

Armed Forces Personnel and Local Connection

From 24th August the legislation has changed around Armed Forces and Local Connection. From this date on the Home Choice Plus Partnership will follow these new regulations.

The regulations are;

Where local housing authorities decide to use a local connection requirement as a qualification criterion, they must not apply that criterion to the following persons so as to disqualify them from an allocation of social housing:

- a) those who are currently serving in the regular forces or who were serving in the regular forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing
- b) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- c) existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service

In addition from 9th November 2012 further regulations were introduced for armed forces to obtain additional priority on the waiting list where they have an urgent housing need and are in one of the reasonable preference categories.

The reasonable preference categories are;

1. People who are homeless
2. People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing
3. People otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
4. People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds
5. People who need to move to a particular locality where failure to meet that need would cause hardship.

The regulations are;

that local housing authorities must frame their allocation scheme to give additional preference to the following persons if they fall within one or more of the statutory reasonable preference categories and are in urgent housing need:

- a) serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- b) former members of the regular forces
- c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- d) existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service