



**Drumchapel  
Housing**  
Co-operative Limited



## **COMMON ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

**This document is available in other formats such as audio tape, CD, Braille and in large print. It can also be made available in other languages on request.**

**Approved by Committee : July 2017**

**Implemented : July 2017**

**Review Date : June 2020**



## POLICY BACKGROUND

There are 5 Registered Social Landlords (RSL'S) partnering in this Common Allocations Policy in addition to this, these RSL's are part of the Glasgow Housing Register (GHR), this register is a single housing list which is maintained on a database by Glasgow City Council on behalf of Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) in the west and north west of the city. All allocations of housing are made through this list by the partnering landlords who are all based in Drumchapel and are:

- Cernach Housing Association
- Drumchapel Housing Association
- Kendoon Housing Association
- Kingsridge Cleddans Housing Association
- Pineview Housing Association

The GHR enables applicants to select the area/s they would like to be rehoused.

This Common Allocations Policy (CAP) sets out how we allocate housing. In other words, how we match the people who apply for our homes with homes that become available. This policy refers to a person or people in a house as a household. To allocate our housing each RSL follows a legislative and regulatory framework.

We want to make the most of your housing options and our main aim is to make Drumchapel a place where applicants want to live and tenants and their households are able to live in good-quality housing affordable housing in a safe and pleasant environment.

## COMMON ALLOCATION POLICY

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out the framework as to how the common allocation policy involving:

- Cernach Housing Association
- Drumchapel Housing Co-operative
- Kendoon Housing Association
- Kingsridge Cleddans Housing Association
- Pineview Housing Association

### 2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy complies with relevant statutory requirements of the:

- Scottish Social Housing Charter (1<sup>ST</sup> April 2012)
- Social Housing Allocations – A Practice Guide March 2011.



### 3. Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

The following charter outcomes and standards are directly relevant to the common allocation policy:

#### **Charter Outcome 1 – Equalities**

*‘every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services’.*

#### **Charter Outcome 2 – Communication**

*‘tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides’.*

#### **Charter Outcome 4 - Quality of housing**

*‘tenants’ homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair’.*

#### **Charter Outcome 7,8 and 9 - Housing Options**

*‘people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them’.*

*‘tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options’.*

*‘people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness’.*

#### **Charter Outcome 10 ‘Access to Social Housing**

*‘people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects for being housed’.*

#### **Charter Outcome 11 ‘Tenancy Sustainment**

*‘tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations’.*



### 4. Policy Statement

The main objectives of this policy are:

- Meeting all relevant legal and good practice standards, for example, addressing the specific housing needs of groups set out in housing law
- To operate a policy that is easily understood and simple to administer
- Maximise opportunities by offering applicants comprehensive advice and information concerning their housing options
- Avoid discrimination on grounds covered in our equality policy such as discrimination on grounds of age, belief, disability, language, marital status, race, sex, sexual orientation or social origin
- Establishing new tenancies that are successful and sustainable
- Processing personal information confidentially to meet relevant legal obligations
- Making best use of the housing stock through promoting tenants' rights such as the right to exchange homes
- Forming partnerships with other housing providers to address housing need
- To respect at all times the human rights of applicants and in particular their right to respect for private and family life
- Maximising income by letting empty houses quickly in accordance with timescales
- Dealing with appeals and complaints fairly in accordance with timescales
- Assessing if policy objectives are met through our audit and performance management system
- Reviewing the policy every three years

In order to achieve these objectives comprehensive staff training will take place to ensure the policy is implemented effectively and quality services are delivered.

### 5. Allocation Law

We will ensure that the allocation policy satisfies legal provisions. The purpose of this section is to explain legal provisions for housing applicants. Legal rules on allocations are contained in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, 2001, 2010 and 2014.

These rules cover the following matters:

- Access to the housing register
- Groups that are to be given reasonable preference when letting houses
- Factors that must be disregarded when letting houses



- Information
- Publicity
- Access to personal information

### 6. ACCESS TO THE HOUSING REGISTER

Any person who is sixteen years or more may apply to the Glasgow Housing Register. This is not, however, an automatic right to receive offers of housing. Section 7 explains how we prioritise applications in line with law and good practice.

Applicants must submit an application via the Glasgow Housing Register (GHR) and select the RSL in the area/s they want to be considered for rehousing. Applicants who do not have online access can be assisted in completing an online application form. Mutual exchanges and internal transfers are administered by each RSL separately from this list. All applicants applying through the GHR are given a unique number and can log in at any time to view or make changes to their application form.

In line with our equality commitments, this form can be made available in different languages and in alternative formats. We will also offer interpreting services where required

In addition, applications can be made by referrals by agencies that have an agreement with any of the aforementioned landlords. Examples being Glasgow City Council Homeless Service (also known as a Section 5 Homeless Referral).

### 7. REASONABLE PREFERENCE GROUPS

Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 the law requires us to give reasonable preference to certain groups when letting houses. The groups to which we must give reasonable preference when letting houses are:

- (a) Homeless people and those threatened with homelessness and have unmet housing need
- (b) People living in:
  - Unsatisfactory housing conditions and have unmet housing need
  - Tenants of houses held by a social landlord which the social landlord considers to be under-occupied.



For clarity, a person has unmet housing needs where the social landlord considers the persons to have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options which are available. It is recognised that people may be in housing need for other reasons other than those covered in the law. Section 6 details the range of housing needs that we address.

### **8. FACTORS NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR ACCESS TO THE HOUSING REGISTER**

In accordance with legislation, certain factors must be ignored by landlords when assessing an application to the housing register, these are:

- Length of time applicants have lived in the area
- Housing debt not owed by applicants, for example, rent arrears owed by a partner
- Housing debt now repaid
- Any non-housing debt such as council tax
- Age of applicants unless under the age of 16
- Applicants income or property, including income or property owned by other household members
- Any rent arrears/tenancy related debt

Whilst these factors do not affect an applicant gaining access to the housing register there are factors that can affect the status of an application. These include:

- Any rent arrears where the amount is more than one months rent and or where the applicant has not been maintaining an arrangement for paying the arrears for at least three months
- If you have been acted anti-socially within the last three years
- If you own a property

Section 9 gives more information on reasons why an application would be suspended.

### **9. SUSPENSION FROM THE HOUSING LIST**

We can suspend applicants for unpaid rent or other monies owed which relates to a current or previous tenancy/tenancies, for example:

- Unpaid rent and factoring charges
- Outstanding rechargeable repairs. For example, if a tenant has lost their keys and we have changed the locks
- The cost of cleaning a house if you leave furniture or rubbish behind when you move out
- Legal costs if we have taken an applicant to court



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If an applicant owes money for unpaid rent we will suspend if:

- More than one month's rent is owed and there is no mutually agreed arrangement to repay it; or
- The applicant owes more than a month's rent, a mutually agreed arrangement is in place to pay it, but has not been kept for three months

We can also suspend applicants due to anti-social behaviour, for example:

- The applicant has been given a final warning for anti-social behaviour in the last six months
- The applicant has been given a "Notice of Proceedings" for antisocial behaviour in the last six months
- The applicant or someone that lives with them has been given an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) or an interim ASBO (the ASBO must be removed by the Sheriff Court before we can end a suspension)
- The applicant has a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy because of anti-social behaviour
- The applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years
- The applicant has been violent or aggressive towards staff

We can also suspend applications due to other types of breaches of their tenancy agreement, for example:

- The applicant has been given a Notice of Proceedings for breaking the rules of the tenancy agreement in the last six months
- The applicant has been evicted for a breach of a tenancy in the last three years

When we suspend an application, we will write and explain why, how long the suspension is for and what needs to be done to remove the suspension. We will also write to the applicant when we have removed the suspension

### **10. INFORMATION**

We can make available a summary of this policy. Applicants can also obtain a full copy on request. The summary and full copy are provided free of charge and can be made available in alternative formats.

### **11. PUBLICITY**

We must publish details of how we assess priority. These rules cover all applicants on our housing register, including existing tenants who wish to transfer to alternative accommodation.



Each organisation operates a separate internal and mutual exchange policy. The mutual exchange policy covers tenants wanting to exchange their homes with other tenants. Scottish secure tenants have a legal right to exchange their homes with other tenants. Landlords can only refuse permission if it is reasonable to do so.

## 12. ACCESS TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

Applicants have rights to access personal information in two ways.

Firstly, an applicant is entitled to view information supplied in connection with their application. This right is set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, 2001, 2010 and 2014.

Secondly, an applicant may access personal information as determined by rights of access under the Data Protection Act 1998 and any subsequent amendments.

We provide this information on request within 28 working days. A £10 charge will be applicable for the RSL providing this information.

## 13. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

This section explains the stages and rules concerning the allocation process. Our staff procedures cover all these stages. These procedures contain audit trails to ensure that policy objectives are met.

### 13.1 Admission to the housing register

In order to be admitted to the housing register, we ask applicants to complete an online application form through the Glasgow Housing Register (GHR). This application covers all aforementioned landlords. To complete an application on the GHR applicants must have an email address. Details on how to get an email address are on the form. If you don't have access to IT, you can contact one of the partners listed.

Our target for assessing completed application forms providing all relevant proofs are in place is 7 days from the date all information is received. Applicants are sent written confirmation of their points award.

If one of the partners requires further information separate from your application for you will be contacted direct. Your application will still be pointed on the information you have provided. Applicants can contact housing staff during office hours to discuss application details.





If required, we may provide support services including interpreters for hearing impaired applicants or people who do not speak English.

### **14. APPLYING FOR A JOINT TENANCY**

Applicants, including existing tenants, may apply to have a joint tenancy with someone who is staying (or intending to stay) with them.

We encourage joint applicants – of the same or opposite sex – to apply for joint tenancies to ensure the same legal rights.

### **15. TENANTS' RIGHTS**

We provide information on tenant rights at various stages of the application process. We also explain tenants' rights in detail at the stage when applicants sign their tenancy agreement.

### **16. INFORMATION AND PROCESSING APPLICATIONS**

We process personal information provided on the application form in line with legal provisions. Accordingly, we only share information with other agencies if we have applicants consent, or if permitted by legislation. We may ask for references from any landlord or mortgage lender to confirm housing and tenancy details. We request applicants' consent to do this.

We will check your current housing position before making an offer of housing. This is good practice to ensure that information is recorded accurately and enables the housing provider to make suitable offers of housing. For instance, we may telephone applicants to confirm details are as recorded on their application form.

We may also carry out home visits to confirm application details. This is of particular importance if no references are available confirming household details. For example, at the home visit, application details may have changed and an offer may no longer be appropriate.

If information held is inaccurate, the applicant will be informed that their application has been temporarily suspended until the application is brought up to date. If information provided is inaccurate this may result in an offer not being made or withdrawn

If an applicant is re-housed based on false information that an applicant has made knowingly, we are entitled to take legal action to recover the tenancy.

Applicants are responsible for advising us of any changes to their housing circumstances.



**17. VERIFYING AN APPLICANTS CIRCUMSTANCES**

Examples of the verification required include but are not limited to:

The main/joint applicant/s are required to submit proof of identity in the form of:

- Current address (2 items)
- Photographic ID

Proofs for other persons/circumstances are listed below. Please note that this list is not exhaustive:

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Verification Required</b>
All applicants to the list	Proof of identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of Current Address (2 items)</li> <li>• Photographic ID</li> </ul>
All household members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of current address (1 items)</li> </ul>
Homeless or threatened with homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment undertaken by Glasgow City Council and copy of Housing Options Plan</li> </ul>
Asked to leave current accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of valid Notice to Quit</li> </ul>
In need of rehousing as health affected by current housing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date relevant medical documentation</li> <li>• Medical form completed</li> <li>• Other supporting information</li> </ul>
Residency	Proof of residency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank Statement</li> <li>• Driving Licence</li> <li>• Tenancy Agreement</li> </ul>
Access to children – The policy on access to children may differ between each RSL.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from child’s other parent</li> <li>• Letter from lawyer</li> </ul>
Experiencing harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corroborating evidence from:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Landlord</li> <li>• Support agencies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT B1 form or similar showing expected due date</li> </ul>
Owner Occupiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of intent to sell</li> </ul>
People from Abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration status</li> </ul>



### **18. PEOPLE FROM ABROAD – IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM**

People subject to immigration control must declare this on the application form. Eligibility for housing will require to be assessed in terms of Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and asylum and immigration legislation. People may remain on the housing list, but will be asked to provide evidence of their immigration status before we can confirm if they are eligible for an offer of housing.

If a landlord cannot establish the identity of an applicant (or a member of their household), the Home Office can be contacted. The Home Office will then have 48 hours to provide their own verification, otherwise the landlord is free to allocate, and without penalty should there be illegal immigration involved.

### **19. APPLICANT CHOICE**

The Common Allocations Policy considers applicant choice however due to low stock turnover of particular house types, applicants will be queued for the apartment size that is suitable to their needs.

An applicant's choice of area and housing may be affected by legal orders and relevant guidance that we are required to follow. For instance, matrimonial interdicts and exclusion orders.

Some of the participating landlords of this policy are affiliated to Homeswapper, the largest national mutual exchange programme. This is renewed annually by each organisation. If your landlord is a member you can register and benefit from this mutual exchange facility free of charge.

### **20. OFFERS OF HOUSING**

Offers of housing are based on the applicant's housing needs and where possible preferences after confirming details on their application form. This is good practice as it aims to reduce inappropriate offers.

Reasonable offers are those that reflect an applicant's stated need for rehousing. For example, we will not offer applicants house types that do not suit their housing requirements for example we will not offer a top floor property where mobility requirements have been identified.

Each Association will provide advice and information on realistic preferences, as demand generally exceeds supply.



## 21. TENANCIES

We provide applicants who accept an offer of housing a Scottish Secure Tenancy in accordance with our legal obligations. In a limited number of instances, we may offer applicants a short Scottish secure tenancy. This has limited security of tenure.

Examples of grounds for a short Scottish secure tenancy agreement include:

- An applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the last three years
- A tenant (or a member of their family) is subject to an anti-social behaviour order
- The applicant owns a property that is not currently meeting their needs and requires housing on a temporary basis to enable their needs to be met pending making alternative arrangements

## 22. HOUSE SIZE

This section gives an example of the house size for which applicants may be considered. All offers of housing are based on individual circumstances. It also outlines rules to address overcrowding and under-occupation.

The size of property for which applicants may be considered is noted below:

Apartment size	2 Apt (1 bedroom)	3 Apt (2 bedroom)	4 Apt (3 bedroom)	5 Apt (4 bedroom)	6 Apt (5 bedroom)
Single Person	√				
Couple	√				
Parent(s) with 1 child		√			
Parent(s) with 2 children under 14 of same gender		√			
Parents(s) with 1 girl					



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and boy both under 8 years		√			
Parent(s) with 2 children of same gender where 1 is 16 years or older			√		
Parent(s) with 1 girl & 1 boy where oldest is over 8 years			√		

Apartment Size	2 Apt (1 bedroom)	3 Apt (2 bedroom)	4 Apt (3 bedroom)	5 Apt (4 bedroom)	6 Apt (5 bedroom)
Parent(s) with 5 children aged between 0 and 18				√	
Parent(s) + 1 extended family member & 4 children of different ages and gender					√

All applicants will be placed on the housing list for the size of property required based on their current household composition. In particular circumstances you may be able to obtain a property of a different size. See below for more information.



### Overcrowding rules

Demand for larger houses often exceeds supply. Applicants may be considered for smaller houses than specified in the table above, this decision will be made by the landlord of the property being offered.

We do not let houses to families if this would create statutory overcrowding, as this would constitute an offence.

### Under-occupation

In special circumstances a landlord may consider under occupation. The landlord offering the property will make this decision based on information provided by the applicant. It should be noted that if one landlord allows under occupation this may not reflect the decision made by another landlord.

For example under occupation, this may be necessary if:

- An applicant can show a need for such accommodation due to medical needs such as overnight support

Internal applicants affected by under-occupation will be prioritised for offers of housing. This is to ensure, as set out within The Housing Scotland Act 2010 as a reasonable preference group, that we make best use of stock.

## 23. GYPSEY TRAVELLERS

Applications from travellers or other applicants living in a caravan are placed in the appropriate group based on their present housing conditions and are awarded points based on their actual housing conditions.

Applications from travelling people who have nowhere to pitch their caravan would be referred to Glasgow City Council's homeless service.

## 24. REVIEWING APPLICATIONS

A review of applicants on the GHR will take place annually. Applicants can review and update their application at any time. Proof of any change to your circumstances will be required. It is important to update your application with accurate information so that appropriate offers of housing can be made.

If no response is received after a standard review and reminder letters applicants are removed from the housing list however you can re-apply at any time.



## **25. REMOVAL OF APPLICATIONS**

There are other occasions when we will remove applications from the register. An application will be removed if an applicant:

- Is housed by the any of the aforementioned landlords and confirms they wish their housing application cancelled
- Specifically requests that we remove their application
- Fails to respond to offers of accommodation within a reasonable timescale
- Fails to respond to a periodic review within a reasonable timescale
- Is deceased

## **26. OUR ALLOCATION SYSTEM**

This section explains the type of allocation system we have adopted to ensure that we meet our policy objectives effectively. The Common Allocation Policy has 3 categories which contains 3 sub groups, these groups are as undernoted:

- |         |   |  |
|---------|---|--|
| Group 1 | - | Homeless Persons as defined by current legislation |
| Group 2 | - | Housing List                                       |
|         |   | Sub Categories                                     |
|         |   | -Urgent Need                                       |
|         |   | -Medical Priority                                  |
|         |   | -Insecure Tenure                                   |
|         |   | -Overcrowding/Under occupation                     |
|         |   | -Care and Support                                  |
|         |   | -Aspirational                                      |
| Group 3 | - | Internal Transfers                                 |

Applicants are placed in the highest priority group reflecting their housing need.

An annual letting plan informed by housing need and demand will establish indicative percentage figures of anticipated lets from each group. Letting plans are agreed by each organisation.

For applicants placed in group 3 there may not be a housing need element for example, their current home meets their housing needs, we do not award housing points for aspirational applications. Instead, we add the application to the group and when a suitable property becomes available for offer to someone from the aspirational housing group, it is offered to the person who has been on the list (for that property type) longest and has the longest length of tenancy.



Each RSL forming part of this policy will administer internal transfers individually.

### **26.1 APPLICANTS WHO HAVE THE SAME POINTS IN THE SAME GROUP/CATEGORY**

If applicants share the same points and are within the same group, applications will be prioritised based on their time in housing need. Accordingly, if two applicants have the same points, the applicant who has been in housing need the longest will be given priority.

### **26.2 ADVANTAGES OF A GROUPING SYSTEM**

The advantages of a group points system are:

- Housing needs specified in law are addressed (the reasonable preference groups), as well as other housing needs
- Facilitates monitoring of allocation practice, in particular how effectively we are meeting our legal responsibilities
- Ensures accurate identification of housing needs and allows us to respond quickly to changing patterns of need
- Provides for a wide range of housing needs to be tackled thereby promoting our objective of creating sustainable communities

### **27. GROUPS – GROUP 1 - HOMELESSNESS**

The following is the points allocated in each group/category with the exception of Group 1.

We recognise our statutory responsibility in the prevention and resolution of homelessness.

All applicants who have a Resettlement Plan from the Casework Team and the landlord has been accepted as a Section 5 homeless referral will be placed in Group 1. Homelessness will be confirmed at the time of offer. If homelessness is not confirmed any offer of housing may be withdrawn.

Only accepted section 5 homeless referrals are placed within this group.

### **28. GROUP 2 – GENERAL HOUSING LIST**

The majority of applicants will fall into this category. Each application is pointed dependant on housing need in each sub category:





The undernoted details the category and points awarded within each.

**29. URGENT NEED**

- Sub Category
- Property subject to demolition or regeneration
  - Applicants to be rehoused through care and support initiatives
  - Applicants subject to domestic abuse/harassment

**a) Properties subject to demolition or re-generation**

Applicants whose houses are subject to demolition or regeneration due to action taken by their own landlord and who require permanent re-housing are regarded as being in serious need.

We will consider on case by case basis requests by local landlords to assist their clearance programmes.

**Points awarded: 250**

**b) People re-housed through care and support initiatives**

This covers applicants who need to be housed as part of community care initiatives. Applicants are referred through Social Work or other support agencies.

Examples of such groups are:

- Young people looked after and accommodated by Glasgow City Council
- Residents of hospitals and other institutions who are returning to the community
- Residents in supported accommodation now ready to move to other accommodation

**Points awarded: 250**

**c) People subjected to domestic abuse, harassment**

This covers applicants who need to be rehoused as a consequence of harassment or domestic abuse. The types of abuse and harassment we consider include:

- Domestic abuse
- Racial harassment
- Religious or sectarian harassment
- Homophobic harassment



- Transphobic harassment
- Harassment of disable people, including those with a learning disability

**Points awarded: 150 points**

**d) Needs not covered by policy**

We apply this section of the policy only in **exceptional** circumstances if our present policy does not address the housing need in question. If this applies, we will award points only after each case has been fully investigated and evidence gathered.

In order to ensure accountability, each case must be approved a senior member of staff. The point’s award is withdrawn if the particular need is resolved before an offer is made. These cases will be monitored closely and, if unique circumstances occur, this will be recognised within the policy review.

**Points awarded: 150**

**SUB CATEGORY – MEDICAL NEEDS AND ACCESSIBILITY**

Where the applicant or a member of their household suffers from any medical condition where rehousing would alleviate the medical problem, points may be awarded in recognition of this situation. The applicant will be required to complete a medical assessment form which will enable a decision to be made on the suitability for rehousing.

There are three gradings placed on an application for medical priority and these are described below:

**Priority A**

Where an applicants’ current accommodation is potentially life threatening or causing severe aggravation to his/her medical condition and where re-housing is extremely urgent. This refers to housebound cases, applicants in hospital awaiting an offer of accommodation before discharge or cases where there is severe difficulty accessing the accommodation.

**Priority B**

Where an applicants’ current accommodation is causing serious aggravation to an applicants’ medical condition. This refers to cases where there is difficulty getting to and from the accommodation or the internal layout is unsuitable.



<b>Medical Grade</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>
A	100
B	75

In the case of joint applicants who both have medical needs, two sets of points may be awarded this is at each RSL’s discretion.

An applicant where a move will not alleviate or address a medical problem, will receive no medical points.

**SUB CATEGORY – INSECURE TENURE**

We must give reasonable preference when letting houses to applicants living in unsatisfactory housing condition. This includes those:

- Living in housing below tolerable standard
- Living in other unsatisfactory housing that we refer to as accessibility or medical needs

Unsatisfactory housing is used in this policy to refer to housing needs relating to accessibility and medical needs.

**a) Housing below the tolerable standard**

Housing falls below the tolerable standard if it does not meet the relevant legal standard. A house is below the tolerable standard if it fails to meet any one of the elements within the tolerable standard.

For example, a property must be substantially free from rising damp or penetrating damp and must have a sink that has a supply of both hot and cold water.

It is anticipated that any award of points in this category will relate to accommodation in the private rented sector.

Points awarded: 20
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**(a) Insecurity of Accommodation**

Applicants from people living in insecure accommodation will be awarded points in this group.



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Insecurity of accommodation covers a range of situations, including applicants who live in:

- Private sector accommodation
- Private sector accommodation with limited security
- Tied accommodation
- Armed forces personnel
- People of no fixed abode

### **(i) Private sector accommodation**

Applicants who reside in privately rented accommodation will be awarded housing need points to reflect lesser security of tenure compared to that offered by social landlords and the realisation that affordability is a legitimate housing need.

Points awarded: 20

### **(ii) Private sector accommodation with limited security**

This covers private rented sector accommodation that is ending due to actions by the landlord or agency to seek recovery of repossession. For instance, this might apply in cases where the landlord is terminating either an assured or a short assured tenancy through the correct legal procedures.

Insecurity of tenure points may also be awarded to owners whose home is threatened because of mortgage default. This may happen if owners cannot afford to maintain mortgage payments and lenders have taken court action to recover the property for sale. Points are awarded once the owner has a date to leave accommodation. In processing applications, we carry out checks as required to confirm details.

Points awarded: 75

### **(iii) Tied accommodation**

This applies to applicants living in accommodation as part of their employment duties. We award points under this category when the accommodation is ending due to termination of employment. Points are awarded six months before the person leaves employment.

Points awarded: 75



**(iv) Armed forces personnel**

This applies to Armed Forces personnel who occupy service accommodation and want to be re-housed in our community. We encourage applicants to apply as soon as possible before discharge. Applicants are required to provide a copy of their certificate of discharge. Points are awarded six months before the person leaves the services.

Points awarded: 75

**(b) Relationship Breakdown**

This applies to partners in a relationship breakdown who now want to live separately. As applicants for housing, they now form a separate household. It should be noted that the current landlord has no obligation to provide housing for applicants in this category.

Points awarded: 20

**(c) Shared amenities**

Points are awarded to applicants who are living with other households if they share key amenities. The amenities for which points are awarded are kitchen, bathroom or toilet. Applicants need to only be sharing one of these amenities to qualify for the points.

<b>Household type</b>	<b>Points awarded</b>
Single person and couples	20
Families	20

Applicants who sublet part of their home or take in lodgers do not qualify for these points.

**(d) No fixed address**

Applicants with no fixed address are in this group.

For clarity, this would cover those applicants whose applications are registered c/o a Government agency such as the Job Centre or Social Work Departments.

Points awarded: 30



**SUB CATEGORY – OVERCROWDING/UNDER OCCUPATION**

When awarding points to applicants in this group, we use the below occupancy standard. This standard is used to calculate if overcrowding (or under-occupation) exists.

Occupancy standard

Household size	Bedrooms required
Single person	One
Each adult couple	One
A disabled child who cannot share a bedroom because of their disability	One
Two children of the same sex under 16	One
Two children under 10 regardless of their sex	One

We do not let houses to applicants if this creates statutory overcrowding. The size of houses that we let to applicants is based on our policy standard.

In the case of medical needs, extra room space may be required. This will be subject to confirmation and evidence provided by the applicant.

Overcrowding assessments are based on current circumstances. An RSL may consider particular circumstances and will operate their own policy. Applicants will be advised of this at the time of application.

The landlords participating in this Allocations Policy may take into account separated parents with shared access to children and award an additional bedroom regardless of how many children the applicant has access to. Each RSL operates a different policy for applicants who fall into this category. Applicants will be advised of this at the time of application.

In this group we have two separate sub-groups: overcrowding for waiting list applicants and transfer applicants.

Points awarded: 25 (for each extra room based on our occupancy standard)



**UNDER-OCCUPATION**

Reducing under-occupation helps us to make best use of our housing. Tenants may wish to move to smaller houses as their present home is too large. Tenants can apply to move to accommodation that reduces present under-occupation levels even if the house remains under-occupied. Applicants who meet this criteria would be awarded under-occupation points only if under-occupation is reduced.

Only tenants (including private rented sector tenants) will qualify for under occupation points. No points will be awarded to owner occupiers.

Two sub groups exist within this group:

- Existing tenants
- Other Registered Social Landlord tenants and tenants from the Private Rented Sector.

**Internal applicants will be prioritised.**

Points awarded: 10 (for each room under-occupied based on our occupancy standard)

**SUB CATEGORY – CARE & SUPPORT**

Where a person requires support from a friend or relative and the applicant is either the carer or the person requiring support, points will be awarded.

Due to the individual nature of this type of application, each application will be assessed on its merits. A number of factors will be taken into account:

- The current distance between the two individuals involved and whether there are other carers
- The dependency of one person on the other any associated health/emotional problems
- The type and frequency of care being provided
- The recommendations of health/social work professionals in relation to care and support.

Once the information has been gathered an assessment will be made.

<b>Support Grade</b>	<b>Points awarded</b>
A	20
B	10



Further evidence may be required before points in this category are awarded. There requires to be a fully justifiable reason for the support need – this will be determined the each RSL.

### 30. ASPIRATIONAL

Tenants who do not have housing needs recognised within the first four groups have their applications placed in Group 3 under aspirational. A separate transfer list is important to meet policy objectives for the following reasons:

- It promotes households to move to other accommodation, in turn releasing stock for other applicants
- 
- It addresses the preferences of existing tenants and this is important as preferences are a form of housing need. For example, tenants with no housing need points and don't qualify to be in aspirational group or support group
- In meeting the needs of tenants it is important to establish communities that are popular and sustainable
- The aspirational group is for tenants (of the participating landlords of this policy only) who have been living continuously within their tenancy for a period of 5 years and over and wish to move to another property in the area that they currently stay. It could be that you live in a flat, and would like to move to a house. Discretion can be exercised by each landlord participating within this policy in relation to length of tenancy.
- As there is no housing 'need' element (in that your current home meets your housing needs), we do not award 'housing points' for aspirational applications. Instead, we add the person to the group, and when a suitable property becomes available for offer to someone from the aspirational housing group, it is offered to the person who has been on the list the longest and has the longest length of tenancy.
- You can't be in any other group as well as the aspirational group at the same time; if you require a bigger house, or a smaller house, or another property because of a medical condition, then you have an element of 'housing need' and will be placed within another group.





**(a) Releasing housing for let to other applicants**

If two tenants want to live together and re-housing both households releases both their houses for let due to both household compositions we award a fixed amount of points.

Points under this category are at the discretion of each landlord.

Points awarded: 25

Tenants with no housing need (zero points) may be placed within this group.

**31. APPEALS**

If an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the way in which their application has been dealt with by the receiving landlord a complaint should be made to the receiving landlord which will be managed in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

**32. POSITIVE ACTION**

We support the development of equality initiatives through all of our housing activities, including allocation practice.

An important part of this process involves developing positive action initiatives. Positive action involves establishing initiatives. Positive action involves establishing initiatives to address discrimination against particular groups such as disabled people or people from minority ethnic groups.

The following are examples of positive action concerning allocation practice that we have implemented:

- Publication of the allocation policy in other formats and different languages, on request
- Ensuring our allocation documentation is produced in plain language
- Promoting awareness of the allocation policy to a diverse range of groups
- Providing interpreting services, on request
- Consulting with national bodies, as required, to promote good practice.

**33. TRAINING**

Training is an important element in ensuring that the allocation policy is implemented effectively. We, therefore, provide ongoing training for staff. This includes training on:



- Allocation law and practice
- Allocation policy and procedures
- Information technology systems
- Other relevant legislation such as equality law

We monitor training through our training plans and annual staff appraisals that link training to strategic objectives and personal development needs.

### **34. AUDITING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE**

#### **34.1 Auditing Performance**

We ensure that proper mechanisms are in place to allow individual allocations to be audited.

#### **34.2 Monitoring performance**

Monitoring the implementation of the allocation policy is an important part of quality assurance. It is also essential to ensure that allocation practices are subject to continuous improvement.

We ensure we monitor performance in the following areas:

- The number of new applications, included whether or not they are processed within targets
- Applications reviewed and deleted as part of the review process
- The groups in which applications are placed
- Household type and equality information
- Offers houses let
- Appeals and complaints

Information on allocation trends is presented to each organisations Committee on a regular basis.

General allocation performance is published for all tenants and service users.

### **35. POLICY REVIEW AND TENANT PARTICIPATION**

#### **35.1 Policy Review**

We review the allocation policy every three years, or as required. For instance, a review of the allocation policy may be necessary to address legal challenges.

We discuss changes to policy with tenants, applicants and other service users through our tenant participation strategy.



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## Common Allocations Policy

We use our performance indicators to discuss improvements to service delivery.

### **36. METHODS OF REVIEW**

We use a range of methods as detailed in our tenant participation strategy when reviewing the policy.

We also carry out regular surveys of service users to gather their views concerning allocation services.