

# The Emergency Allocations Policy - Impact of Direct Matching

## Outcomes Oct - Nov 2023

### Housing Services Division November 2023



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## Context

At its meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 Cabinet considered the findings of the Communities, Homes, and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Task & Finish Group to develop an Emergency Social Housing Allocations Policy for Carmarthenshire to address the unprecedented situation where the Council, as with all Welsh Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords, was facing increased demand for social housing that was exceeding the level of supply.

The Emergency Allocations Policy was approved by Cabinet at this meeting, together with the following recommendation:

*That the Scrutiny Committee receive updates at every meeting from officers on the effectiveness of the change; that the content of the update reports (attached) include data for the previous period referring to:*

- Proportion of properties directly matched and those advertised
- Banding of Clients directly matched
- Number of properties directly matched and advertised by each community connection area, type of property and landlord
- Proportion of direct matches that were successful
- Number of direct matches where the client requests a review of the allocation, and the outcome of those reviews
- Number of direct matches where the client refuses the allocation but doesn't request a review

This is the fourth report of data available for direct matching which covers from October 2023 to November 2023. Also included is previous data updated as offers and acceptances have gone through the system.

The data in this report highlights how this has impacted on the number of properties available to bid on for the wider housing register.

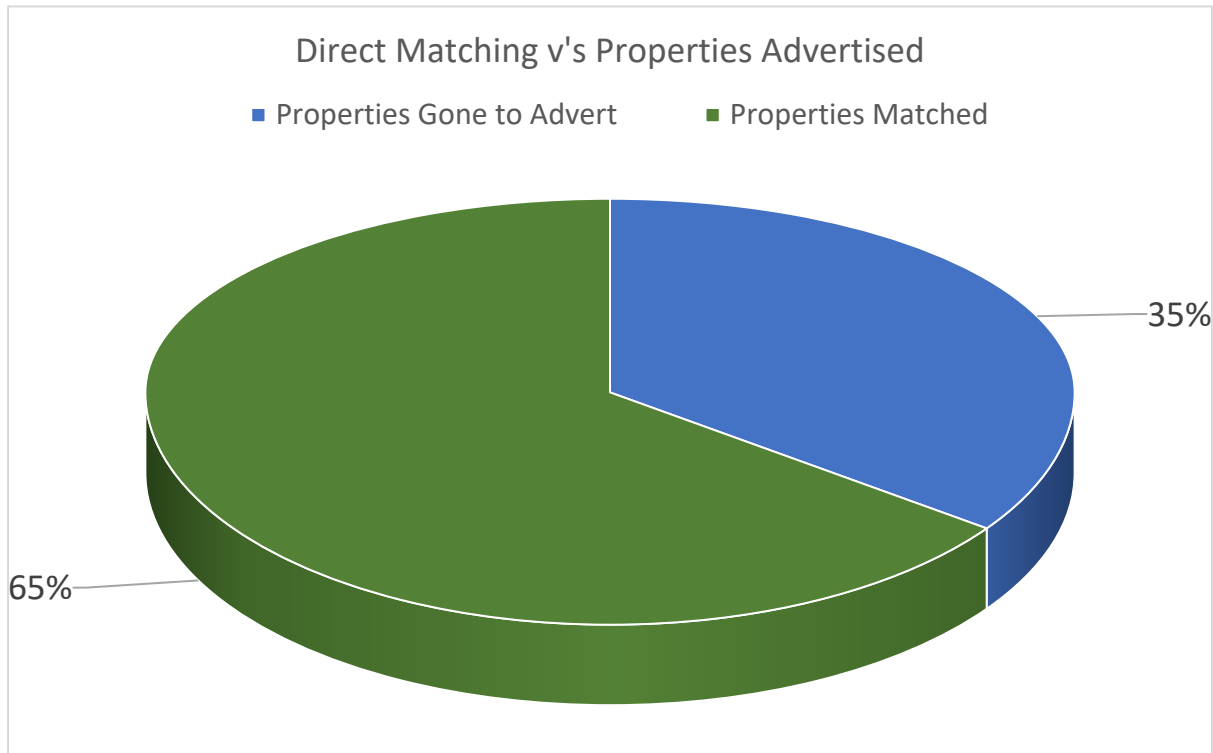
## Recommendations

Communities, Homes, And Regeneration Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

1. Consider the data provided in the monitoring report of the Emergency Social Housing Allocation update report on the operation of the new allocation policy.
2. Provide feedback on any additional or detailed information required for the next quarterly monitoring report being mindful of GDPR rules.

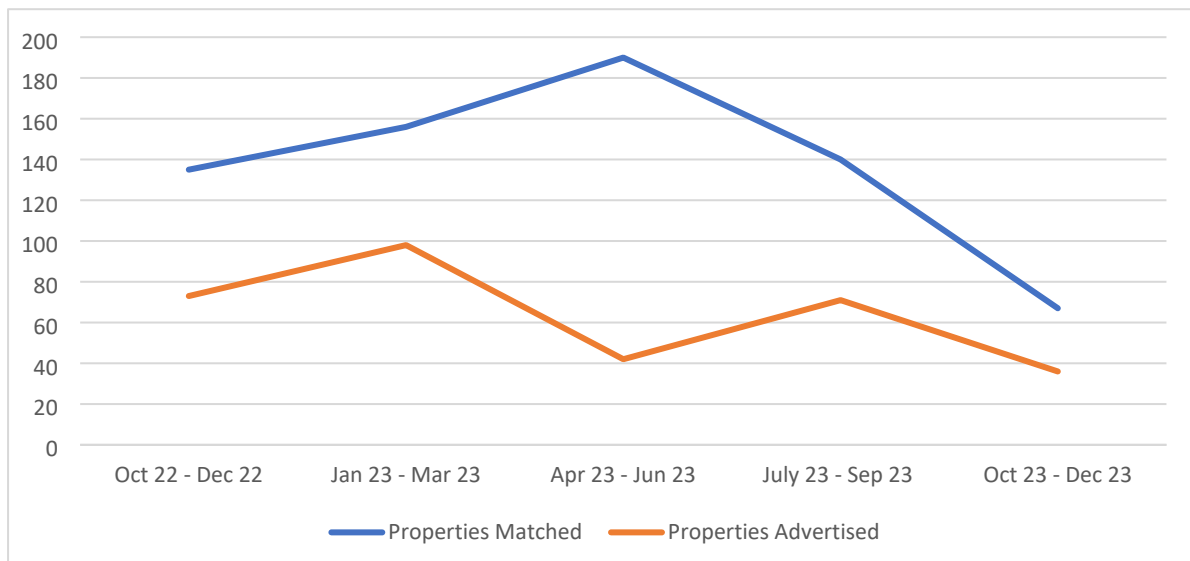
# Number of properties matched

**Graph 1. Properties Matched October 2023 – November 2023**

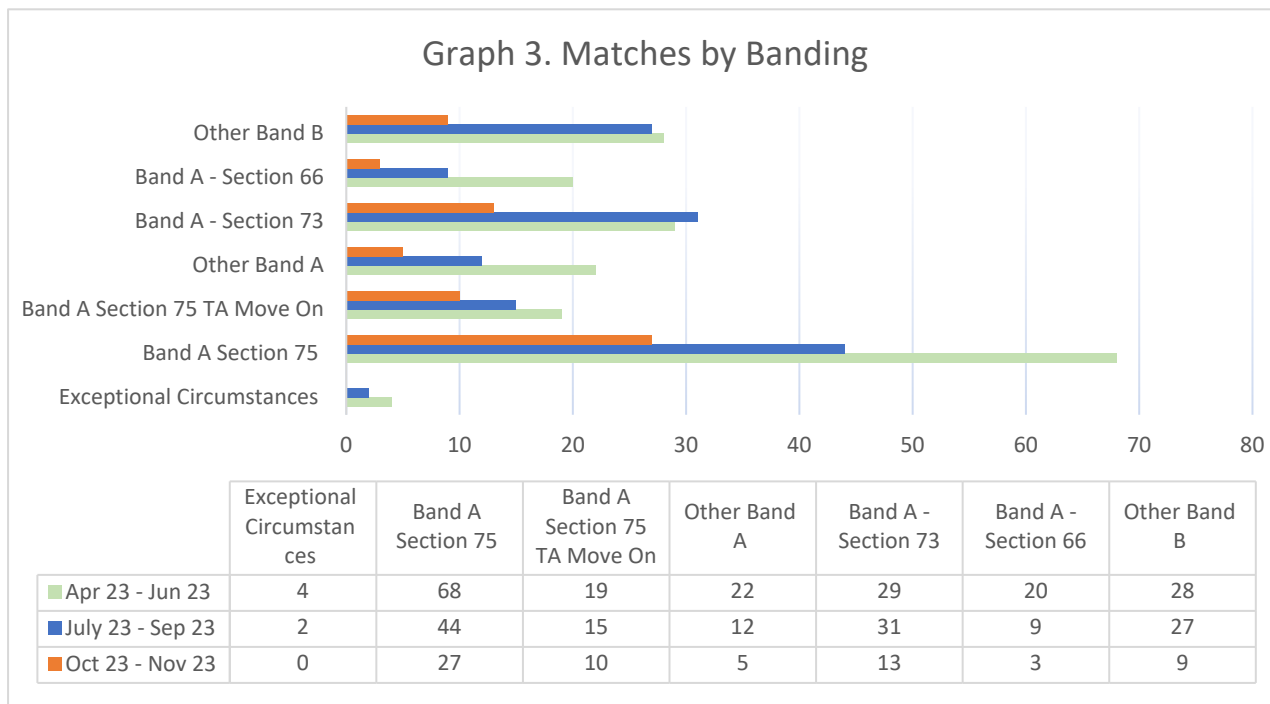


Properties Gone to Advert	36
Properties Matched	67

**Graph 2. Properties directly matched v's properties advertised.**



## Matches by Band



## Matches by Community Connection Ward, Property Type and Landlord

**Table 1. Matches By Community Connection Area**

Community Connection Area	No of Matches		
	Apr-Jun 23	Jul-Sep 23	Oct-Dec 23
Amman Valley	6	6	3
Ammanford	23	8	7
Carmarthen	17	26	7
Gwendraeth	12	20	7
Llandovery/Llandeilo	10	7	1
Llanelli East	16	20	11
Llanelli North/Rural	9	8	8
Llanelli Town	27	23	14
Llanelli West	19	12	4
Rural Central	2	3	0
Rural North	7	4	3
Rural West	42	3	2

**Table 2. Matches By Property Type**

Property Type	No of Matches		
	Apr-Jun 23	Jul-Sep 23	Oct-Dec 23
1 Bedroom Bungalow	7	6	2
1 Bedroom Flat	27	26	19
1 Bedroom Flat >55's	5	4	2
1 Bedroom House	0	2	0
1 bedroom Flat Extra Care	2	2	0
Bedsit	0	0	0
Shared Housing	9	0	0
2 Bedroom Bungalow	31	22	7
2 Bedroom Flat	19	11	7
2 Bedroom Flat > 55	0	1	0
2 Bedroom Maisonette	0	0	0
2 Bedroom House	45	26	14
3 Bedroom House	44	39	16
4 Bedroom House	1	0	0
5 Bedroom House	0	1	0

**Table 3. Matches By Landlord**

Landlord	Stock	No of Matches		
		Apr-Jun 23	Jul-Sep 23	Oct-Dec 23
Bro Myrddin	986	15	11	3
Caredig	600	7	7	3
Carmarthenshire Council	9324	113	108	56
Pobl	1425	9	8	3
Simple Lettings	134	3	3	2
Wales and West	152	43	3	0

## Definitions for the purpose of the report

### Homeless Duties within the Homeless (Wales) Act 2014

#### **Sec 66 – Prevention**

Once the household has been assessed and found to be at threat of homelessness, a duty to assist that household to try and prevent homelessness by taking all 'reasonable steps'. Some solutions such as mediation, support with debt

advice/mortgage/rent arrears, security measures put in place, advocacy, private rented accommodation, social housing, prevention fund.

### **Sec 73 – Relief**

Once the household has been assessed and found to be homeless, a duty to assist the household in resolving their homelessness.

### **Sec 75 – Final duty**

Once the duty under Section 73 has ended, if the household is homeless, has a local connection and fits into a priority need group the authority has a duty to house. This accommodation must be for a minimum of 6 months.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

If a household is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, they apply to the council for help. We may provide temporary accommodation; this can sometimes be referred to as 'emergency' accommodation or 'interim' accommodation'.

We provide different kinds of temporary accommodation. Some of which is provided by the Council, private landlords and commissioned rooms in Hotels and Bed and Breakfast that we have the responsibility for arranging and allocating.

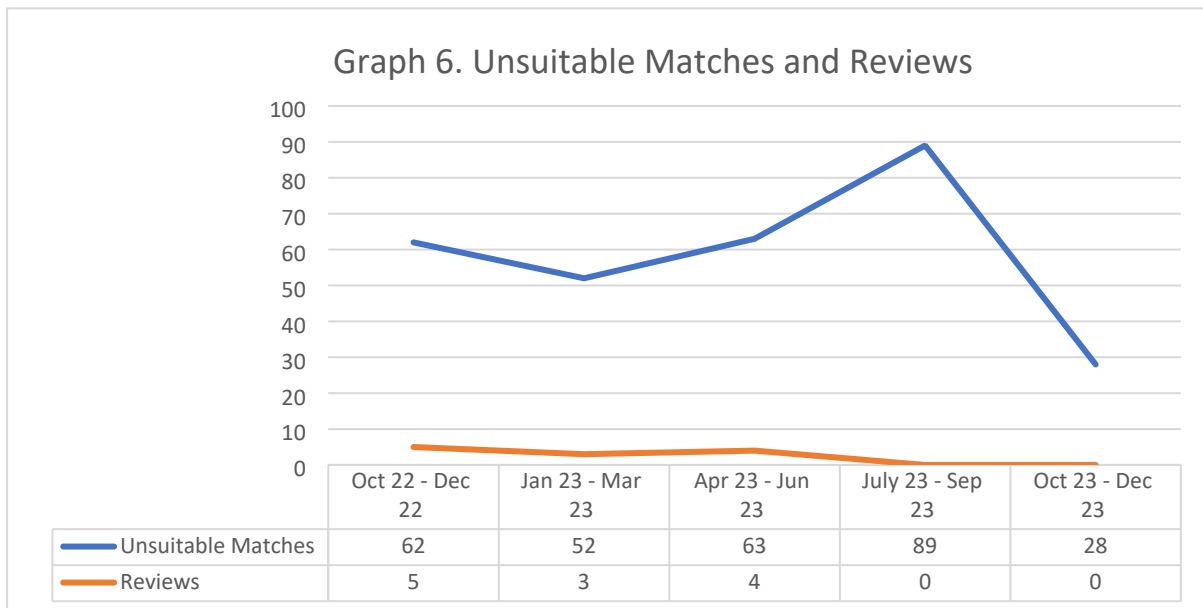
At the time of writing this report (14/11/23) there are no households with children in Bed and Breakfast or Hotels. For families these are used in emergency situations only until such time as we can arrange more suitable temporary accommodation.

### **No Preference Group**

Applicants are placed in a Band depending on their housing need identified through the housing assessment. Applicants will fall under the 'No preference group' if they:

- Have the financial resources available to meet their housing costs.
- Have been guilty, or a member of their household has been guilty, of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant of the Council.
- Do not have a local connection to Carmarthenshire, as defined at section 81 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. A person has a local connection with the area because:
  - the person is, or in the past was, normally resident there, and the residence is or was of the person's own choice.
  - the person is employed there.
  - of family associations.
  - unless they are exempt because of special circumstances (i.e., fleeing domestic abuse or violence, moving to receive or provide care to someone who has a local connection)

## Unsuitable matches and reviews



### Reasons for unsuitable matches:

- Change of Circumstances i.e., no longer needed accommodation, other needs we were unaware of.
- Property not suitable to meet their needs – medical conditions, family make up.
- Property topography unsuitable.
- Refusing properties after initial verbal offer – after viewing not happy with property offered i.e. don't like property or area, no off street parking
- Band B refusals – applicants can have 2 reasonable offers

There has been a reduction in the number of unsuitable matches due to a change in our approach to the matching process. By contacting applicants first we are able to establish the persons circumstances to ensure that it would be an appropriate offer that would meet their needs.



# Housing Register Data

**Table 4. Number of Households on the Housing Register**

<b>Band</b>	<b>Applications 09/10/22</b>	<b>Applications 12/04/23</b>	<b>Applications 13/06/23</b>	<b>Applications 28/08/23</b>	<b>Applications 14/11/2023</b>
<b>Band A</b>	607	830	831	581	528
<b>Band B</b>	1197	926	887	1077	1091
<b>Band C (Registered Only)</b>	2610	2463	2488	2708	2847
<b>No Preference Group</b>	-	332	322	374	380
<b>Total</b>	4414	4551	4528	4740	4846

- Analysis and breakdown of reasons why households are placed in the no preference group to be carried out.