

## **Changes to the Lettings Policy**

When the council's lettings policy and the homesearch scheme were introduced in September 2005, it was agreed that a review should be carried out following its first year of operation. As a result of this, and following a wide-ranging consultation programme which sought the views of residents and a range of agencies, several changes were agreed. Some of these key changes are listed below and will apply from beginning of April 2008:

### **Advertising adapted homes**

Currently offers of adapted homes, both for wheelchair use as well as lesser adaptations, are made directly to applicants who have been assessed as needing such a home. It has been agreed that advertising some or all of these homes is investigated and we are currently looking into this.

### **Suspension from the bidding process**

Applicants who have refused 10 offers of accommodation will be suspended from the bidding process for 6 months.

### **Homeless without priority need**

This category no longer has priority status for rehousing and has been removed from Band 3 (this does not affect those previously accepted and they will retain their Band 3 priority).

### **Band changes**

Statutory obligation category is moved from Band 2 to Band 1. Only a small number of families are affected and this change is not envisaged to have a noticeable effect on other applicants.

SHNAG (single homeless nominations and allocations group) category is moved from Band 1 to Band 2. This group are still likely to be rehoused within a similar period of time and this change will benefit all other very urgent applicants in Band 1.

### **Medical recommendation for ground floor or garden properties**

When this type of property is advertised, adverts may now indicate some priority will be given to those with a ground floor or garden medical recommendation as determined by our Medical Assessment Service. This will be applied where such an applicant is amongst the first three shortlisted applicants, and within the same Band as the highest applicant on the shortlist, or in the next Band below. Properties will be selected over the coming weeks.

An updated version of the summary of the lettings policy 'Letting Southwark Homes' will be available shortly on [www.southwark.gov.uk](http://www.southwark.gov.uk) or a copy can be obtained free of charge from the Homesearch Centre, area housing office or one stop shop at the end of April.