

TRAFALGAR HOUSING ASSOCIATION	
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TRAFALGAR HOUSING ASSOCIATION

**SUBJECT : ALLOCATION POLICY
INCLUDING TRANSFER AND MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY**

**DATE APPROVED BY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

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Appendix 1

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Trafalgar Housing Association allocates its vacant properties according to the rules set out in this document. This allocation policy has been designed to allocate our accommodation according to housing need. The Association will publish any proposed changes to the policy; consult on the proposals with tenants, any existing Registered Tenants Organisations, applicants and other stakeholders and publish a report of the feedback received. Feedback received as a result of consultation will be included in reports to the Committee of Management when seeking Committee authorisation for the policy and any proposed changes, either as a result of consultation, or, from ongoing experience, in implementing the policy. Our Policy also resonates with the outcomes of the Local Housing Strategy.

1.2 We will ensure that all allocations are carried out fairly and in accordance with this policy

1.3 In all allocations we will:

- not discriminate against any applicants on the grounds of ethnic or national origins, race, sex, or sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity
- take account of all legal requirements which affect the allocation of a property
- take account of good practice guidelines issued by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations or the Chartered Institute of Housing and of any thematic studies issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator
- give priority to people in greatest housing need
- make effective use of our housing stock and minimise the time properties lie vacant.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 This policy aims to ensure that the Association's properties are allocated fairly and objectively with no discrimination on the grounds of race, religion or belief, disability, gender reassignment, sex or sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and that housing is allocated on the basis of housing need.

2.2 Our objectives include:

- providing a customer-focused allocations service that is transparent, consistent, accountable and fair;
- using allocations processes that are efficient, effective and economic to administer;
- ensuring that there is open access to our housing list and that our housing may be accessed by all those aged 16 years and over who need it
- providing appropriate advice and assistance to customers on their housing prospects so that they can make informed choices in relation to requesting specific allocation areas, house types, tenures etc;
- allocating our houses principally based on need, giving those in greatest need the highest priority for housing;
- making the best use of our housing stock, including seeking to address under-occupation in our housing stock and seeking to match applicants with needs to vacant properties that are designed or have been adapted and specifically meet their needs;
- contributing to the prevention of homelessness and supporting tenancy sustainment
- minimising the time taken to allocate empty properties and thereby minimising void rent loss; and
- monitoring and reviewing housing needs data, including reasons for refusals of offers of rehousing and
- including developing appropriate strategies for proactively tackling, any concentrations of emerging low demand or unsustainable housing stock.

3 EQUALITIES

3.1 We will consider all applications, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3.2 We will make this policy available in alternative formats such as large print or Braille on request. Translation services for other languages will also

be made available if you require this. We are also firmly committed to the equalities standard in the Scottish Social Housing Charter that “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”.

4.0 LEGISLATION, GUIDANCE

4.1 Our Housing Allocation Policy complies with legislation, guidance and good practice including:

- The Housing (Scotland) Acts 1987, 2001, 2010 & 2014 and statutory guidance supporting the 2014 Act;
- Social Housing Allocation in Scotland; A Practice Guide – Feb 2019, Scottish Government
- The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003;
- The Equality Act 2010;
- The Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981;
- The Civil Partnerships Act 2004;
- The Data Protection Act 1998; the General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- The Access to Personal Information (Housing) (Scotland) Regulations 1993;
- The Human Rights Act 1998; and
- Management of Offenders etc (Scotland) Act 2005 (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements – MAPPA).
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018

Specifically, the Housing (Scotland) Acts 2014, 2001 and 1987 and associated guidance, lay down the legal requirements that the Association and all other social landlords must comply with in terms of:

- setting out policy for admission onto the housing list;
- priority of allocation of social rented houses;
- transfer of tenants;
- mutual exchange of houses; and
- assistance to homeless persons.

5.0 SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER APRIL 2017

5.1 In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, 2017 (SSHC), the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has identified a number of key indicators relevant to access housing and support by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following.

- Equalities -social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that – every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing
- Access to social housing - Social landlords ensure that - 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 on their prospects of being housed.

- Communication – Social landlords manage their businesses so that – 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.

- Participation – Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

- Quality of housing – Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants’ homes as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standards, (SHQS) when they are allocated; are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair and also meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by December 2020.

- Housing options - Social landlords work together to ensure that:
 - 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 and Social landlords ensure that:
 - People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness

- Tenancy sustainment – Social landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need 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.

- Homeless people – local councils perform their duties on homelessness so that homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable good quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1 We recognise that confidentiality is important to applicants and will treat information that we receive in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 1998 and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018. We will not pass on or discuss with any third party any information provided by any applicant without the applicant's written permission. If there is personal information about someone other than the applicant on the application, we will not release that information unless we receive written permission from that other person.

6.2 To ensure an applicant's own confidentiality within their household, we can if instructed, contact the applicant at an alternative address, if we receive full details and the instruction in writing with the application, or later.

6.3 All applicants who would like to check the details that we hold on their application can contact us. Except as may otherwise be required by law, we will allow only the applicant access to their file, unless we have a signed mandate from the applicant authorising us to allow another named person access to the file and we can satisfy ourselves as to the identity of that other named person.

7 ELIGIBILITY

7.1 In assessing applications, we will take no account of –

- the age of an applicant, other than to verify that the applicant is aged 16 years and over;
- the length of time the applicant has lived in the area;
- any money due for a house that the applicant was not the tenant of;
- rent arrears or housing debt, such as rechargeable repairs, which have been paid off or amount to less than one month's rent;
- rent arrears or housing debt, such as rechargeable repairs, which amount to more than one month's rent where the applicant has an agreed repayment arrangement and has maintained the arrangement for at least three continuous months;
- any debts which do not relate to the tenancy of a house;
- any Council Tax arrears;
- the applicant's own income or the income of the household

Responsibility rests with the applicant for keeping us informed of any change in their circumstances including in relation to the above

8. FALSE INFORMATION

8.1 Where an applicant has knowingly supplied the Association with false information or has withheld relevant information, we will suspend the application for a period of one year. We will advise the applicant in writing of this decision and of their right of appeal. Where a tenancy has been granted on the basis of an applicant knowingly supplying false information, the Association may seek to take legal action to re-possess that property.

9.0 TENANCY REFERENCES

9.1 We will, normally, prior to an offer of rehousing, seek references from the appropriate landlord/s for any applicant who has been a tenant of:

- any local authority;
- any Registered Social Landlord; or
- any other landlord.

9.2 We must be satisfied that the information provided in the tenancy reference confirms that the applicant satisfies our eligibility criteria detailed in this Policy before we will consider an application for an offer of housing. We will ask all applicants, and anyone applying to be housed with them as a joint tenant, who has held a tenancy to sign a mandate confirming that they are happy for us to write to any current and all previous landlord/s within a **3-year period** prior to the date of the application for a tenancy reference. Without this authorisation we cannot contact landlord/s for a reference and we cannot process an application further.

9.3 We will not make an offer of housing if we are not satisfied with any of the tenancy references that we receive. We will suspend the application and monitor the case for improvement, e.g. in terms of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, tenancy breaches, etc.

9.4 However, if the tenancy reference is unacceptable because of rent arrears, which the applicant accrued as tenant, it is the applicant's responsibility to advise us when the account is clear or that the applicant has kept to an agreed repayment plan in respect of the arrears for a continuous period of 3 months.

9.5 If the tenancy reference is unacceptable because the applicant or a member of the applicant's household is subject to an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) under relevant legislation, we may consider making an offer of housing with a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST).

9.6 Where we suspend an application because we are not satisfied with a tenancy reference the applicant can request to see the reference.

10. HOME VISITS

10.1 All applicants accepted onto the housing list will be visited by a member of our staff prior to an allocation being made. The purpose of the home visit, which will normally be by appointment, is to confirm the applicant's housing circumstances. Where it is not geographically possible to carry out a home visit a statement from the applicant's landlord will normally be obtained.

11 REVIEWS

11.1 We will review our housing list annually so that applicants have their circumstances checked and updated routinely. Every 12 months we will issue a review letter to applicants, requesting confirmation of circumstances. If the applicant does not respond by the set date, a reminder letter will be issued. If we fail to receive a response to this reminder letter, we will remove the application from the housing list. If an applicant who has been removed from the list contacts us at a future date, they can reapply to join our housing list.

12 NUMBER OF OFFERS

12.1 Applicants may receive two offers of suitable accommodation but if both offers are refused without good cause, the application will be suspended from further offers for 12 months dating from the second refusal. Written notification of this, will be provided along with information on any right of appeal. Written offers of tenancy will be issued and applicants must respond in writing within 5 days of the date of the offer, which may be withdrawn in the absence of a response within this time-frame.

13 CANCELLATION OF APPLICATIONS

13.1 We will only cancel an application for housing where:

- the applicant has requested in writing or by telephone that they wish to be removed from the waiting list
- the applicant has died
- the applicant has failed to respond to the periodic review of the waiting list
- the applicant cannot be contacted regarding an offer of housing and there is no response within the specified timescale.

We will inform the applicant in writing where we cancel an application.

14. SUSPENSION OF APPLICATION

14.1 We aim to operate a housing list that is open and can be accessed by people in a variety of housing circumstances. However, although we may accept an application, there are circumstances, as outlined above where we may cancel an application. In the following circumstances we may suspend an application and therefore not make an offer of housing. We aim to minimise the number of suspensions and where this is necessary to advise the applicant in writing of why this has happened, for how long the suspension will remain and what action the applicant needs to take to have the suspension removed and of how an appeal may be made against this decision.

REASONS FOR SUSPENSION	COMMENT	SUSPENSION PERIOD
<p>1. Anti-Social Behaviour</p>	<p>Anti-social behaviour is defined as an action or course of conduct causing or likely to cause alarm, distress, nuisance or annoyance with conduct including things which a person has said as well as physical actions. A course of conduct must involve anti- social behaviour on at least two occasions Where a person has: acted in an antisocial manner in relation to another person residing in, visiting or otherwise engaged in lawful activity in the locality of a house occupied by the person; pursued a course of conduct amounting to harassment of such other person, or a course of conduct</p>	<p>6 months The case will be reviewed by the Director</p>

	which is otherwise antisocial conduct in relation to such other person, or acted in an antisocial manner, or pursued a course of conduct in relation to an employee of the Association.	
2. Tenancy Related Debt	<p>Attributed to the applicant as a tenant within the previous 3 years. Suspension will be applied where the applicant has rent arrears or any other tenancy related debt (e.g. rechargeable repairs, service charges etc.).</p> <p>Exceptions to this would be where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The debt has been paid in full • The level of debt is equivalent to or less than a months' rent • An agreement has been made to pay the debt off and this has been maintained for at least three months and is continuing to be maintained • The debt is not the responsibility of the applicant as a tenant 	<p>3 months or until applicant confirms criteria have been met</p> <p>The suspension will be lifted in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately following full payment of the debt <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where an arrangement to pay off the debt has been maintained for 3 months <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the debt has been reduced to less than a months' rent
3. Refusal of a	Suspension will be	3 months

second offer of housing	applied where the applicant has refused a second reasonable offer of housing within the last 3 years (made in accordance with applicants' preferences).	
4. Fraud, false or misleading information	Suspension will be applied where the applicant has deliberately misrepresented information in order to gain advantage over other applicants in housing need.	12 months
5. Breach of tenancy conditions	Suspension will be applied where the applicant is a tenant and has breached their tenancy conditions. For example – unsatisfactory condition of property etc. and where alterations or improvements have been carried out without the approval of the landlord	3 months or until there has been an agreed improvement; where there are persistent breaches and no improvement, the Director may extend the suspension period by a further 3 months.
6. Criminal convictions	Where the applicant or someone the applicant lives with or has lived with has been convicted of either or both of the following and where these offences are associated with a residential property or the surrounding area: 1. Using a house or allowing it to be used for immoral or illegal	6 months; careful consideration will be given to the circumstances of the offence ; what the applicant's current circumstances are and what would be achieved by a suspension

	<p>purposes or</p> <p>2. An offence punishable by imprisonment which was committed in, or in the locality of a house occupied by the person</p>	
7. Order for recovery of possession	Where a court has previously granted an order to evict	3 months – careful consideration will require to be given to what led to the order ; the applicant’s circumstances at that time and now
8. Abandonment of a previous tenancy	Where either, as a sole or joint tenant, the tenancy has been repossessed under Section 18 (2) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001	2 months – as above

The suspension timescales outlined above may be extended if we consider that the applicant has not taken the necessary steps required for the suspension to be lifted. Suspensions will only be extended at the discretion of the Director and will be based upon the individual circumstances of the case.

15 SIZE OF ACCOMMODATION

15.1 Appendix 1 illustrates the household composition appropriate for different property sizes/types based on the following requirements:

- a double bedroom for each couple or single parent
- children of the same sex should not have to share once the elder reaches 16 years
- children of different sexes should not have to share once the elder reaches 10 years
- a single bedroom for any remaining member of the household
- an applicant being rehoused following relationship breakdown with access to children will normally only qualify for a property with one bedroom. Access to a larger property will normally only be granted when overnight or weekend access or custody has been agreed and written confirmation of this is provided to the Association.
- an additional bedroom if a carer needs to stay overnight and there is written confirmation of this.

15.2 Appendix 1 is intended as a general indication of what family composition would normally be eligible for different sizes/types of accommodation. Exceptions may be made for unusual family compositions, eg where relatives staying permanently with a household increases the number of bedrooms required, or where there is a medical requirement for a separate bedroom for one person within an applicant's household. Verification of such circumstances will be sought before an allocation takes place.

Allocations to scarce properties such as larger properties or high demand properties will not normally be made to households who will under-occupy them. For other properties, under-occupation of more than one bedroom will not be permitted.

15.3. We will, where possible, allow some flexibility in allocating properties, but due recognition must be made of the Association's small housing stock and the scarcity of particular house sizes and types.

16. THE QUOTA SYSTEM

16.1 We operate a quota system, the aim of which is to ensure that the needs of different groups of applicants are taken into account by fixed percentages of annual lets being set to each of 4 groups. In this way, the Association is able to make the best possible use of its housing stock by creating a balance in allocations to allow more mobility for tenants whilst continuing to rehouse waiting list applicants in housing need. Transfer applicants normally have specific housing needs, eg their household may have become overcrowded; however a proportion of transfer applicants have aspirational needs only, and want to move to a different type of property. It is recognised that many tenants, especially those living in tenement flats, aspire to move to a different property type; this is particularly relevant as family circumstances change and by meeting these aspirations the Association can help to maintain a balanced community and re-let the subsequent vacancy as part of a vacancy chain.

16.2 The groups of applicants and annual quotas are:

Group A	Transfer applicants (Trafalgar HA tenants)	25%*
	Aspirational transfer applicants (Trafalgar HA tenants)	5%
Group B	Housing list applicants	30%
Group C	Nominations from West Dunbartonshire Council	up to 40%

The percentage of lets to each group may be reviewed at any time. It should be noted that in the event of the Association securing an active development program priority will be given to households requiring rehousing due to impending demolition.

*The quota system was reviewed in January 2013 in anticipation of increased demand from Trafalgar Housing Association tenants for transfers to smaller properties because of the introduction, on 1 April 2013, of restrictions to Housing Benefit for working age tenants because of under-occupation. In order to alleviate financial hardship, all suitable properties becoming available for let will be offered first to transfer applicants affected by Housing Benefit restrictions and any properties not allocated to this group will be allocated in accordance with the remaining quotas.

17 THE POINTS SYSTEM

17.1 Allocations will normally be made to the applicant with the highest point score. However, in the interests of achieving a balanced housing mix within particular areas, the Association does reserve the right to allocate to a lower points score when allocating within an area with specific problems e.g. high child density. This is expanded on in the section on Local Lettings Initiatives.

17.2 Where by passing of applicant(s) does take place, this will require the approval of the Director and will also be reported to the Management Committee.

17.3 Points will be awarded to applications as set out below.

Overcrowding

5 points for each bedroom lacking. Where a household is likely to be overcrowded on the birth of a child, overcrowding points will be awarded on receipt of proof of confinement.

Lacking a bedspace

3 points for each bedspace lacking, ie where a double bedroom is required and only a single bedroom is presently available.

Under-occupation

3 points for each bedroom excess to requirements. Where the applicant is a tenant of social rented accommodation 5 points will be awarded for each bedroom excess to requirements

Medical Priority

The following medical points will be awarded on the basis of the medical information supplied by the applicant. Awards will only apply towards a property which meets the medical requirements.

Priority A - 30 points awarded to applicants whose medical condition, or the medical condition of any other person included in the application, is severely affected by their current housing circumstances, and where rehousing is essential to enable independent living or to allow discharge from hospital or to prevent admission to nursing or residential care and it is not practical to adapt the current accommodation to meet the expressed needs.

Priority B - 15 points awarded to applicants whose medical condition, or the medical condition of any other person included in the application, is aggravated by their current housing circumstances. Rehousing in this instance is likely to produce a great improvement to the quality of life and/or substantially reduce the risk of injury or harm or

where the present home makes essential activities of daily living difficult and it is not practical to adapt the home to meet the individual's needs.

Priority C - 5 points awarded to applicants whose medical condition, or the medical condition of any other person included in the application, is potentially affected by their current housing circumstances and where the current property does not adequately meet housing needs, or essential support which cannot be provided in your current home is required.

Priority D - 0 points - where there may be medical factors but these are not impacted on by the current accommodation

Medical priority will be determined by 2 members of staff who will, where appropriate, seek further advice relating to the medical/health circumstances and the linkages with the living circumstances of the applicant.

17.4.1 Local Support

Local support points are awarded only where the following housing needs factors exist:

a) Care and Support

10 points will be awarded to applicants who require to move to or remain in the local area (G81 postcode) to be near friends or relatives who require support or care due to sickness or disability and no other family support is available. Confirmation of care and support require to be provided by the applicant.

10 points will be awarded to applicants who need care and support from friends or relatives already living in the local area.(G81 postcode) Confirmation will be required from the applicant.

15 points will be awarded where support and care has to be provided on a daily basis.

Confirmation of care and support needs or evidence of receipt of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living

Allowance or Personal Independence Payment will be required.

17.4.2 Insecurity of Tenure

15 points will be awarded to applicants who have no security of tenure or whose family unit is split as a result of no suitable permanent accommodation being available.

30 points will be awarded to applicants who are care leavers, who are requiring rehousing due to harassment, including racial ,religious or sectarian, sexual, homophobic, transphobic, harassment or harassment of autistic people, and people with a learning or physical disability, actual or threatened violence or abuse within the home or applicants who have to leave their home as a result of tied or fixed term tenancy expiring and applicants who face immediate homelessness within a two month period including those leaving HM Forces.

30 points will be awarded to applicants who have been assessed by West Dunbartonshire Council as being statutorily homeless.

17.5 Lacking Amenities

Where applicants lack amenities in their current accommodation the following points will be awarded:

no bath or shower	-	16 points
no hot water supply	-	6 points
no separate kitchen	-	4 points

17.6. Sharing Amenities

Where applicants share facilities the following points will be awarded:

Bathroom	-	10 points
Kitchen	-	4 points
Livingroom	-	2 points

17.7 Property Condition

Where an applicant is living in accommodation which does not meet the Tolerable or Repairing Standards, in addition to lacking

amenities, 15 points may be awarded upon confirmation of the property condition. The Tolerable Standard is set out in Chapter 3, section 11 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 and the Repairing Standard in Chapter 4, Section 13 of the same Act.

18 LOCAL LETTINGS INITIATIVES

18.1 We may agree Local Lettings Initiatives to achieve aims specific to an area. They will be developed where we feel that specific and targeted action is required to achieve balance and stability in particular communities or to achieve the aim of a particular development, including new build. LLIs will require the approval of our Committee.

19 EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

19.1 It is unlikely that every situation will be captured within one Allocations Policy and there may therefore be exceptional circumstances where we may require to make an allocation which is not immediately within the scope of our Policy, but which meets our legal obligations. Illustrative examples of this may include

- where we make a management transfer or special let outside the normal allocations policy;
- where we make an exceptional allocation to someone who does not qualify to succeed to a tenancy – for example a carer who has given up their previous home; or
- where we make an allocation, out with our normal allocation system, to a household being resettled in the UK – for example through an official Resettlement Programme.

Any allocations made in this way will require the approval of the Director and will require to be reported to Management Committee.

20 EQUAL POINTS

20.1 When two or more applicants have an equal number of points then the deciding factor will be date of application onto the housing list.

21 LOCAL AUTHORITY NOMINATIONS

21.1 We will accept nominations from West Dunbartonshire Council, including Section 5 Homeless referrals, for up to 40% of housing stock,

surplus to the needs of any development programme. The nominations agreement with West Dunbartonshire Council will be reviewed regularly.

22 JOINT APPLICATIONS

22.1 We will consider an application from more than one person, where the applicants wish to live together as joint tenants. We will consult all applicants, who have requested a joint application, or the number of people who apply to be housed together as joint tenants.

23 MUTUAL EXCHANGE

23.1 Association tenants have the right to exchange their accommodation with another tenant of the association or a tenant of another housing association or local authority, providing they first obtain the written consent of both landlords and providing they have been tenants of their current homes for at least 12 months.

Consent to exchange will not be unreasonably withheld and will normally only be withheld on one or more of the grounds listed below:

23.2 Reasons for refusing a mutual exchange

Applicants will not normally qualify for a mutual exchange if:

- they are in arrears of rent in excess of one month's rent and no arrangement for payment has been made or maintained for a minimum of three months;
- they have any outstanding liability in respect of any previous tenancy in excess of one month's rent and no arrangement for payment has been made or maintained for a minimum of three months;
- they have support needs which mean that they are unable to sustain a tenancy without support from care agencies and that support is either not in place or rejected by the applicant
- the accommodation is substantially larger than needed by the tenant's family
- the accommodation is not suitable to the needs of the tenant's family

- the accommodation is designed to make it suitable for occupation by a physically disabled person and, if the exchange was allowed, there would no longer be a person with a disability occupying the property

Where a tenant is in breach of their tenancy agreement, but proceedings for possession have not been started, consent may be given, subject to the breach being remedied or where such a move might bring about an improvement in the situation.

24 PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS

24.1 Applications will normally have points calculated within two weeks of receipt of all required information, and the applicant will be informed that their application has been accepted on to the Association's waiting list and advised of points awarded.

24.2 Allocations will be made by the Housing Manager in accordance with this policy and reported to the Management Committee on a monthly basis.

24.3 It should be emphasised that the selection of applicants is in effect made by the allocation policy itself and not by Committee members or staff.

25 GRANTING OF TENANCIES TO PEOPLE RELATED TO STAFF OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

25.1 Any allocation of accommodation involving members of the Committee and/or staff of the Association or their close relative (being husband, wife, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother and sister), will comply with the Association's Payments and Benefits policy. To ensure that we comply with the Regulatory requirements regarding granting of entitlements, payments, expenses or benefits to Committee members and staff, or to their close relatives, we ask all applicants to state on the application form, whether to their knowledge, they are related to a Committee or staff member. This also applies in the case of former members of Committee or staff – where this position has been held within the last 12 months of the date of possible allocation.

25.2 The Committee will formally approve any allocation of a property to a staff or Committee member or their close relative. The formal approval of the Committee must be recorded in the minute of the Committee meeting with the details of the allocation entered on the appropriate Register of Interest. When the allocation is concerning a Committee member or a close

relative of a Committee member, the Committee member must declare an interest and leave the meeting when the issue is being discussed.

Any allocation to the above group will be recorded in the Association's minutes, with any personal interest dealt with in accordance with the Association's Rules.

The above procedures are in accordance with Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

26. DECANT ACCOMMODATION

26.1 There may be times when it is necessary to move a tenant temporarily to another property to allow us to carry out work in our properties. This is known as 'decanting'. Tenants may be decanted for the following reasons:

- planned major works or improvements where the disruption would be too great if the tenant remained in the house;
- repair work due to fire, flood, major accidental damage to the property etc and/or
- work required for health and safety reasons.

26.2 If at any time we have to decant a tenant, we will do our best to provide temporary accommodation that meets the tenant's needs. We may also ask the tenant to consider living with a relative if the decant period is for a short time and we are unable to find temporary accommodation to suit the tenant's needs. When we provide decant accommodation, it will be housing on a 'like-for-like' basis whenever possible, which means that we will aim to offer the same type and size of property that the tenant lives in at the time. Where there is no such housing available at the time we reserve the right to offer housing that is approximate to the tenant's needs.

When the work is complete in the tenant's home, the tenant must leave the decant accommodation and return to their own tenancy which will continue throughout any decant period.

27 PROCEDURES

27.1 This Policy is accompanied by written documented procedures

28 TRAINING

28.1 This Policy will be underpinned by training for all staff involved in any aspect of allocations

29 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

29.1 We will monitor this policy and to assist in this the following will be collected, monitored and reported quarterly to the Committee of Management

- the number of vacant properties, the turnover, the number of refusals, the reasons for the refusals, the reasons for terminating tenancies, the household type being allocated properties
- the cost of re-letting, voids loss and exceptional repairs costs
- the number and percentage of applicants by each category of need and the numbers and percentages of those housed
- the number of transfer list applicants rehoused;
- the number of waiting list applicants housed; and
- the number of homeless, section 5 applicants housed.
- the number of abandoned properties
- the number of appeals, complaints, including complaints to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
- the number of suspensions
- tenancy sustainment rates

30 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

30.1 The Committee will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it is properly operated, that there is appropriate officer involvement in the allocations system and that there is effective scrutiny of the implementation of the Housing Allocation Policy.

30.2 The Housing Manager has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Policy and our Housing staff are responsible for key aspects of the day to day service delivery with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.

30.3 The Committee will ensure that the Policy is meeting its intended objectives and that monitoring, and reporting takes place in accordance with the Charter indicators listed in the Monitoring and Review section of this Policy. The Committee will also have annual oversight of housing needs categories and letting quotas set out in the Policy to ensure that they remain appropriate in relation to changing housing needs or statutory requirements

31 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

31.1 Should applicants be dissatisfied with the assessment of their applications or aggrieved with the way tenancies have been allocated, they have the right of appeal. Such appeals will only be considered in terms of the Allocations Policy and no details of another applicant's application will be released to an applicant who is appealing.

31.2 In the first instance, they should approach one of the Association's staff to try to have the matter resolved.

31.3 If the matter is not resolved they should write, stating the facts on which the appeal is based, to the Director who will give the applicant a written reply.

31.4 If after exhausting the Association's complaints procedure (full details of which are available on our website, in our tenants' handbook and in reception) an applicant is still unhappy, they should contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO):

- Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh
EH7 4NS

Telephone 0800 377 7330 (free phone) or 0131 225 5300

Fax 0800 377 7331
Text 0790 049 4372
E-mail ask@spsso.org.uk

SPSO
Freepost

32 REVIEW OF POLICY

32.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if practice or legislative change requires this. Any proposed changes to the Policy will, in line with legislation, be consulted upon and presented to the Committee for approval with a report published on the consultation.

APPENDIX 1

Size/Type of Accommodation to be allocated	Family Composition Normally Eligible
1 person/2apt (general needs)	single person, non elderly
1 person/2apt (amenity)	elderly single person
2 per/2apt (general needs)	single person or couple
2 per/2apt (amenity)	elderly single person or couple
2 per/3apt (general needs)	single person and one child or couple requiring separate bedrooms
2 per/3apt (amenity)	elderly single person and one child or elderly couple requiring separate bedrooms
3 per/3apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with one child or where a carer provides overnight support and written confirmation of this has been provided or where there is residential access to child/children
3 per/3apt (amenity)	elderly single person or couple with one child
4 per/3apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with one child or 2 children under 10 years
4 per/4apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with 2 children
5 per/4apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with 3 children who require 3 bedrooms
5 per/5apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with 3 children who require 4 bedrooms
6 per/5apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with 4 children who require 4 bedrooms
7 per/5apt (general needs)	single parent or couple with 5 children who require 4 bedrooms
6 apt and over (general needs)	single parent or couple with 5 or more children who require 5 or more bedrooms