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# Rethinking allocations

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## What I'll be covering



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- Why rethink allocations?
- What we wanted to know and how we went about it
- Key findings
  - Competing objectives
  - People versus process
  - Some examples
- Other things to think about



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## Why rethink allocations



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- **Our Rethinking social housing work pitched a future vision for social housing – it should be:**
  - A mainstream tenure for more people
  - Seen as a public good like the NHS & our education system
  - Central to any government plan to tackle the housing crisis
- **BUT right now we don't have enough, or the right type of stock to meet demand**
- **A consensus that some form of rationing will take place but there are concerns about the impact of some approaches**



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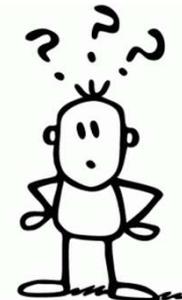
## What we wanted to know



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### We aimed to understand:

- The range of criteria used in allocation policies by local authorities and housing associations in England
- The extent to which allocation models are being shaped or influenced by the current policy environment and the impact this is having
- The type of model that best reflects our perceptions of who social housing should be for and what its role and purpose should be



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## How we went about it



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- Literature review
- Project sounding board
- Twitter debate
- Sector survey
- Series of workshops
- Applicant survey



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## Key findings - competing objectives



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	Objectives considered to be very important	Percentage of survey respondents
1	Providing homes to people who need them the most	88%
2	Making best use of stock	75%
3	Ensuring people can sustain their tenancies:	
	Affordability.....	73%
	Supporting people into sustainable tenancies .....	70%

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## Competing objectives – policy pressures



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- To some extent there has always been some kind of trade-off in an attempt to balance a range of objectives
- **BUT** the current policy environment is making this more difficult:
  - Supply
  - Affordability
  - Cuts to funding for support services

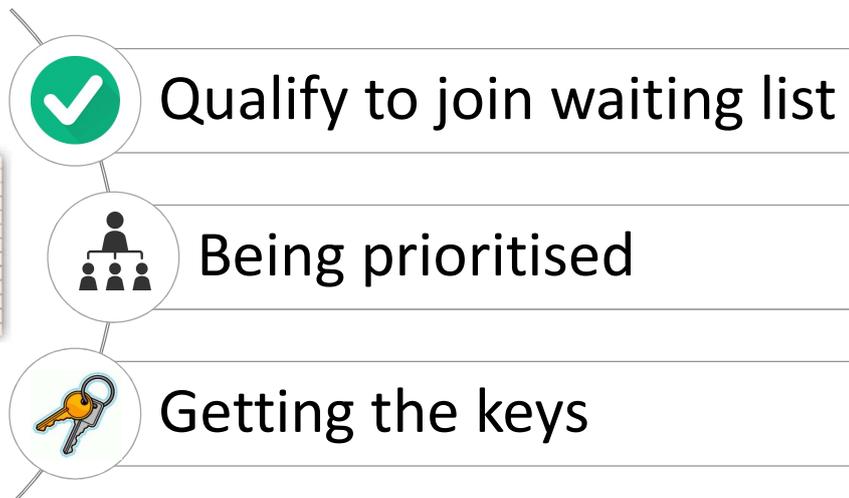
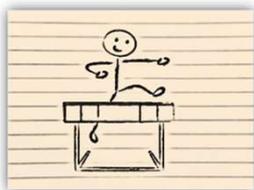


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## Competing objectives – things we have power over



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## People versus process?



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	CRITERIA
<b>Qualifying to join a list</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rent arrears</b></li> <li>• Local connection/residency requirements</li> <li>• ASB</li> <li>• Income/equity</li> <li>• <b>Suspended applications</b></li> </ul>
<b>Being prioritised</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable preference groups (what the law says must be considered)</li> <li>• <b>Reduced priority (e.g. arrears, local connection refusal of offers etc)</b></li> <li>• Enhanced priority e.g. working households, local connection, local protocols, tenancy training</li> <li>• To respond to local pressures e.g. temporary accommodation or under-occupation</li> </ul>
<b>Getting the keys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 106 requirements (e.g. local connection)</li> <li>• Lettings policies/plans (e.g. local connection, working households)</li> <li>• <b>Pre-tenancy assessments</b></li> <li>• <b>Rent in advance</b></li> </ul>

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## People first – some examples



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### Stage one

- Reviewing qualifying criteria for unintended consequences e.g. causing tensions in partnerships with HAs and pressure on other services.
- Making the application process simpler and ensuring decisions are genuinely made on a case by case basis.

### Stage two

- Introducing home visits to find out more about applicants' circumstances.
- Having a clear policy and procedure for how you approach restrictions.
- Using priority as a way to avoid disqualifying applicants altogether.

### Stage three

- Making informed decisions about section 106 local connection requirements.
- Works towards a pre-tenancy assessment approach that supports access rather than restricts it.
- Working with partners to tap into support resources, including pre-tenancy training.

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## Other things to think about



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- **CBL systems**
  - Information for applicants
  - Balancing partner priorities
  - Consistency post nomination
- **Nomination agreements**
  - Reviewing them
  - Making sure information is
  - Monitoring outcomes of nominations
- **Partnerships are crucial to making this work!**



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## Applicant survey quote



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“We do not all fit into tick boxes nor do our individual circumstances. We should be banded with some humanity and not by the tick boxes that do not always reflect our circumstances”

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Thank you for listening!



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