



I am writing to make a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 relating to support for care leavers for whom your local authority has corporate parenting responsibilities.

1. Are care leavers given any “reasonable preference” for social housing under your local authority’s social housing allocations policy?

Yes care leavers are awarded Group A priority.
2. How many priority bands or categories does your local authority housing allocation policy have?

3 Groups A – C with points awarded in Group B.
3. Under your local authority’s social housing allocations policy, which priority banding would care leavers be given if they had no additional need or vulnerability?

All care leavers are given Group A priority regardless of additional needs or vulnerabilities when they are due to leave their care home or foster home.
4. Are there any circumstances or criteria in which care leavers from other local authorities can be assessed as having a local area connection under your local authority’s housing allocations policy, and if so, what are these circumstances or criteria?

Wigan operate an open house register meaning out of borough applicants can apply to join the Housing Register, however their application would be assessed in accordance with the Allocations policy and their priority reduced if they are unable to demonstrate a local connection to the borough. This applies to all applicants living out of the borough regardless of whether or not they are a care leaver. Local connection criteria is stipulated in 5.2.16 and 5.2.17 of the Allocations policy which can be found on our website.
5. What are the criteria or circumstances in which care leavers aged 21-25 can be assessed as in priority need for a homelessness duty?

Care leavers over the age of 20 can be found in priority need if they are deemed vulnerable due to having been in care.
6. Are there circumstances or criteria in which care leavers can be assessed as intentionally homeless, and if so, what are these circumstances / criteria?

As with all applicants, care leavers can be assessed as intentionally homeless. However, we must be satisfied that the support and accommodation met the care leaver’s needs.

7. Does your local authority have a joint housing protocol for care leavers across children's services and housing services? Yes
8. Does your local authority currently provide a housing guarantor scheme for care leavers, and if so, what are the eligibility criteria for this scheme? No – Although this is something we are looking to put in place. We are currently developing our own Guarantor Agreement, to allow us to act as a rental guarantor for local care leavers accessing private rented and/or student accommodation. Whilst this is in development, we will assist care leavers by purchasing guarantor products/ services on their behalf if required. All care leavers are eligible for this support up until (at least) the age of 25.
9. Does your local authority currently provide a tenancy deposit scheme for care leavers, and if so, what are the eligibility criteria for this scheme? Yes, we provide rental deposits for local care leavers accessing privately rented accommodation, which may take the form of a paper 'bond' or guarantee (to be claimed against in the event of rental arrears or property damage), or a standard cash deposit. To be eligible for this support, applicants must demonstrate a low-income i.e. they cannot fund the up-front cash deposit themselves, and the requirement for an urgent move e.g. if they have been served with an eviction notice or their current accommodation/ living arrangements are unsuitable.