

**Guidelines for prioritisation for the location of offers of Temporary Accommodation under s188 and/or s193 Housing Act 1996):**

*January 2013*

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The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is committed to securing suitable temporary accommodation for homeless households where this is required under S188 or S193 of the Housing Act. The Council's aim is to provide accommodation within Kingston Borough wherever possible, but unfortunately this is not always achievable. The Council is dependant on the supply of accommodation that is available, and ongoing welfare benefit changes mean that for some households, accommodation in Kingston Borough will not be affordable. As a result, there will be an increasing need to use accommodation that may be at a distance from Kingston, and a process needs to be in place to ensure that the Council prioritise those who have the greatest need to be in or close to a particular location. Where a household needs to be moved away from a particular location for safety reasons, this will always be taken into account when deciding on temporary accommodation allocation.

In assessing the allocation the Council will consider whether the applicant can afford the housing without being deprived of basic essentials such as food, clothing, heating, transport and any other specific essentials a household may have; and in so doing will take account of costs resulting from the location of the accommodation.

It should be noted that these are guidelines only and the individual circumstances of each case including the time likely to be spent in the accommodation must always be taken into account when determining the suitability of an offer of Temporary Accommodation.

**Group A** - The Council has made a firm commitment to households in this group, who will be offered Temporary Accommodation in RBK, adjacent boroughs<sup>1</sup> to RBK and boroughs in the South West London sub-region<sup>2</sup> wherever possible:

- Households with one child (or more) in secondary school in their final year of Key Stage 4 (generally Year 11)
- Households with one child (or more) who has a Statement of Special Educational Needs
- Households with one child (or more) who is the subject of a Child Protection Plan

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<sup>1</sup> Adjacent boroughs (not in South West London sub region) are: *Borough of Elmbridge* and the *Borough of Epsom & Ewell*

<sup>2</sup> Boroughs in the South West London sub-region are: *London Borough of Sutton, London Borough of Merton, London Borough of Richmond, London Borough of Croydon, London Borough of Wandsworth, London Borough of Lambeth*

- Households where one person (or more) is receiving NHS treatment for mental health problems other than from their GP, (eg from the Community Mental Health team) and/or is on the Care Programme Approach (CPA)<sup>3</sup>
- Households where a member of the household is caring for another person in the borough who falls into one of the following categories:
  - a) Over 75 years old and living alone, or with no other member of the household under 75 years of age, OR
  - b) In receipt of a registered care package, OR
  - c) In receipt of the medium or higher rate of the care component or the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, War Disablement pension or any equivalent replacement benefit introduced under welfare reforms.

*The Council would require evidence of the age/benefits/care package as appropriate, and evidence of caring responsibility in the form of a letter from their GP/social worker/other professional.*

**Group B – Households in this group will be prioritised for Temporary Accommodation in a borough which is within one hour's travelling distance on public transport from the RBK boundary**

- Households with one child (or more) in primary school (up to and including Year 6) in Kingston Borough or neighbouring boroughs
- Households with one child (or more) in secondary school or further education college in Kingston Borough or neighbouring boroughs (other than those in the final year of Key Stage 4 – see Group A above.)
- Households where one person (or more) is in permanent and settled employment (for at least six months prior to date of homelessness application) – this group will be prioritised for housing within one hour's travel of their workplace.
- Households where one person (or more) is receiving medical treatment that can only be provided by a specific medical facility - this group will be prioritised for housing within one hour's travel of the medical facility
- Lone parent households with a baby under 6 months old at the time of allocation

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/CarersDirect/guide/mental-health/Pages/care-programme-approach.aspx>

**Group C**

All other homeless households will be offered Temporary Accommodation wherever the borough is able to procure it.

**Support and Resettlement**

Households who are more vulnerable will be offered an interview with the Housing Service/Resettlement Support Service, and a care plan will be prepared to address identified needs. Support will be provided in relation to these needs, eg, accessing GPs, health visitors, education and Children Centres. The Temporary Accommodation Admissions Team will provide details of incoming households to receiving boroughs. Where an area is used on a regular basis for the provision of Temporary Accommodation, an information pack will be provided covering local services.

