our full guide to the Home4U scheme, called Info4U, explains how lettings are made in Stevenage, and you should read the notes below in conjunction with Info4U or Stevenage Borough Council’s Allocations Scheme.

The Home4U scheme uses points to prioritise the circumstances of Housing Applicants, so that the applicants with the highest priority have the highest number of points. The table below shows the points schedule in the Allocations Scheme. We have colour-coded the points categories to link them to the notes in the rest of this guide, which begin on page 3 of this guide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>REASON FOR PRIORITY</th>
<th>POINTS AWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platinum 1</td>
<td>Applicant has an urgent medical need. Medical evidence will be required</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Gold 2 | Applicant has very severe hardship or welfare needs (senior officer housing needs panel award only)  
Applicant is a statutory or non-statutory successor to a tenancy  
Applicant has been given a senior officer housing needs panel award | 7500 |
| Gold 3 | Applicant lives in a property with group 1, band a hazard(s) that makes the property unsuitable to occupy  
Applicant requires an adaptation to their existing home but the property is not adaptable  
Applicant requires an adaptation to their existing home that has value for money implications for Stevenage Borough Council  
Applicant is (1) living in supported or other accommodation, has been assessed as ready for independent accommodation and has continuing support needs; or (2) is a qualifying young person leaving specialist young persons supported accommodation and has been assessed as ready for move-on accommodation; or (3) is a qualifying care leaver. | 5000 |
| Gold 4 | Applicant is statutorily homeless and living in temporary accommodation provided or arranged by Stevenage Borough Council.  
Homelessness prevention cases | 500 per month (up to a max of 2500 i.e. 5 months) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silver 5</td>
<td>Applicant’s household has multiple high medical needs. Medical evidence will be required. Applicant’s household is very severely overcrowded</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver 6</td>
<td>Applicant has high medical needs. Medical evidence will be required.</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 7</td>
<td>Applicant has medium medical needs. Medical evidence will be required. Applicant’s household is severely overcrowded</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 8</td>
<td>Applicant’s household is very severely overcrowded</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 9</td>
<td>Applicant is living in armed forces accommodation</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 9</td>
<td>Applicant is living in a flat or maisonette without a lift Applicant has severe hardship, welfare or social needs Applicant lives in a property with group 1, band a hazard(s) that does not make the property unsuitable to occupy Applicant’s household is overcrowded Applicant’s household includes two children of opposite sexes, at least one of whom is aged 11 or over, having to share a bedroom Applicant is under-occupying a house or bungalow, per bedroom Applicant is non-statutorily homeless Applicant has been the tenant of a studio flat for four years (Stevenage Borough Council or registered provider tenants resident in Stevenage only)</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 10</td>
<td>Applicant has staying arrangements with children Applicant’s household includes two children with an age gap of 11 years or more having to share a bedroom Applicant is living in non-secure accommodation. Applicant is sharing accommodation</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 11</td>
<td>Applicant has low medical needs Applicant lives in a flat or maisonette with a lift Applicant lives in a maisonettes above shops Applicant has hardship, welfare or social needs Applicant lives in a property with group 1, band b hazard(s) Applicant is under-occupying a flat or maisonette, per bedroom</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 12</td>
<td>Applicant is lacking a play space Applicant lives in a property with group 1, band c hazard(s)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronze 13</td>
<td>Time on housing register points</td>
<td>70 per year (up to a max of 350 i.e. 5 years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have points in the platinum or gold 4 categories, this is your final points total and you cannot claim any other points, including time points.

If you have points from the gold 2 or gold 3 categories, this is your points total unless you are awarded medical points as well. You cannot claim time points.

If you have points in the silver and/or bronze categories, you can add them together to make your final points total, except where the individual categories say otherwise.
EXPLAINING THE POINTS SCHEDULE

The Scheme can be quite difficult to use to calculate your points total. We have designed the next part of this guide to help, as it explains a little more about how we decide on the various categories. You will see that the colour-coding below links with the colours we have used in the main table in pages 1 and 2, so for example, all points categories relating to children are shown as pink.

Points awards relating to children

We will award points relating to children after we have assessed the applicant’s living arrangements against the bedroom standard, assuming the best possible use of bedrooms (which may not be the actual use). We may sometimes carry out a home visit to make this assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF POINTS AWARD</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF AWARD</th>
<th>POINTS AWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where two children of different sexes, at least one of whom is aged 11 or over are having to share a bedroom</td>
<td>We will award these points where the best possible use of the bed spaces available will still result in two children of opposite sexes, at least one of whom is aged of 11 or over, having to share a bedroom.</td>
<td>Bronze 9 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where two children with an age gap of 11 years or more are having to share a bedroom</td>
<td>We will award these points where the best possible use of the bed spaces available will still result in two children with an age gap of 11 years or more having to share a bedroom.</td>
<td>Bronze 10 500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Applicants with staying arrangements with children | We will award these points to applicants who have no children as permanent members of their household, but who have staying arrangements with a child or children. We will ask the applicant to prove the staying arrangement by providing the Birth Certificate for each child, plus one of the following for each child staying:  
  • Court Order - proof of parental responsibility OR  
  • Letter of confirmation from CSF (Children, Schools and Families) OR  
  • Letter of confirmation from the other parent or guardian, which must include their contact details OR  
  • Letter of confirmation from a solicitor. | Bronze 10 500 |
<p>| Applicants living in a flat or maisonette without a lift | We will award these points where a family with at least one child aged 12 or under or a person aged 60 or over, is living in a flat or maisonette above the ground floor without a lift. | Bronze 9 700 |
| Applicants living in a flat or | We will award these points where a family with at least one child aged 12 or under, or a person aged 60 or | Bronze 11 300 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>maisonettes with a lift</strong></th>
<th>over, is living in a flat or maisonette above the ground floor with a lift.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Families in flats or maisonettes above shops</strong></td>
<td>We will award these points where a family with at least one child aged 18 or under is living in a flat or maisonette above shops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Households with a child lacking a play space</strong></td>
<td>We will award these points where an applicant has at least one child aged 12 or under and the family live in a flat block where there is no enclosed garden or play space for the family’s exclusive use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Points awards relating to health and safety (including medical needs)

We will award points relating to a **medical** need for rehousing in circumstances where the Stevenage Borough Council Independent Medical Adviser has confirmed both an applicant’s diagnosed medical condition and also the adverse impact of the applicant’s current housing circumstances on the condition.

### Urgent

We will award these points where an applicant’s medical condition is so severe that it makes it impossible for them to continue to occupy (or to return to) their current property, and where their medical condition will not improve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10000</td>
<td>Platinum 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Multiple high

We will award these points where more than one member of the applicant’s household has high medical priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2500</td>
<td>Silver 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### High

We will award these points where an applicant’s medical condition means that it is very difficult but not impossible for the applicant to continue to occupy their current home and the Medical Adviser has confirmed that early rehousing is required for medical reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Silver 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Medium

We will award these points where an applicant’s medical condition means that it is difficult but not impossible for them to continue to occupy their current home and the Medical Adviser has confirmed that eventual rehousing is desirable for medical reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Bronze 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Low

We will award these points where the medical condition means that it is difficult but not impossible for the applicant to continue to occupy their current home and the Medical Adviser has confirmed that eventual rehousing will be beneficial for medical reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>Bronze 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We will award **Health and safety hazards** only after an assessment and recommendation by a local authority’s Environmental Health Section (including Stevenage Borough Council’s). The judgements shown below are those made by Environmental Health Officers according to standards set out within Environmental Health and other legislation. Points awards are not made before the landlord has been given proper notice and reasonable opportunity to resolve the problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious health and safety hazard(s) that makes a property unsuitable to occupy</td>
<td>Gold 3 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious health and safety hazard(s)</td>
<td>Bronze 9 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and safety hazard(s)</td>
<td>Bronze 11 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Health and safety hazards</td>
<td>Bronze 12 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We will award **Disabled adaptation** points after an assessment and recommendation by an Occupational Therapist, and apply only to tenants in homes owned by Stevenage Borough Council or Registered Providers in Stevenage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where a disabled adaptation is required to a tenant’s home but the property is unable to be adapted.</td>
<td>Gold 3 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where a tenant requires a disabled adaptation to their existing home but it would be better for the family to be moved to more suitable accommodation.</td>
<td>Gold 3 5000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Points awards relating to an applicant’s living arrangements

We will award overcrowding points where there are more people living in a property than are shown in the bedroom standard. The bedroom standard is part of Stevenage Council’s Allocations Scheme.

**Bedroom Standard**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF BEDROOMS</th>
<th>FAMILY SIZE AND COMPOSITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Studio flat</td>
<td>Single person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One bedroom</td>
<td>Single person, Couple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single person or couple with access to child/children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two bedroom (either one double and one single or two doubles)</td>
<td>Family, one child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family, 2 children same sex (2 doubles only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Related non-couple, i.e. brother and sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Couple with medical recommendation for separate bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single person or couple with independently verified need for a permanent full-time live-in carer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three bedroom (one double and two singles)</td>
<td>Family two or three children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three bedroom (two doubles and one single)</td>
<td>Family two or three children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three bedroom (three doubles)</td>
<td>Family two or three children; or 4 children where 2 boys/2 girls or all same sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four bedroom (two doubles and two singles)</td>
<td>Family three children, where none can share a bedroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four bedroom (3 doubles and 1 single)</td>
<td>Family four or more children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five bedroom – any combination</td>
<td>Family five or more children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Very severe Overcrowding**
We will award these points where an applicant in their present home is overcrowded by three or more bedrooms.

| Silver 5 | 2500 |

**Severe Overcrowding**
We will award these points where an applicant in their present home is overcrowded by two bedrooms

| Bronze 7 | 1500 |

**Overcrowding**
We will award these points where an applicant in their present home is overcrowded by one bedroom

| Bronze 9 | 700 |
We will award **under-occupation** points where the number of people living in a property is less than the bedroom standard, and where the home is owned by Stevenage Borough Council or Registered Social Landlords in Stevenage.

| Under-occupation points, house or bungalow. | We will award these points where a tenant wishing to transfer is occupying a house or bungalow larger than they need. We will award the points for each bedroom more than the applicant needs according to the bedroom standard. | Bronze 9 700 |
| Under-occupying a flat or maisonette | We will award these points where a tenant wishing to transfer is occupying a flat or maisonette larger than they need. We will award the points for each bedroom more than the applicant needs according to the bedroom standard. | Bronze 11 300 |
| Single applicant in studio flat | We will award these points where an applicant has been the tenant of a studio flat for four years and wishes to transfer to a one-bedroom flat, and where the studio flat is owned by Stevenage Borough Council or by a Registered Social Landlord in Stevenage. The applicant can join the housing register at any time but we will award the points only after they have been the tenant of the studio flat for four years. We will remove these points if the applicant’s circumstances change and they become eligible for a property larger than one bedroom. | Bronze 9 700 |
| Sharing accommodation | We will award these points where an applicant is sharing their home with others, whether relatives or non relatives. | Bronze 10 500 |
| Living in non-secure accommodation | We will award these points where an applicant  
- Has an Assured Shorthold tenancy.  
- Is living in tied accommodation and has provided a copy of their tenancy agreement to Stevenage Borough Council.  
Is sharing their accommodation with someone other than their parents (a Licence Agreement), they will receive these points in addition to the sharing points. | Bronze10 500 |
| Living in armed forces accommodation | We will award these points where the applicant is living in armed forces accommodation and provides Stevenage Borough Council with a copy of their tenancy agreement. For armed forces personnel who have to leave armed forces accommodation, their effective date of application will be either the actual date of application, or the date of joining the armed forces, whichever is the earlier. We will also apply these rules to bereaved husbands, wives or civil partners of armed forces personnel. | Bronze 8 900 |
# Points awards relating to the welfare of the applicant

Welfare points include cases that had “social points” under the old Allocations Scheme.

| Very severe hardship or welfare | **We will award** these points where an applicant needs to move is urgently, usually after Police advice as a result of violence or threats of violence. We may limit the time that we these points will last, as we would expect the applicant to start bidding immediately for any suitable property if they have an urgent need to move. | Gold 2 7500 |
| Severe hardship, welfare or social needs | **We will award** these points where an applicant needs to move to or within Stevenage on welfare grounds, for example to give or receive long-term continuing and constant care or to obtain specialist medical treatment for themselves or a permanent member of their household. We will award social points to applicants for sheltered housing only when a needs and risk assessment has identified all three of the following social points factors present: **Physical isolation** e.g. difficulty in accessing public transport, distance from facilities, relatives and friends, physical difficulty in attending social events. **Social isolation** e.g. lack of family or friends’ support, recent bereavement, loss of confidence caused by health or mobility problems, no contact with own age group **Present accommodation** e.g. inability to look after the house and garden, unable to heat the property adequately, harassment or vandalism in the area, problems with neighbours. | Bronze 9 700 |
| Hardship, welfare or social needs | **We will award** these points where an applicant needs to move to Stevenage to take up an offer of permanent employment or a training/education opportunity of at least one year. We will need to have written confirmation of the employment or training offer. **We may also award** these points where the medical condition of a member of the household with whom the applicant shares accommodation (but who is not included in their application) is having a detrimental effect on the applicant or their household. **We will award** Social points to applicants for sheltered housing only when a needs and risk assessment has identified two of three Social points factors present, as shown above. | Bronze 11 300 |
| Succession to a tenancy | We will award these points where an applicant is able to succeed to a tenancy through legislation or Stevenage Borough Council’s policies, but the home is too large for their needs according to the bedroom standard. | Gold 2 7500 |
## Temporary points awards for short term need

We will award **Homeless points** only after an assessment and recommendation by the Homelessness Section of Stevenage Borough Council (SBC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An applicant has been accepted as homeless by Stevenage Borough Council and is living in temporary accommodation.</td>
<td>We will award these points where SBC has accepted a duty to assist the applicant and has placed them in temporary accommodation.</td>
<td>Gold 4 500 points per month – up to a maximum of 2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An applicant is in danger of becoming homeless but may be able to live in their existing accommodation for a short period of time.</td>
<td>We will award these points where SBC has confirmed that the applicant has made active efforts to prevent their homelessness; and that SBC would otherwise owe the applicant a duty to assist them.</td>
<td>Gold 4 500 points per month – up to a maximum of 2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living in supported accommodation and is ready to live independently although requires continuing support.</td>
<td>We will award these points where an applicant is in one of these categories. <strong>Living in supported accommodation</strong> as the result of a referral from SBC or other accredited agency, and we have assessed them as ready for independent living with appropriate and planned support. Where an applicant is <strong>leaving young persons supported accommodation</strong> and we have assessed them as ready for independent living. <strong>Is a young person leaving care</strong> who has been referred by the Leaving Care Team (Independent Support Service).</td>
<td>Gold 3 5000 points for a maximum of 3 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Other Points Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time points for time spent on the housing register</strong></td>
<td>We will award these points annually on the anniversary of the effective registration date. We will award these points for a maximum of 5 years i.e. 350 points.</td>
<td>Bronze 13 70 per year up to a max of 350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Panel</strong></td>
<td>We will award these points where the housing panel has given greater priority to an individual housing applicant whose individual circumstances are exceptional.</td>
<td>Gold 2 7500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Housing Panel is a group of senior Stevenage Borough Council’ staff who consider requests for exceptions to be made to the Allocations Scheme; normally where there is an urgent need to move.
APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS
You can appeal against a decision made about your application for housing. Appeals must be made in writing within 21 days of being notified of the decision. You can also use the Council’s complaints procedure. Details can be found at the Customer Service Centre and on our website www.stevenage.gov.uk

HOW TO CONTACT US
You can write to us at:
Lettings
Stevenage Borough Council.
Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Herts:
SG1 1HN

You can Fax us on 01438 242384
Textphone users can call 01438 242150
You can telephone us on 01438 242666
You can email us at: lettings@stevenage.gov.uk

Housing Advice
You can write to us at:
Housing Advice
Stevenage Borough Council
Daneshill House
Danestrete
Stevenage
Herts
SG1 1HN

You can telephone us on: 01438 242242
Textphone users can call: 01438 242555
You can Fax us on: 01438 242566
You can email us at: housing.advice@stevenage.gov.uk

A copy of the Council’s full Allocations Scheme document is available on request or can be downloaded from our website www.stevenage.gov.uk