

Allocations policy

Introduction

Grand Union Housing Group owns and manages homes for rent across a number of local authority districts in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and neighbouring counties. The purpose of this policy is to set out how we allocate our properties.

Policy statement

We are committed to providing a high quality, efficient and responsive, allocations service. In doing so, we will work closely with the local authorities and Choice Based Letting (CBL) schemes in the areas in which we operate.

We reserve the right to act outside of the policy where there is clear justification for doing so e.g. when letting certain properties for which demand is low.

Objectives

- Determine who will be allocated housing.
- Identify who is eligible for transfer.
- Ensure properties are let quickly and efficiently.
- Ensure that properties are let appropriately to those with a housing need.
- Protect the financial interests of Grand Union by minimising rent loss and tenancy failure.
- Be fair and transparent.
- Promote equality of opportunity and customer choice wherever possible.
- Assess priority on the basis of need.
- Aim to create and maintain balanced and sustainable communities, reducing social exclusion.
- Work in partnership with our local authorities in order to meet housing need and make the best possible use of our housing stock.
- Ensure that our policy accords with our associated policies and procedures and with current regulatory guidance.
- Only ask for information that we need in order to deal with housing applications. (All personal information will be treated confidentially. If we do not offer an applicant a tenancy all personal information will be disposed of confidentially).

Other related policies/procedures

Allocations Procedure
Anti Social Behaviour Policy
Assignment Procedure
Complaints Policy
Data Protection Policy
Disability and Adaptations Assistance Policy

Domestic Abuse Policy
Equality, Diversity and Customer Care Policy
Fresh Start Scheme
Mutual Exchange Procedure
Prevention of Tenancy Fraud Policy
Starter Tenancy Procedure
Tenancy Changes Policy
Tenancy Support Procedure

Conflict of interest

Grand Union's staff and Board members, and their families, are entitled to apply for housing, and to transfer, in the same way as all other applicants. However, to satisfy the probity requirements of the Regulator, details of anyone applying for housing will be disclosed to the Executive Director of Operations, who will approve the allocation if they are satisfied that it has been made in accordance with our policy or, where we are acting outside of the policy, that the decision and allocation is fully justified.

Void management

It is important that properties are re-let within the shortest possible period to minimise rent loss. The entire process from when a property becomes void to the point where it can be re allocated, will be managed by the Void and Onboarding teams, liaising with other teams as necessary. Outgoing customers may be asked to agree for the new customer to view the property, and for any necessary work to commence, while they are still in occupation. Properties will be let to the Grand Union void standard. Applicants must be able to sign the tenancy agreement and start the tenancy as soon as the property is ready to let in order to avoid properties being left vacant and to minimise void rent loss. If an applicant is unable to commit to this, the offer of housing may be withdrawn.

Housing applicants

Choice based lettings

Most of our properties will be let via the relevant CBL scheme in line with the local authority allocation policy for each district. Anyone who wishes to apply for a property will need to contact the relevant local authority to make an application. Under the scheme, eligible applicants will be placed in a band or allocated points according to the level of their housing need as determined by the local authority and will then be eligible to register their interest, or 'bid', for advertised properties. Existing Grand Union customers who need to move because their homes are no longer suitable for their housing needs, may also make a housing application via the relevant schemes and be assessed by the local authority.

Nominations

Where we have property in a local authority area that does not operate a CBL scheme, we will work in partnership with the authority to assist them in meeting their statutory responsibilities relating to homelessness and in meeting general housing needs. Applicants will need to apply to the relevant local authority and will also be assessed according to their housing need so rather than 'bidding', they may be nominated for a property owned or managed by Grand Union.

Localised agreements

Where housing stock has transferred from the local authority to Grand Union, certain legal agreements remain in place that we are obliged to adhere to when allocating properties.

Allocating properties

- We will allocate in accordance with any prevailing nominations agreements or CBL scheme we have joined across Grand Union. We will follow the provisions set out in these agreements or schemes. Where the information is not provided in these agreements, we will allocate in accordance with our Allocations Policy.
- Properties will be promptly offered and allocated to the applicant with the highest housing need either via the relevant local authority scheme or by nomination.
- Rent in advance will be due at the start of the new tenancy. The expected amount will usually be four weeks rent in advance, but in exceptional circumstances this amount may be negotiated. It will also be expected that all incoming customers will set up a direct debit as their primary method of payment for their rent. All applicants will be required to undergo an affordability check to ensure that they can meet their rent commitments.
- When allocating property we will try to balance housing need with financial circumstances, however, we cannot offer a property that is deemed unaffordable. In these cases, we will provide whatever support and advice we can to source a suitable solution which may be more affordable. .
- If we believe that an applicant can afford to meet their own housing costs in the private sector, they will not usually qualify for housing in line with our charitable objectives; the exception to this will be if the local authorities' policy that has awarded them with housing need makes allowances for this.
- Where there are no suitable applicants for a property, we reserve the right to allocate to any other person applying for housing through other means, such as by responding to an advertisement on a property website.
- We will usually only allocate a home to an applicant who will/whose family will fully occupy it within the definition set out in the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

We will allocate homes on the basis that:

- each married or cohabitating couple will have a separate bedroom
- young persons 16 years and over will have a separate bedroom

We will permit a bedroom to be shared by:

- persons 10 years of age or over of the same sex
- children under the age of 10 years regardless of sex

We will take into account the need for an additional bedroom where:

- the applicant receives support from carers who do not reside with them but need to stay overnight
- the applicant is a prospective foster carer or adoptive parent(s)

- there are medical requirements
- the applicant has formal shared custody of a child or children

Except where it is required by a nominations agreement or other scheme arrangements which we have entered into, we will not allocate a property where the household composition exceeds the English Housing Survey Bedroom standard. The exception to this is if we need to accommodate a large household or shared parenting arrangements and we wish to limit the number of bedrooms offered to make best use of our housing. In these circumstances we may allocate a property provided the limits set out in s.325 and s.326 Housing Act 1985 are not exceeded.

In certain cases, some properties may have smaller second and/or third bedrooms and in these cases it may only be reasonable for one person, likely a child under the age of 10 years to occupy.

Local lettings policies – balanced communities

Wherever possible, we will contribute to the building of balanced and sustainable communities by providing properties for outright sale, shared ownership and rented housing.

Wherever possible, we will also aim to agree with the relevant local authority, a lettings plan for the first and subsequent letting of each new development to ensure that it starts and continues to be a viable and sustainable development.

Other requests for housing

We will co-operate with requests from the Home Office, government or any local authority, to house people with specialist housing requirements, for example, asylum seekers, or under the National Witness Protection Scheme. Such requests would normally be dealt with outside our normal allocations process.

Extended families – minors

Where a minor is to be included or added to an application but no parental responsibility exists, proof of legal guardianship must be supplied or confirmation from social services that this action is a permanent arrangement.

Adding adults to an application

Other adults who need a bedroom will only be added to the application if they have a demonstrable need to live with the applicant and plan to do so on a long-term permanent basis.

Applicants who require a full time residential carer may include them on their application but proof of the requirement will be required from social services or a primary health care professional.

Persons under 18 and or persons leaving care

An appropriate person must hold the tenancy in trust for the minor. This person must be able to demonstrate that they are successfully managing their own tenancy or mortgage, if applicable. We will require a suitable trustee and guarantor in order to house applicants of 16 and 17 years of age.

Grand Union will ask the relevant local authority to undertake a joint assessment, with social services, of the applicant's housing, care and support needs to ensure that adequate support is available.

Sensitive lettings

We may categorise a property, or properties, as requiring a sensitive letting in order to address a particular problem in a locality, for example, where there has been an eviction, ongoing anti-social behaviour or where we have received a request from our statutory partners to consider the impact of housing particular applicants at the location.

Joint tenancies

Due to the legal complexities surrounding joint tenancies we will only grant joint tenancies to applicants who have made a joint housing application and intend to reside together as a couple. An exception will be if the nominating local authorities' allocation policy allows for family members who have made a joint housing application and have been nominated for a joint tenancy.

Retirement/supported/adapted accommodation

Specific age and disability criteria apply for supported accommodation and other accommodation that incorporates the support of an independent living advisor and community alarm support system. Additionally, property that has been adapted or is particularly amenable to adaptation and is therefore especially suitable to a household containing a disabled member, may be considered and offered outside of the scope of this policy in the first instance.

Refusals and withdrawals

We reserve the right to refuse any applicant for the following reasons:

- where it is clear that an applicant would need far more support than Grand Union can provide within its general needs stock even with a tenancy support package in order to sustain their tenancy and inadequate or no support is available from external agencies
- where there is clear evidence that a proposed allocation could put either the applicant or members of the surrounding community at significant risk
- where it is clear that the rent, or proportion of rent in the case of under occupiers, is not affordable to the household
- where it is clear that the applicant will not make best use of a specifically adapted property

- where new information comes to light after an offer of tenancy is made that would make the applicant ineligible under this policy or the nominating local authority's policy

Criminal convictions and poor behaviour

The overriding priority for Grand Union is the protection of the public, customers, employees and the communities that we serve. We may refuse the application if we reasonably believe that if the offender was to reside at the property they would pose a risk to the health, well-being or safety of others. In particular we will work with statutory agencies, such as the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements in the housing of violent and sexual offenders in order to establish whether or not the accommodation and area would be suitable for the applicant.

Tenancy breaches

A tenancy breach includes factors such as:

- making a false statement to obtain a tenancy
- housing related debt (though if arrears have accrued primarily due to cuts in welfare benefits following the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2012, we may allow an allocation to proceed if a suitable repayment plan is established)
- causing nuisance to neighbours which has resulted in legal action being taken or a notice of seeking possession being served
- being convicted of using the home for immoral or illegal purposes
- causing the condition of the property to deteriorate by a deliberate act or neglect

A person being treated as ineligible may become eligible if:

- 12 months have elapsed since the applicant or any member of their household gave false information to obtain a tenancy
- all rent charges or outstanding debts, including court costs, are paid in full.
- the applicant(s) or any members of their household have demonstrated acceptable behaviour for at least a year

Withdrawal of an offer

Grand Union reserves the right to withdraw an offer of accommodation at any time throughout the allocation process. A written decision will be issued. Such circumstances may be, but not limited to, when the property is required for an emergency decant, a fraudulent application is identified, right to remain issues are identified, outstanding debt to the organisation is identified, or where significant criminal history comes to light which may constitute a risk to Grand Union customers, staff, contractors or the communities that we serve.

In the event that information becomes available that indicates that the offer of tenancy would have been withdrawn if the information had been declared prior to the sign up, tenancy enforcement action may be considered.

Any applicant who is refused, or who has an offer of tenancy withdrawn, has the right of appeal, as set out in the Allocations Procedure. It may also be necessary for them to appeal to the local authority as determined by the local authority's policy.

Grand Union direct lets

All direct lets will be considered alongside the local authority for the specific area and at the discretion of Grand Union, production of the appropriate supporting evidence and completion of a Grand Union housing application form.

Direct let moves may be considered in the following circumstances:

- Statutory overcrowding – as defined in the Housing Act 1985 Part X.
- Hate crime or any other discriminatory harassment or abuse including domestic abuse which is substantiated and supported by other agencies such as police or MARAC, where the customer is facing a life threatening, violent, or similar extreme situation.
- Landlord requires decanting for refurbishment/redevelopment etc. Of the property/site.
- Non statutory succession where customers are eligible under the local Housing Allocation Scheme.
- Where a property becoming available is adapted or amenable to adaptation and would meet the specific household needs of a Grand Union customer. This is on the understanding that by not doing so, we are likely to have to carry out specialist adaptations in future.
- Where adaptations are required on medical grounds but after consideration from the Adaptations team, it is deemed that adaptations are not feasible in the current property the customer is living in e.g. Where the property does not lend itself to a stair lift.

Where a request for a direct let is not approved, the customer will be advised to seek alternative methods of moving. We will provide support to customers wanting to move with advice and help to register with local authorities for housing or mutual exchange.

We will hold a list for existing customers who wish to downsize to a smaller property or have a housing need. This is referred to as a 'specific needs list' and is for customers in Grand Union stock where there is not an active transfer list being operated.

Existing customers will be expected to comply with any requests from Grand Union to access the current property in order to carry out any pre-termination inspections or repair works. It will be expected as a condition of customers being able to move within Grand Union stock, that their property is returned in a good condition with the outstanding repairs completed before the move takes place. Grand Union will aim to exercise a degree of flexibility with this where a customer has disabilities which may prevent them from carrying out the remedial works themselves.

Transfers - West Northants Council area customers only

At present, Grand Union currently only operates a transfer list for customers living in the former South Northants Council area, now part of the West Northants district area.

Under our contractual arrangements with West Northants Council we will allocate 25% of our vacant properties to customers on our internal transfer list. However, customers will also be advised to make an application to join the housing register. All applicants who wish to transfer will also be encouraged to register for a mutual exchange.

Who can apply?

- Existing customers that live in the former South Northants district area, and who hold an assured tenancy, can apply to the waiting list.
- All joint customers are eligible to apply but both/all must agree. If not, a decision must be made to assign the tenancy to one of the joint customers prior to applying onto the list and the Assignment procedure should be adhered to.

N.B. There may be times when Grand Union decides to restrict transfer requests to those customers who have an urgent banding. Any restriction is likely to remain in place only for a short period of time and will be due to a genuine business requirement. For example, it may be necessary to concentrate our resources on our existing void properties rather than those where customers are transferring.

Customers with a starter tenancy

We will not usually permit a customer who holds a starter tenancy to join the transfer list. However in exceptional circumstances, if it is obvious that an applicant's circumstances would otherwise have placed them in the urgent or high banding criteria (appendix A), a transfer application will be considered. In these cases, the applicant will be offered a further starter tenancy for the full 12 month period. Customers with a starter tenancy may also be permitted to apply for a transfer on the ground of affordability, for example, if they cannot afford the rent for the affordable rent property that they reside in.

Restrictions

- We will not allow customers with a starter tenancy to apply onto the transfer register if an extension of starter tenancy and/or legal proceedings have commenced. If, after acceptance onto the transfer list, they are guilty of a breach of tenancy and/or legal proceedings have commenced, they will be removed from the transfer list.
- We will not usually permit a customer who has mutually exchanged into their property to join the transfer list. However, in exceptional circumstances, if it is obvious that an applicant's circumstances would otherwise have placed them in the urgent or high banding criteria (appendix A), an application to the transfer list will be permitted.

The only exceptions to the above would be where tenancy failure could be directly attributed to significant mitigating factors, such as severe, undisclosed domestic abuse. In such cases, this will be at the discretion of the Relocations team leaders in the first instance.

Priority

We will give priority to those in most housing or safety need. We will consider the individual requirements and circumstances which apply to certain groups of applicants to ensure appropriate banding on the transfer list. Applicants are placed into one of four priority bands. Please refer to appendix A.

Applicants will then be considered in date order within the band.

Priority for medical or social welfare needs will be assessed as per appendix B. It is only upon production of satisfactory evidence from a qualified medical practitioner that Grand Union will apply medical or social welfare criteria to an application for re-housing. Additionally:

- Applicants will need to provide details of their circumstances and requirements to ensure they are appropriately assessed.
- Any breach of tenancy will need to be remedied before an offer of rehousing is made. For anti-social behaviour cases (ASB), there must not have been any reports of ASB in the past 12 months.
- Applicants under occupying the property, who have accrued rent arrears solely due to benefit cuts, may be approved for a transfer, providing an agreement has been made to repay the debt before the transfer takes place. Agreements will usually form part of the new tenancy agreement and will, therefore, be monitored to ensure compliance. These applicants will be given priority. In these circumstances, the customer may be eligible for a Fresh Start scheme payment, which may clear the arrears in full. The availability of this scheme, and any remaining budget, should be considered before reaching a decision on the eligibility of transfer customers who are in arrears.

Transfer list customers will be expected to have a property inspection. Any offer of rehousing may be withdrawn if the property inspection determines that the time required to complete the level of work required to bring the property back to a lettable standard exceeds that of the standard void turnaround.

Medical and welfare assessments

Priority for medical or social welfare needs will only be given where it can be demonstrated that the condition or location of the applicant's accommodation is having a direct impact on either their health and/or social welfare and that re-housing will significantly improve their situation. Supporting evidence will be required and applicants most likely to be considered on these grounds may be receiving support from other organisations such as social services, police, probation etc.

Any costs associated with the production of these reports will not be borne by Grand Union under any circumstances.

Change of circumstances

Customers on any of our internal waiting lists will be expected to inform us of any change to their circumstances that may affect their priority for a move. Where an offer has been made Grand Union reserves the right to withdraw an offer of a property, or take legal action to recover possession if the tenancy has already started, where a customer fails to inform us of a change that would adversely affect their priority on the list.

Customers who deliberately worsen their circumstances will remain on the same level of priority at which they were previously assessed for a period of 12 months.

Exceptional circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, if it is obvious that an applicant's circumstances are not adequately reflected by the bandings listed, the Onboarding & Relocations manager, after considering all of the information available, has the authority to determine the banding of the applicant according to their housing needs.

Grand Union reserves the right to prioritise applicants over others in the same banding who may have been on the list for a longer period:

- If a direct let has been agreed and failure to do so would cause serious detriment to the household in question.
- Where it is clear that a property becoming available is adapted or amenable to adaptation and would meet the needs of a specific household. This is on the understanding that by not doing so, Grand Union is likely to have to carry out specialist adaptations in future.

Direct allocations

In limited circumstances we will consider letting a vacant property to an applicant that is not currently one of our customers or a council nominee, for example, where the council is unable to provide a suitable nominee and there are no suitable applicants on our waiting lists. These allocations are referred to as direct allocations. Subject to certain criteria, anyone who is not currently a customer will be eligible to join the direct allocations list. These applicants will be expected to follow the same process as all other applicants.

Non-allocated properties

Where a property is considered 'non-allocated,' Grand Union may use other means to advertise the property outside of the local authority Housing Allocations scheme. This may include advertising through Rightmove or approaching other local authorities for nominations.

A property will be considered non-allocated where:

- there have been no suitable bids after advertising through three CBL cycles, or where similar properties in the vicinity have failed to attract, via CBL, on a regular basis.

- the local authority has confirmed that they are unable to nominate a suitable applicant to the property within the timescale specified within the nominations agreement.

Where properties have been advertised outside of the local authority Housing Allocations scheme, the property will be allocated directly by Grand Union. A tenancy will only be offered in the circumstances that the applicant meets the criteria set out in this policy.

Whilst Grand Union will not impose income limits or other restrictions set by local authorities in their allocations scheme, making best use of housing when letting at a social or affordable rent is a priority. Grand Union will impose income limits as specified in the affordability section below. For applicants who exceed the income threshold, but are able to demonstrate that they are homeless or threatened with homelessness, their application will be considered with final approval from the Onboarding & Relocations manager.

In very rare cases, where properties are non-allocated, Grand Union may decide to either dispose of the property or change the tenure of the property. This is in exceptional cases and is only to take place when there is Leadership team approval.

Types of tenancy offered

Starter tenancies

Grand Union will continue to offer starter tenancies for all new customers, except for those holding an assured or secure tenancy with Grand Union, another registered provider or a local authority immediately prior to the allocation. The exception to this will be where either customer has voluntarily relinquished a joint tenancy and one customer is returning to Grand Union on a sole tenancy or with a different joint customer than previously, in which case a starter tenancy will be issued.

Starter tenancies will be issued for an initial period of 12 months for all properties whether social or affordable rents or assured tenancies.

Assured tenancies

Where possible, we aim to provide our customers with assured tenancies and long-term tenancy rights. This is, however, dependent on the area and type of property the customer is moving to.

Grand Union will offer assured tenancies to new customers who hold an assured or secure tenancy with Grand Union, another registered provider or a local authority immediately prior to the allocation in accordance with the Regulatory Standards Framework, irrespective of where they are being housed.

Assured shorthold (periodic)

An assured shorthold tenancy is a rolling weekly tenancy that can be ended at any time after six or 12 months from the start of the tenancy, by Grand Union giving two months' notice. These tenancies are generally used for market and intermediate rent properties, where Grand Union holds a short term lease, or where the length of occupation is likely to be short term e.g. in accordance

with the Strategic Asset Management Strategy Grand Union is considering future refurbishment, change of tenure or disposal of the property.

Temporary tenancies

These tenancies are used when Grand Union provides accommodation to people who have applied to the council for assistance under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Act 1996 and the council owes a duty to secure accommodation. These are weekly periodic tenancies, which may be ended by either the customer or Grand Union giving notice to quit.

Joint customer allocated sole tenancy

If the applicant is a current joint customer of Grand Union and is allocated a property in their sole name, a tenancy change must be effected before an offer of accommodation can be made. Once the applicant removes their name from the existing tenancy, or the notice period expires, Grand Union will offer a starter tenancy followed by the tenancy type that the applicant would have been issued if they had signed a tenancy as a new customer with no previous tenancy history.

Affordability

For new applicants, a financial assessment will be carried out in all circumstances to determine the applicant's ability to pay the rent. Generally 'affordable' means that rent is lower than 35% (net) of the household income, although Grand Union recognises that social housing is a provision that people access in the absence of other affordable options and therefore will consider all extenuating circumstances.

For existing customers, the same financial assessment will be undertaken where there has been a change in circumstances, such as household composition or employment to determine their affordability.

Income Restrictions

Where the local authorities' affordability criteria does not apply, for example, where an applicant has applied via Rightmove and does not have determined housing need by the local authority, Grand Union will impose income limits on all non-allocated properties using the calculation of annual rent (weekly rent x 48) x 6 = less than the households gross income.

Mutual exchanges

A mutual exchange is a swap between two or more customers and allows them to arrange their own move. Most customers of Grand Union will have the right to carry out a mutual exchange with customers in England and Wales who have a secure or assured tenancy or assured shorthold fixed term tenancy. This includes exchange with a customer from a local authority, housing provider or charitable housing trust. However, there are some customers who do not have the right to exchange i.e. Starter and assured shorthold (not fixed term) customers.

A written decision must be given within 42 days of receiving an application to exchange giving either consent or the reasons for refusal. Reasons for refusing a mutual exchange are set out in the Mutual Exchange Procedure.

There are some important implications involved with mutual exchange as it may result in a change to a customer's tenancy and/or Right to Buy or Right to Acquire status.

Refer to the Mutual Exchange Procedure for more details.

Exchange without consent

In the event that a customer exchanges properties with another customer without gaining the permission of all relevant landlords, there are three available options:

- regulate the position by completing the process retrospectively
- insist that the customers return to their original properties
- terminate the tenancies by serving Notice to Quit on the original homes and seek possession

Privacy, complaints and review

Applicant's information

In accordance with our Privacy Statement, any information collected from applicants with regards to rehousing will not be kept for any longer than is necessary. Any costs associated with production of such documentary evidence will not be borne by Grand Union under any circumstances. Any information received from the applicant which indicates that there may be money laundering will be dealt with in accordance with our Anti-Money Laundering Procedure. Any information which indicates that a fraudulent housing application has been made will be reported to the local authority and appropriate action taken.

Complaints against a decision

Any dissatisfaction will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy and Procedure.

Monitoring and review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the policy review programme.

Person responsible for review:	Director of Customer Experience
Supported by:	Onboarding & Relocations Manager
Ratified by:	Leadership team
Date policy reviewed:	June 2021
Date of next review:	June 2024

Appendix A - Banding scheme

Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• severe medical needs - see appendix B• exceptional circumstances - detail above• direct lets- detail above• succession where move to alternative accommodation required• high risk or actual breakdown of mental illness linked to housing
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• considerable medical needs - see Appendix B• under occupation by one or more bedrooms• overcrowding (please refer to Allocating properties section)• affordability
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• moderate medical needs - see Appendix B• families where there is at least one child under the age of 16 in flats above ground floor
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• adequately housed• minor medical needs - see appendix B

Appendix B - Medical matrix

	Low	Medium	High	Urgent
Mental health		Anti-depressant or anti-psychotic medication with secondary care input. The care that is provided is vital to maintain community living and the housing situation is a significant factor in the illness and mental health is likely to deteriorate if housing need is not addressed.	Customer has a planned treatment programme where housing is a significant factor in the treatment plan. Some support is needed to prevent admission into a psychiatric unit or immediate deterioration in their health. Housing issues are related to illness and relationships within the household are seriously affected by mental health issues.	Immediate discharge from a psychiatric hospital following treatment where housing is a significant factor in the treatment plan. High support needs required to prevent readmission.
Mobility	Home slightly unsuitable to meet their needs with low risk of harm e.g. client has some difficulty accessing essential facilities such as the toilet, bathroom, bedroom. Adaptations would be feasible.	Increased difficulties accessing essential facilities e.g. toilet, bathroom, bedroom and this is likely to worsen. Adaptations may be possible.	Unable to access essential facilities. Care or severely modified living required and housing is a significant factor in maintaining community living. Adaptations are not an option.	Home not suitable following discharge from hospital or unsuitability of home is preventing discharge.

<p>Independence (relates to giving or receiving care)</p>	<p>Independence is affected by inability to access essential facilities. Need occasional care/support from family or home carer.</p>	<p>Independence is affected by inability to access essential facilities. Need medium level of care/support from family or home carer.</p>	<p>Cannot access essential facilities without a high level of care/support from family or home carer.</p>	<p>Level of care/support is high and cannot be sustained in the longer term.</p>
<p>Children - physical disability</p>	<p>Children who have difficulty accessing essential facilities e.g. bathroom, toilet bedroom or a child's disability restricts use of the house by other family members e.g. increased bathroom usage. Health and safety not affected.</p>	<p>A child who cannot access essential facilities without assistance and health and safety is affected. The Occupational Therapy department has made recommendations that adaptations are required and are feasible for a disabled child.</p>	<p>A child who cannot or has difficulty accessing essential facilities and health and safety is affected. The Occupational Therapy department has made recommendations that separate facilities are required for a disabled child.</p>	<p>A child who cannot access essential facilities and their health and safety is affected. The Occupational Therapy department has recommended alternative housing to meet the needs of a disabled child.</p>