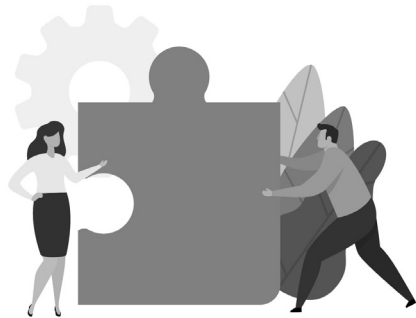


1 reasonable offer by this date you will be entitled to 1 further reasonable offer. If you have already received 2 reasonable offers by this date you will be entitled to 1 final offer. You can speak with the person dealing with your application if you are unsure of how many offers you have left.

### What happens if I refuse an offer of accommodation?

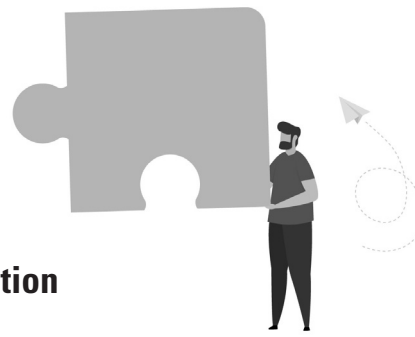
We can look at the reasons why you have refused and decide whether your refusal reasons are reasonable in line with the Housing Selection Scheme Rules. If we decide that they are, where appropriate, we will review your areas of choice with you and update your housing application with further details about your household and your housing needs. The offer will not be counted under the rules of the Scheme. If we decide that it is an unreasonable refusal the offer will be counted as one of your two offers under the rules of the Scheme. You will have the right to appeal that decision.



### Getting help

#### Can I talk to someone about my housing situation?

If your situation has changed or you would like to explore other housing options you should contact the person dealing with your application. They can provide you with independent and impartial advice.



### Further Information

Should you wish to speak with someone regarding these or any other concerns you may have you can contact the person dealing with your application who will be happy to help (this will be your Housing Advisor or Patch Manager if you are a Housing Executive tenant, or a Housing Officer, if you are a Housing Association tenant).

If you do not have direct contact information for your Housing Advisor/Patch Manager you can get in touch by calling our General Enquiries number on **03448 920 900** (Lines are open 8.30am to 5pm Monday – Friday) or by visiting your local Housing Executive office

If you are a Housing Association tenant you should speak to your Housing Officer.



### KEEP UP TO DATE

You can find out more information on how these changes may impact you by visiting our website at [www.nihe.gov.uk](http://www.nihe.gov.uk) or by using the QR code.



HS-11-10-22-SC

## Changes to the rules of the Housing Selection Scheme: Your Questions Answered



We are making changes to the Housing Selection Scheme.

This is the scheme that sets out how we assess your housing need and how social housing landlords allocate their homes.



The current Housing Selection Scheme has been in place for more than 20 years and is highly valued but we needed to make changes to reflect people's situations and the demand for housing in Northern Ireland.

These changes which are being introduced on a phased basis over the next 3 years will help to build on the strengths of the current allocations scheme to enable it to work better for people in need. The changes are in response to the views shared during the Fundamental Review of Allocations consultation, carried out by the Department for Communities in 2017. Further details can be found in the Consultation Outcome Report (published 18 December 2020) which is on the Department's website ([www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/fundamental-review-social-housing-allocations](http://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/fundamental-review-social-housing-allocations))

**The first changes which apply now are:**

- 1. All applicants will have the ability to choose as many or as few areas of choice as you wish.**
- 2. The Housing Executive will reduce the number of reasonable offers given, from three reasonable offers, to two reasonable offers.**



## Areas of choice

### What is happening with areas of choice?

Before these changes you could pick up to 2 areas of choice with the opportunity to widen these by adding the General Housing Area (GHA) to your application. You will now be able to choose as many or as few areas of choice as you wish. This also means that if you are owed the full statutory homelessness duty (a Full Duty Applicant) the General Housing Area (GHA) will no longer be imposed on your areas of choice. The person dealing with your application will be able to advise you on your housing prospects in other areas that you may decide to choose. It is important to note that you must have at least one area of choice applied to your application.

### A General Housing Area (GHA) was applied to my application. What happens now?

If you had a General Housing Area (GHA) applied to your application or you had chosen a wider GHA you will still be on the Waiting List for all those areas. You can now review your application and remove any areas you do not want to be considered for.

### How do I increase my areas of choice?

If you wish to increase or change your areas of choice you should contact the person dealing with your application.

### Will there be any changes to any Area Points which I currently receive?

Not everyone is entitled to Area Points. Area Points are Other Social Need (OSN) points that can apply to any of your areas of choice where the person dealing with your application is satisfied that you have a specific need to live in that area.

You may have received OSN Area Points for one or more areas, depending on your circumstances. Changes to the Rules about the number of areas you can now choose and the removal of the General Housing Areas (GHA) mean that you may be entitled to OSN Area Points in some of your other areas of choice.

These changes will not affect any OSN Area Points you may have already been awarded. If you think these points could be awarded to other areas of choice within your application, you should get in touch with the person dealing with your application who can review your area points alongside your areas of choice.

## Reasonable offers

### What is a reasonable offer of accommodation?

Under the Rules of the Housing Selection Scheme, an offer of accommodation is said to be reasonable if it is: a suitable size for your household, as outlined in the Rules of the Scheme; within your chosen areas of choice; suitable to meet the needs of your household, for example if you or someone in your household has been assessed as requiring ground floor or wheelchair standard accommodation; and in a reasonable condition of repair for your safe occupation when you begin your tenancy.

### I have already received a reasonable offer of accommodation. What happens now?

All new applicants and existing applicants already on the Waiting List will be entitled to receive 2 reasonable offers of accommodation. This means that if you have not yet received an offer of accommodation you will be entitled to 2 reasonable offers. If you have already received