



Key Changes to Local Connection Criteria Fact Sheet

Anyone who wishes to apply to join the housing register must have a local connection to the Cheshire West and Chester area. This means that an applicant must either currently live, work or have family in the area to be considered.

What were the old local connection criteria?

The old Allocations Policy stated: that the applicant must have lived within the area for at least 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years; or have immediate family in the area; or have a permanent contract of employment in the area or lastly; have any other significant reason as to why they need to live in the area to come on to the housing register.

So what's changed?

To help simplify things, the new policy states that applicants must have lived in the area for 2 years or more. All the other exceptions listed above remain the same in the new policy.

Do the new local connection criteria apply to everyone?

The local connection criteria do not apply:

- If an applicant is homeless and the Council has accepted a homeless duty to them;
- If an applicant is leaving prison or a secure unit or hospital, rehabilitation centre, refuge, hostel or supported accommodation scheme;
- If an applicant is a care leaver below the age of 21 years and are owed a duty under Section 23C of the Children Act 1989;
- If an applicant is suffering from domestic abuse or a hate crime from another area, or they are on a witness protection program, or where by not moving to the area this would be detrimental to their wellbeing or cause significant hardship;
- If an applicant is a serving member of the armed forces or; they have served in the regular armed forces within the five years immediately prior to the date of their application to go on the register or; they are a serving or a former serving member of the regular armed forces or reserve forces and they are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability as a result of their service;

- If an applicant is a bereaved spouse/civil partner of a former serving member of the regular armed forces and have recently ceased (or will soon cease) to be entitled to reside in services accommodation.

What happens if an applicant doesn't meet the new local connection criteria?

Unfortunately, if an applicant does not meet the local connection criteria they will not be able to join the housing register however, if an applicant feels that their circumstances mean that do qualify then they can speak to a member of our team by contacting West Cheshire Homes directly via:

Telephone: **0300 123 2442**

Email: westcheshirehomes@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Post: **West Cheshire Homes, Council Offices, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, CH65 0BE.**

For more information about the local connection criteria and any exemptions, please see our guide: [Local Connection Criteria and Exemptions](#).



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