

POLICY OUTLINE

Grampian Housing Association was originally formed in 1973 as a co-ownership housing society, but was re-established in its present form in 1975. It is a non-profit-making organisation headed by a voluntary Board of Management. The original purpose of the Association was to provide new build general and special needs housing – this has been supplemented by older housing acquired from Scottish Homes through stock transfer. In addition to housing for rent on assured tenancies, the Association offers housing through the Lead Tenancy Initiative and under various Low Cost Home Ownership programmes. This includes a significant quantity of shared ownership housing which aims to help people who cannot afford to buy a house on a conventional mortgage to acquire a share of the total value of a house, and to pay an occupancy charge for the remainder to the Association. The Association operates throughout what was formerly Grampian Region.

The Association's Objectives

The Association's main aim is to work in partnership with other agencies to provide and manage quality accommodation for those in housing need in Scotland. Specifically, the Association seeks to provide housing for couples (whatever their sexual orientation) and families (one and two parent), amenity housing for the elderly and housing for single people. Wherever possible, provision is also made in the context of mixed developments for special needs group where prior requirements can be established. The Association takes part in Care in the Community. The Association's broader aims include working in partnership with local authorities, other public bodies, voluntary organisations, and the private sector in developing innovative and caring housing solutions; participating in rural and urban regeneration projects linked to environmental and other improvements.

Related Policies:

Equal Opportunities (Service Provision)	ADM/113/--
Rent Arrears	HMG/601/--
Joint Tenancies	HMG/602/--
Estate Management	HMG/603/--
Voids	HMG/607/--
Racial Harassment	HMG/608/--
Assignment, Subletting and Exchange	HMG/612/--
Abandonment	HMG/613/--
Succession	HMG/614/--
Anti Social Behaviour	HMG/604/--

The Housing Stock

The Association's housing stock is spread throughout most of the main settlements in the North East. The rented housing stock within and outwith Aberdeen includes general needs houses and flats for large and small households, a substantial number of amenity for the elderly units and some specially adapted wheelchair properties. Quite a large proportion of the Association's stock is shared ownership, concentrated in Aberdeen City, but with some developments in rural areas. There are significant levels of provision within the Moray area and partnership with Social Services looks to assist in the provision of housing for special needs groups including those with mental health problems. The shared ownership properties are a variety of one, two, three and four bedroom houses and flats - the stock of houses is on the outskirts of the city or in outlying areas; flats in the city centre. Lead tenancies are provided in Aberdeen, Peterhead and Fraserburgh. The Association aims to provide mixed housing developments in terms of the type and tenure of units, in order to create balanced communities.

Policy

The Association's Allocations Policy is designed to meet the aims detailed below:

- to be fair, efficient and consistent in allocating properties
- to help create and sustain balanced and stable communities*
- to ensure any available accommodation is suitable for the applicant's housing need
- to make best use of the available housing stock
- to consider social and medical factors and the capacity to improve an applicant's quality of life
- to work with other providers, including local authorities, in alleviating housing need.

** The Association defines stable and balanced communities as communities encompassing a range of life and employment experience and of ages and types of household.*

In formulating this policy, the Association has taken into consideration the appropriate legislation as well as Communities Scotland Performance Standards and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations Raising Standards in Housing: Allocations, and guidance from the Chartered Institute of Housing. The policy has particular regard to the Human Rights Act 1998

Equal Opportunities

The Association aims to house those in need regardless of their race, colour, culture, ethnic or national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, family circumstances or marital status. Applicants are asked to provide details of their ethnic origin in order that this section of the policy can be monitored, although provision of the information is entirely voluntary. The Association will seek to work with statutory and voluntary bodies to ensure that equality of opportunity is achieved.

1 RENTED HOUSING

1.1 Admission to Waiting List

The Association will accept applications for assessment for rented housing from anyone over the age of sixteen who is in housing need, as long as the type and size of accommodation provided by the Association is suitable for their needs.

Young people between the ages of 16 and 25, who apply to the Association for housing, but who need support to enable them to sustain a tenancy in their own right, may be referred to Aberdeen Foyer or other appropriate agencies, subject to the young person's agreement.

Generally, where the Association receives an application from someone who appears to have significant support needs as well as housing need, the Association aims to ensure that appropriate support agencies are contacted, subject to the applicant's consent.

Where applicants have declared or have known addiction problems they will be expected to address the issue and/or accept support before being offered a tenancy.

Where an applicant declares (or faces allegations) that he is a sex offender, the Association will seek his permission to approach the police/social work (designated senior link person) to ensure that a risk assessment will be carried out before making any decision to house. In the unlikely event that the applicant refuses to give consent to contact the police or social work, the Association reserves the right to refrain from making an allocation.

All applications must be fully completed, accurately and truthfully using the Association's, or where relevant, Homechoice application form.

Receipt of application will be acknowledged within seven to ten working days. In the case of Homechoice, the application will be receipted and assessed within 28 days.

The Association, along with the other housing providers in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, has set up a new company called Homechoice, which aims to improve and simplify the process for applying for housing. One of the important features of the new system is a single, combined application form for those applicants seeking housing in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area.

In general, demand for the Association's housing far outweighs supply, especially in Aberdeen itself. Each application is assessed with reference to a points system aimed at giving priority to applicants in the greatest housing need.

In cases where two applicants have equal priority and their circumstances are the same, the applicant who has the earliest date of application will be given priority.

The Association is not able to assist everyone who applies to it, so we would recommend that all relevant agencies are contacted by applicants, e.g. council housing departments and other relevant housing associations.

If an applicant already has a tenancy with a social landlord, but has applied for re-housing with the Association because they are unable to continue living there, an offer of accommodation will be subject to confirmation that notice will be given on the other tenancy on acceptance of the Association's offer.

Homeowners will be required to occupy any tenancy granted as their principal place of residence.

The Association reserves the right to reject applicants who verbally or physically abuse or threaten staff. In addition, the Association may only deal with the applicant through a third party.

1.2 Review

Each application is reviewed one year after it is registered with the Association. Applicants who do not respond to the review letter within one month will have their application withdrawn. If after a two month period from date of cancellation, the applicant makes contact and provided their circumstances have not changed, the application will be reinstated.

1.3 Confidentiality

The information given by the applicant and sought by the Association is aimed at assessing housing need. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

According to the Data Protection Act 1998, the applicant has a right to see any information about him/her, which is held in files by the Association whether on computer, or not. If an applicant should wish to see any such information they may contact the Association in writing to make their request. The Association will respond within 14 days and an appropriate charge will be made as necessary. Where information is supplied by a third party, written consent of that party will be required before it is shown to the applicant. If the third party does not respond to a written request for consent to disclose within 28 days then their consent will be deemed to have been given.

The Association has written nomination agreements with the Moray and Aberdeenshire Councils. Through such agreements the Association recognises its role in assisting Councils to meet their obligations in respect of homelessness. At time of writing the Association aims to allocate 50% of its new vacancies and re-lets to applicants nominated by the appropriate Council. In some areas, where the Association may not have its own waiting list or where it is small, the percentage of nominations may be higher. The Appendices attached indicate the specific arrangements for Moray and Aberdeenshire. **These agreements will be reviewed in light of new requirements regarding homelessness to become effective in September 2002.**

In respect of the Aberdeen Housing Market area, the situation is slightly different in that Homechoice Partners have agreed the following:

When a vacancy arises, applicants who have applied to both the Association and Council will be shortlisted directly by Association staff. Those with the highest points will be considered. In order to ensure that those who may formerly have been nominated are not overlooked, Associations will select Aberdeen City Council Transfer Applicants on a rotational basis.

For example, for each 100 re-lets that the Association has every year, the breakdown and source of allocation would be

- 50 from GHA (40 waiting list and 10 transfer)
- 50 from ACC (25 homeless, 20 waiting list and 5 ACC Transfer)

As with the Nomination agreements with Moray and Aberdeenshire Councils these arrangements will be subject to review from September 2002.

1.4 Referrals

The Association accepts referrals from the Next Stage Housing Group (responsible for providing mainstream tenancies for people in supported or hostel accommodation and discharged short stay patients), Young People Moving On and Aberdeen Foyer. These referrals are based on separate quota systems. The Association also grants occasional tenancies to SACRO (Scottish Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders), the Richmond Fellowship Scotland (supported accommodation for former long-term hospital patients), Leonard Cheshire, and others. In Moray the Association works with the Community Mental Health Team to provide move on accommodation for clients who have previously been in long term residential care.

The Association aims to work more and more with these partners in the future to provide appropriate care and support for vulnerable individuals whose chances of sustaining a tenancy are thus greatly enhanced. In particular, the Association believes that partnership working of this nature will help to make Social Justice and wider action a reality in the communities the Association aims to serve.

1.5 Allocation of Tenancies

1.5.1 Re-lets

When a property becomes available for re-let, and it is not the turn for a nomination or in the case of Homechoice, a selection that meets any agreed quota, the applicants from the waiting list with the highest number of points for the size and type of housing available are contacted to see if they are interested. Home visits are arranged for those applicants that are interested in order to confirm the points that have been allocated and update the information on the application form. The visit is also used to discuss the housing needs of the applicant in more detail, to provide further information about the Association, the type of tenancy on offer, the rent levels and the available accommodation.

Once all the home visits have been carried out and the points confirmed, an offer will be made to the applicant with the greatest housing need, subject to the need to create balanced and stable communities, and the applicant will be invited to view the flat or house. The applicant will be given a maximum of three working days to respond to an offer of a tenancy, after which the offer may be withdrawn. In certain letting areas where demand is low, the Association reserves the right to seek interested parties by way of advertisement etc. Any persons responding will still be subject to an assessment of need and policy conditions within this document.

1.5.2 New Lets

Home visits are carried out where practical to all applicants for new schemes. Waiting list selections are made for all applicants for the size and type of units being built in the area concerned starting with those applicants with the most points. Once the visits have been carried out and points revised, applications have been checked and verified staff will make the allocation decisions based on the applicants with greatest housing need, and on the need to create a well balanced community. Offers of tenancy and invitations to view then follow.

1.5.3 Size of Accommodation

The size of accommodation allocated will accord with the Association's own overcrowding points assessment criteria, unless an applicant chooses to over-occupy, subject to the Association's approval. In exceptional circumstances where supply outstrips demand consideration will be given to allocation of property even though this may result in under occupation.

1.5.4 Refusal of a Tenancy

Where an applicant refuses two offers of accommodation, this will result in a review of the applicants stated choices, with the expectation that these choices would be narrowed down. Whilst it might not be possible to code all issues, there must be an attempt to record some of these to ensure that selections can be focussed more specifically. In carrying out this, the applicant must be clear about how any review might have on when they are reached for housing.

1.5.5 Tenancy References

The Policy in regard to this section will have regard to the Human Rights Act 1998.

No applicant will be excluded from the list where they either have rent arrears in regard to a current or former tenancy with the Association or other landlord. The Association, however reserves the right not to make an offer of accommodation to the applicant where any outstanding liability is more than one twelfth of the annual amount payable (or which was payable) by the applicant in respect of the tenancy. Where arrears are greater than this amount, but the applicant has entered into a repayment agreement and payments have been made in accordance with that agreement for three months and continue to be made then an offer of accommodation may be considered. In considering applications, the individual circumstances of each case will be considered including any mitigating circumstances, which contributed to the arrears.

Where an applicant has a current or previous tenancy that is found to be/have been unsatisfactory, then the Association may suspend any such application. An unsatisfactory tenancy is defined as such where one or the following has occurred:

- The applicant has been guilty of using the property for illegal purposes which are or were likely to endanger or cause nuisance or harassment to neighbours.
- Been guilty of causing nuisance or harassment in the vicinity of the property.
- Been guilty of causing racial harassment.
- Allowed other household members or friends to cause nuisance and harassment in the vicinity of the property.
- Been guilty of causing abusive or violent behaviour towards employees of the landlord.
- Caused extensive damage to the property.

Tenancies to be considered relevant in this regard will be limited to those which are within the social housing sector and where the breach has occurred within the previous **two years**. The Association will in its consideration of such cases take into account extenuating circumstances, which can include but are not limited to:

- Mental health issues that may have affected an applicants ability to comply with their conditions of tenancy and any health issue has subsequently been treated or controlled to the extent that a recurrence of the tenancy problems are unlikely. Evidence from appropriately qualified health care professionals will be required to confirm the situation.
- The applicant has learning difficulties and was unsupported at the time of tenancy breakdown but is now in receipt of support. Evidence will be required from a health care professional to confirm.
- The applicant was under 18 years of age and unsupported at the time of tenancy breakdown.
- The applicant was a joint tenant or the partner of a tenant and it was the behaviour of the other partner/tenant that caused the tenancy breakdown.

Where suspension is being applied, this will not be indefinite and detailed below is a breakdown of what proof the Association would expect in determining a case along with the indicated suspension period. In considering individual cases, the Association will have regard to evidence of changes in behaviour which are supported by for example, a probation officer or social worker. Changes in behaviour would be expected to have been demonstrated over a minimum three month period.

The Association will consider the allocation of a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy where an applicant has been subject to a re-possession order in the UK on the grounds of anti-social or similar behaviour in previous 3 years or subject to an anti-social behaviour order. In this situation, the Association will arrange for support in order that the tenant may be able to sustain any tenancy granted. The cost of support will be recovered as a charge on the tenancy.

The Association understands that Anti-Social Behaviour can arise in a variety of different circumstances and reasons. These reasons however may not be relevant at the time the applicant applies for re-housing. In order to be fair and consistent to applicants who received unfavourable tenancy references the Association will have in place the following:

Applicants will be informed in writing that the Association has received an unsatisfactory tenancy reference and ask them to make an appointment to discuss the circumstances around this.

The applicant will be interviewed by the Housing Manager or Housing Services Team Leader and the tenancy reference will be discussed. The applicant will be invited to bring along an advocate if they wish. At this time the applicant will be asked if there were any extenuating circumstances that they wish to bring to the Association's attention and detailed notes will be taken by the member of staff attending in order to compile a detailed report for the panel. In addition the Housing Services Manager or Housing Services Team Leader may wish to contact the previous landlord to gain more information regarding the behaviour and to confirm the validity of the unsatisfactory tenancy reference.

A panel will be convened which is made up of staff and Board members and where appropriate, representatives from other agencies and the report will be discussed. The panel will consider the nature, frequency and duration of the conduct along with any extenuating circumstances and the likelihood of the conduct being repeated.

The panel will consider the option of providing support in the tenancy, granting the tenancy as an SST and including a support package or whether, as a last resort a suspension should be applied.

The applicant will be notified within 2 working days of the decision of the panel. If the decision is to apply a suspension the applicant will be given details of the terms of the suspension (e.g. time-limited, conduct dependant, change in household circumstances) with details of how the suspension would be lifted and given the opportunity of appeal. The applicant will be sent information regarding this in the letter advising of the decision.

1.5.6 False Information

Applicants are expected to ensure that all information given to the Association in connection with their application for housing is true and accurate. False information or omitted relevant information may lead to deferral for up to a maximum period of six months provided that it is reasonable to assume that any information treated as false or misleading was deliberately so. If it should come to the Association's attention that a tenancy has been granted on the basis of false or misleading information, the Association will take action to recover possession of the property in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.

1.6 Transfer and Mutual Exchange Policy

The Association will maintain a list of its tenants who seek to move to another of the Association's properties.

Allocations will be made according to the size and type of accommodation needed by the applicant. Account will be taken of preferences given regarding location, heating type, floor level, etc.

Applications will be accepted from tenants whose accommodation is no longer suited to their household's needs, or from those who have a social reason for seeking to move. The priority of transfer applicants will be assessed according to the same points system as waiting list applicants.

Allocation to transfer applicants will only be made to tenants whose rent account meets that criteria detailed at 1.5.5 above.

Applications must be submitted on the appropriate forms, which must be truthfully, accurately and fully completed.

Any change in the applicant's household circumstances must be notified to the Association immediately.

Transfer applicants who are currently under-occupying one of the Association's properties may be considered for re-housing with relatively low levels of points in order to assist the Association to maximise the use of its housing stock.

Mutual exchanges between tenants of the Association will be permitted following submission of completed applications. No move can be made without prior written permission. The rent accounts of all parties must be clear and tenancy reports satisfactory. House size must be compatible with household composition, although the Association may decide to allow under-occupation by one bedroom.

Mutual exchanges between tenants of the Association and tenants of Councils, other Housing Associations and Co-operatives will be considered following submission of completed application forms. A house visit will be carried out. Tenancy reports must be satisfactory.

Exceptional cases may be referred to the Housing Review Group.

Tenants having to leave their home as a result of marital or relationship breakdown will be asked to submit an application to the Association for re-housing and points will be assessed accordingly. Such applicants will be treated as transfer cases and the Association will consider re-allocation, subject to the availability of alternative housing. Any tenants made statutorily homeless in this way should present themselves to their local Council Homeless Section for immediate assistance. In cases of relationship breakdown or abuse, the applicant's view of where they wish to be re-housed is particularly important and the Association will try to take this into account, if necessary working with its partner social housing providers to find an appropriate location.

Rights of succession are detailed in the Tenancy Agreement.

The Association operates a quota system for transfers. One in five allocations are offered to a transfer applicant.

1.8 H.O.M.E.S. (Housing Mobility and Exchange Scheme)

The Association is affiliated to HOMES, which enables tenants to move outwith the immediate area. The Association aims to give 4% of net lettings to mobility applicants.

The minimum eligibility criteria for the HOMES scheme are:

- taking up employment beyond reasonable daily travelling distance
- giving or receiving support
- other specified social reasons.

The Association will use the same criteria for checking the tenancy record of mobility applicants as for all other applicants.

2. SHARED OWNERSHIP HOUSING

2.1 Admission to Waiting List

The Association will accept applications for assessment for shared ownership housing from anyone over the age of sixteen as long as the type and size of accommodation provided by the Association is suitable for their needs.

All applications must be fully completed, accurately and truthfully.

Receipt of applications will be acknowledged within seven to ten working days.

The Association will assess applicants financially to determine whether they can afford a shared ownership property of their desired type and size. Once an applicant has been accepted he/she will be assessed according to the points system and, in areas of high demand, applicant with the highest points will be given priority.

In cases where two applicants have equal priority and their circumstances, including financial circumstances are the same, the applicant who has the earliest date of application will be given priority.

2.2 Review

Each application is reviewed one year after it is registered with the Association. Applicants who do not respond to the review letter within one month will have their application withdrawn. If after a two month period from date of cancellation, the applicant makes contact and provided their circumstances have not changed, the application will be reinstated.

2.3 Confidentiality

The information given by the applicant and sought by the Association is aimed at assessing housing need. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

According to the Data Protection Act 1998, the applicant has a right to see any information about him/her which is held on file by the Association, whether on computer or not. If an applicant should wish to see any such information they may contact the Association in writing to make their request. The Association will respond within 14 days and an appropriate charge will be made as necessary. Where information was supplied by a third party, then that will not be disclosed unless the third party's written consent is secured. If the Third Party does not respond within 28 days to a request seeking consent to disclose then their consent is deemed to have been given.

2.4 Allocation of Shared Ownership Properties

2.4.1 Re-Sales

When a property becomes available for re-sale, the applicants from the waiting list who are able to afford the property and with the highest number of points for the size and type of housing available are contacted to see if they are interested. Interviews are arranged to confirm the points that have been allocated and confirm the financial circumstances of the applicant. Applicants must provide verification of income and savings. The interview is also used to provide further information about the responsibilities of shared ownership and the costs involved.

Once all the interviews have been carried out and the points and financial circumstances confirmed, an informal offer will be made to the applicant with the greatest housing need, and the applicant will be invited to view the flat or house. The applicant will be given a maximum of one week to respond to an offer after which it may be withdrawn.

2.4.2 Sales (new developments)

When a property becomes available for sale, the applicants from the waiting list who are able to afford the properties and with the highest number of points for the size and type of housing available are contacted to see if they are interested. Interviews are arranged to confirm the points that have been allocated and confirm the financial circumstances of the applicant. Applicants must provide verification of income and savings. The interview is also used to provide further information about the responsibilities of shared ownership, the costs involved and specific details of the properties on offer.

Once all the interviews have taken place and the points and financial circumstances confirmed, offers will be made to the applicants in the greatest housing need. The applicant must notify the Association within seven days of receiving the informal offer that they wish to make a reservation. The applicant will be required to pay a reservation fee to secure the offer.

2.4.3 Size of Accommodation

The overcrowding and under-occupation criteria will not apply in the allocation of shared ownership housing on the understanding that purchasers will be able to choose the size of accommodation they wish subject to availability and the relative needs of those on the list.

2.4.4 Previous Tenancies

Where an applicant has a current tenancy, or has previously held a tenancy, the Association will write to the landlord(s) to confirm whether there have been any problems with the tenancy. Applicants with unsatisfactory previous tenancies, including rent arrears, may not be made an offer until any issue is resolved or outstanding debt cleared onto the waiting list.

2.4.5 False Information

Applicants are expected to ensure that all information given to the Association in connection with their application for housing is true and accurate. False information will lead to disqualification.

2.5 Transfer Policy

The Association will maintain a list of its sharing owners who wish to move to another of the Association's shared ownership properties.

N.B. This is only possible in the case of transfer to new build properties because of the short timescales involved in re-sales.

The priority of transfer applicants will be assessed according to the same criteria as waiting list applicants, although it is acknowledged that transfer applicants will not require the same level of points as waiting list applicants.

Applicants for transfers should normally have a minimum occupancy in their present accommodation of one year, although where an urgent need for a transfer arises, cases may be referred to the Housing Committee.

In addition the Association will consider requests from sharing owners for alternative accommodation other than shared ownership. In doing so the Association expects such parties to relinquish their share of their property as soon as reasonably practical.

Allocation to transfer applicants will only be made to sharing owners whose occupancy payment account has been clear for three months.

Applications must be submitted on the appropriate forms which must be accurately, truthfully and fully completed.

Any change in the sharing owners household circumstances must be notified to the Association immediately.

It should be noted that any offer made to a transfer applicant for shared ownership will be conditional on finding an applicant to buy their current property.

3. RIGHT OF APPEAL

Any applicant who wishes to question the assessment of their application is expected to discuss the assessment informally in the first instance with the frontline housing staff. If the query is not resolved, the applicant may wish to submit a formal appeal, which will be heard by the Housing Review Group. This group will comprise as a minimum of the Housing Committee Convenor or his or her appointee, a Housing Manager and one other member of staff.

As the processing and assessment of many applicants' forms will now be carried out by Homechoice, applicants for the Homechoice area should in this instance contact the Homechoice Option Shop where advice will be given about the complaints procedure which is available on request.

If things have still not been resolved to the satisfaction of the applicant, they can appeal by writing to the Chairman of the Housing Management Committee. They will receive an acknowledgement within 3 days. If, in addition to a written appeal, applicants are keen to talk to the Committee, then they may do so. Should the applicant wish to bring along a friend or adviser this is perfectly acceptable. The outcome will be notified to the applicant within 3 working days and, if still not satisfied, the Housing Association Ombudsman can be contacted.

The Housing Association Ombudsman is a free and impartial service set up to investigate complaints against Housing Associations. Normally a complainant must have exhausted the Association's own complaints procedure before the Ombudsman can deal with your complaint. The Ombudsman's address is 2 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3BL, Tel. no. 0131 220 0499.

4 SECTION 15

The Association may grant a tenancy, transfer of tenancy or mutual exchange or a shared ownership agreement to an employee, former employee, committee member or former committee member, providing that the person:

1. fully meets the Association's published allocations criteria, and
2. has had no involvement in or influence over the process by which the Association allocated the tenancy in question.

Where there is any potential or actual interest, conflict or duality of interest in any application for housing or allocation of housing on the part of any Board member or staff member either current or previous, then such interest must be declared by that person. This is consistent with para.9 of Section 4 of the Board and Committee standing orders. Any allocation which is subject to Section 15 will be recorded in the Section 15 Register.

Any allocation to an employee, former employee, Board Member, former Board Member or close relative will require the approval of Housing Management Committee. This accords with Board and Committee procedures.

5 ALLOCATION REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it continues to fulfil its aims and objectives effectively. More periodic review may be undertaken where this is required as a result of legislative, regulatory requirement or recommended practice.

POINTS SYSTEM

	No. of Points
1. Security of Present Accommodation	
1) No fixed address or roofless/temporary homeless unit Only staying a few night in one place	40
2) Threatened with Homelessness (within 28 days)	
- *Notice to quit served	35
- *Property being repossessed	35
- *Asked to leave by friends/family/landlord (*Documentary evidence will be required)	35
3) Temporary Accommodation:	
- Non-homeless hostel, Women's Aid Refuge, Travelling or non-static caravan	20
- Bed and Breakfast, Hotel	15
- Institution/people leaving supported housing	15
4) Insecure Tenancies	
- * Tied housing where applicant within 1 year of retirement or of employment ending	10
- * Lease of less than 6 months	10
- Mobile Home/Static Caravan	10
- Staying care of, with relatives or in parental home or lodgings	10
* points will only be awarded for one of these categories	

	No. of Points
5) Secure Accommodation	
- Local Authority or Housing Association tenant or owner occupier	0
- Private let for more than 6 months	0

NOTE: Points are awarded under only one of the five headings above and applicants in categories 1) and 2) will not be awarded points under Sections 2 or 3, overleaf.

2. Overcrowding and Under-occupation

1) Overcrowding

It is considered that a bedroom is required for:

- a couple living together
- a parent in a single parent family
- each person over 14 years of age
- children of opposite sex and where one of whom has reached the age of 8 years and over should not share a bedroom
- children of the same sex 10 years apart in age should also not share the same bedroom
- no more than two people
- people who need a separate bedroom for medical reasons (verification required)

If one applicant is divorced or separated, points are only awarded in this category if the applicant has full or joint custody of the child/children.

For each bedroom short of the required number	10
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2) Under-occupation

- | | |
|--|----|
| - For one room in excess of requirements | 5 |
| - For two or more extra rooms | 10 |

No. of Points

3. Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) Lacking basic amenities: | |
| - No separate kitchen | 3 |
| - No cooking facilities | 3 |
| - No bath or shower | 3 |
| - No inside toilet | 3 |
| - No piped cold water supply | 3 |
| - No piped hot water supply | 3 |
| 2) Points will be awarded for sharing kitchen and toilet facilities where applicant is staying in: | |
| - Non Homeless Hostel, Womens Aid Refuge | |
| - Travelling or non-static Caravan | |
| - Bed & Breakfast, Hotel | |
| - Institution/People leaving supported Housing (except prison) | |
| - Staying care of, with relatives, friends or in parental home or lodgings | 3 |
| 3) No full central heating | 3 |
| 4) * Evidence of damp, condensation or water penetration | 3 |
| 5) * Serious disrepair/structural defects | 5 |
| 6) Elderly person or person with medical problems unable to manage large garden | 3 |
| * Points can be awarded for 4) and 5) together to give a total of 8 points if circumstances permit | |

NOTE: Unsatisfactory housing conditions points will be verified during the house visit. Inadequate heating points will be allocated where there is no full central heating. A house would have to require to be rewired before dangerous wiring points will be awarded. Significant evidence of damp will be required before points will be awarded (e.g. mould, etc).

4. Medical Points **No. of Points****Guide/Procedure For The Assessment Of Medical Priority****Introduction**

This guide/procedure is intended to assist in the effective assessment of medical priority.

Issuing Forms

When issuing an application form or when interviewing existing applicants the Association requires a pro-active approach to be adopted.

Applicants should be asked if they or any other individual to be included in their application has a medical condition that is affected by their current accommodation. If the answer is yes, then it must be stressed that the Medical Form must be completed in addition to the Application Form and as fully as possible to give a clear picture of their circumstances. It should also be made clear that any information given may be verified with their GP.

If a separate medical form has not been completed, suggesting no medical condition exists; the application form must be examined to ensure that other indicators of medical need have not been given. In the event that it appears that a medical need may require to be assessed to enhance their opportunity for appropriate housing, the applicants must be contacted and advised to complete the medical form.

Social Factors to Consider: -

- Is the medical condition likely to have stress/anxiety related to it?
- Is there a drug/alcohol dependency?
- Is the applicant making an effort to deal with the addiction?
- Is the health problem one that may be passed on to others in the household?
- Are the household overcrowded or do they have their own accommodation?
- Is the applicant or family staying in violent or non-violent circumstances?
- Is the applicant stressed due to financial difficulties?
- Does the applicant have or have a history of mental health problems?

Mobility Factors to Consider: -

- Is the current accommodation suitable i.e. is it level access or a multi?
- Are the stairs external or internal?
- How many stairs are there internally and externally?
- Is the bathroom upstairs/downstairs?
- Does the applicant have anyone else in the household who could assist them?
- Is the accommodation on a hill/gradient?
- Does the applicant have any aids in the house i.e. grab rails, hoists?
- Does the applicant walk with any aids i.e. stick, zimmer?
- Is the mobility problem temporary i.e. broken leg in younger person?

The award of medical points is for the household as a whole and is awarded on a cumulative assessment of the circumstances. All applicants who are being considered for allocation are visited and the award of medical points can be confirmed at the house visit.

After a visit, the application may be re-assessed and points may be added or removed.

Supporting information is not essential however in some circumstances it may assist in making an assessment.

Assessment will be made with reference to the Disability Handbook Second Edition (Stationary Office)

ASSNIL		ASSESSED AS NIL AWARD
MINMAR	(A/1)	5 POINTS
MINMOD	(A/11)	10 POINTS
MINWHO	(A/111)	15 POINTS
MODMAR	(B/1)	10 POINTS
MODMOD	(B/11)	20 POINTS
MODWHO	(B/111)	25 POINTS
SEVMAR	(C/1)	15 POINTS
SEVMOD	(C/11)	25 POINTS
SEVWHO	(C/111)	40 POINTS

Definitions of Terms

A. *Minor or Non-debilitating Medical Condition*

A condition that does not result in any risk to the person concerned and does not restrict normal activity. May include anxiety and depression that is not the subject of medical treatment.

B. *Moderate Medical Conditions*

Where the person concerned has a degree of restricted mobility or has some difficulty in managing normal activities. May include general frailty in the case of an older applicant. Does not require any particular facilities or amenities within the home.

C. *Severe Medical Condition*

Person may be at risk through falls, blackouts, fits or other sudden and serious illness. Mobility may be severely restricted, preventing them from carrying out normal activities without aids or assistance.

Progressive illness or diseases should be reviewed regularly and priority awarded to take into account likely changes in the condition over an annual period.

I *Current Housing Marginally Unsuitable*

Present housing circumstances do not significantly contribute to present ill health or frailty and not likely to cause deterioration in condition, or avoidable restriction of activities. However, re-housing may contribute to comfort and well being of person concerned.

II *Current Housing Moderately Unsuitable*

There are aspects of current housing which are unsuitable for person's present and potential health condition. Re-housing could significantly contribute to the well being and or mobility of the person.

III *Current Housing Wholly Unsuitable*

Continuation of living in present circumstances is likely to lead to further breakdown of person's health and re-housing is an essential part of addressing the medical problem.

Note:

In order to determine the appropriate category, the assessor needs to consider the medical form along with the whole application form and any letters etc. Where further information or clarification is required, any contacts such as Doctors, OT's, etc. should be followed up and/or the applicant contacted. The attached grid is to assist in the assessment of the degree of medical condition.

Further guidance on aspects of medical condition.

Aspect of Condition	Nil	Minor	Moderate	Severe
Mobility	Fully mobile – can use body freely without aids – climb stairs and at least moderate hills	Slight restrictions in overall mobility but nothing, which limits ability to access most facilities or carry out normal household tasks. May not be able to manage several flights of stairs	Would some assistance to perform general household tasks – e.g. cleaning, gardening. May be unable to negotiate stairs or gentle hills. May use minor aids such as a walking stick.	Would require intensive support or aids to move around or carry out personal care – cannot manage any household tasks without help
Pain / Discomfort	Condition does not result in pain or discomfort, which cannot be readily alleviated by preparatory medication	May experience periodic discomfort or pain or breathlessness as a result of activity or conditions is controlled by medication as prescribed.	Is regularly in pain or discomfort/ breathlessness. May receive some intensive treatment such as physiotherapy to control pain.	Is incapacitated on a frequent basis. Requires support or very regular hospitalisation to keep under control.

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Aspect of Condition	Nil	Minor	Moderate	Severe
Physical communication - sight, hearing, touch, speech, etc.	Has no difficulties and can communicate freely using all senses.	May require some aids to communicate freely – may be partially sighted or have minor hearing loss or disturbance. Speech may be difficult.	May suffer severe visual impairment or hearing loss, or be unable to verbally communicate. Assistance in unfamiliar surroundings required but otherwise can live without support.	May have a combination of the difficulties described under <i>moderate</i> or have a total loss of any of these facilities and require support on a regular basis to retain independent living.
Lethargy/ Depression ability to interact with others,	Not applicable to the person or not confirmed by any health professional	May suffer with feelings of depression, anxiety, sleeplessness, constant tiredness, which is controlled by medication from GP.	May have mental health problem, which requires occasional hospitalisation or therapy. Support being provided or required on a regular basis from health services or carers. Include learning difficulties where person can live independently with periodic support.	Frequent hospitalisation or intensive (daily) support from carers or psychiatric services is required / May be currently in hospital or supported accommodation and deemed ready for discharge. Severe learning difficulties

Aspect of Condition	Nil	Minor	Moderate	Severe
Risk of sudden illness, fit, attacks etc	Not applicable	Occasional attacks causing some pain or discomfort or shortness of breath, which are related to certain activities or can be predicted. Can be controlled by the individual using a prescribed treatment	Attacks may be frequent or unpredictable but can be controlled by the individual or a carer	Occurrence of unpredicted sudden attacks, fits etc of a nature, which require immediate treatment by a health professional. Also where it is indicated by the applicant that the illness is terminal.

Any one of the aspects covered or a combination of them would result in the appropriate award. Use discretion to decide if a higher award is appropriate where a number of the aspects combine to produce overall a more serious scenario.

5. Support Points

- 1) The assessor is required to carry out a manual assessment of support points from the information contained in the application form and medical form if applicable.
- 2) Full consideration of all the circumstances contained within the forms should be made and a judgement taken on the appropriate award. The award of support points is dependent on the following:
 - a) that there is a need for support and it is shown how this will be provided.
 - b) that the support needs can be met by one party moving to a particular area.
- 3) Support points may be awarded in the following circumstances:
 - a) where the applicant will be the recipient of support by moving
 - b) where the applicant will be the provider of support by moving
- 4) Support is most likely to be given or received by a family member, however, friends are also accepted as providers or recipients of support.

No. of Points

5.1 Desirable Support

5

The following types of support would qualify for the award of these points:

- a) an infirm or elderly person requiring emotional and practical support e.g. to feel secure in his or her own home, help with housework or shopping.
- b) a disabled person requiring support as above.
- c) a single parent requiring support e.g. occasional childcare.
- d) a family requiring some help with childcare (e.g. during school holidays).
- e) a person with long term or serious illness requiring emotional and practical support e.g. with housework, shopping or childcare.

No. of Points**5.2 Essential Support**

10

These points are awarded where the support given makes a significant difference to the person's quality of life or ability to live at home. These points are also awarded where childcare provided is necessary to allow an applicant to continue or start work.

- a) *Personal Care Dressing*
 - Washing
 - Assisting with use of toilet
 - Preparation of meals
 - Feeding
 - Giving medication
 - Assisting mobility within and outwith the property

- b) *Household Tasks*
 - Housework - if unable to do any housework or only able to do very light tasks.
 - Shopping - if unable to go out at all or unable to do most shopping tasks.

- c) *Childcare*
 - Where a parent/guardian's employment is dependent on the childcare provided.
 - Where either the child or parent/guardian have medical problems which require significant support

		No. of Points
6. Social Needs		
1)	Domestic Violence <i>(For the purposes of this policy, domestic violence shall mean: verbal, psychological, physical or sexual abuse at the hands of a member of the household)</i>	20
2)	Harassment/Racial Harassment <i>(Harassment points will only be awarded if harassment is directed at the applicant or the applicant's family and not where there is a general neighbour problem in a block or area)</i>	20
3)	Non-violent relationship breakdown whilst in marital home.	10
4)	Travelling difficulties: Applicants who need to be closer to place of work/ educational establishment or essential services, such as a day centre, currently more than 10 miles away, - with access to own transport - reliant on public transport	2 5
	If the applicant wishes to remain in the situation where they live > 10 miles from their workplace, they will not receive these points.	
5)	Isolation: Distance from public transport and local amenities: - more than 1 mile away and less than 3 miles away - more than 3 miles away	3 5
	Points in this category will not be allocated if the applicant lives in a town or city.	
6)	Financial difficulties Rent or mortgage costs such that the applicant experiences Financial hardship (e.g. costs such that these exceed 40% of disposable income)	5

NOMINATION AGREEMENT – TEMPLATE

PLEASE NOTE THAT APPENDICES REFERRED TO IN THIS NOMINATION AGREEMENT ARE NOT ATTACHED – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

1. Introduction

The purpose of this agreement is to assist in meeting housing need in the * area. The main intention of this agreement is to establish a framework whereby * can make nominations to * in order to meet identified housing need.

2. Scope of the Agreement

The agreement will apply to * accommodation in the * area and will relate to all new build properties, improved properties and conversions, relets and housing that has been specifically adapted to the requirements of households with special needs.

3. Procedure

Each party will provide the other with a copy of their allocations policy and any changes to these should be notified immediately.

* will provide advance notice of any vacancy. This will be at a minimum **one week** prior to such property becoming available for letting. In the case of new build accommodation, notice will be given as a minimum, **one month** prior to availability for letting and will provide detail of type and size, approximate rent and any occupancy restrictions.

* will complete Part 1 of the nomination form (Appendix 1) and this will be faxed to the designated officer of * as detailed in Appendix 2. The designated officer of the Council will complete Part 2 of the nomination form and will return the same to * within **3 working days** of receipt. Nominees will be expected to meet the criteria as specified at Part 1.

The * will then consider the list provided and will determine an offer to one of the nominees or rejection of the list within **five working days** of receiving it and will advise the designated officer of the Council of the outcome at the end of this time.

4. Quotas and Targets

As a registered social landlord with Scottish Homes, * agree to reach a target of 50% of net lets to *. Where * has provided significant funding or land below the market value or some other form of subsidy for a new build scheme other quotas may be negotiated upwards with the agreement of both parties to this agreement.

Net lets above refers to total lettings less transfers, mutual exchanges, successions, H.O.M.E.S. and any special referral arrangements that may have been negotiated outwith this agreement.

Within the agreed quotas the parties accept that a flexible agreement is important in sustaining balanced communities, however recognition is made of the needs of those who may be homeless or faced with such. Accordingly * agrees to alternate nominations from general and homeless lists where possible. Where this is not possible and there is an over-riding requirement to house a homeless applicant then * will attempt to accommodate this.

To facilitate the best use of housing stock in the * area, * agree to accepting 100% nomination rights where the Council agrees to the rehousing of a * household where under-occupation exists and/or the consequential vacancy results in the availability of adapted accommodation.

5. Refusal by a Nominee

Where an offer of accommodation is refused by a nominee written refusal will be requested by * and a copy of this will be passed to the Council. The applicant will be advised that such refusal may affect their position on the Council's own list. If the Nominee is a homeless applicant then * will advise them to contact the Council to clarify whether their refusal affects any priority awarded to them in terms of relevant legislation concerning homelessness.

6. Failure of nominations Provided

* must provide the Council with confirmation of the reasons why nominees are rejected. Where there is complete failure of a list provided by the Council the process will revert to that indicated in para 2. Should further failure occur then * will refer to its own list.

Refusals to accept nominations should be restricted to the following circumstances:

- where a nominee fails to meet the criteria as specified in the nomination form Part 1
- where the nominee fails to meet criteria as specified in the *'s allocation policy
- where it is found that any information supplied by the applicant is either false or untrue.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Council will maintain a record of nomination requests and targets and relevant outcomes for monitoring purposes. These will be passed to * on a quarterly basis or by * requesting this information provided that seven working days notice is provided.

Designated staff of both organisations will meet on an annual basis to discuss the nomination process and to agree and implement any changes required in light of operational experience, legislative requirements or good practice guidance from recognised professional bodies.

8. Equal Opportunities

Both Organisations adhere to policies of equality of opportunity in access to housing via the nomination agreement. This aims to ensure that no applicant receives less favourable treatment than others on the grounds of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, sex or marital status. Each party to this agreement will supply the other with copies of their equal opportunities policies. These it is expected will have regard to the following as a minimum.

- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981

9. Dispute

Where it is felt that this agreement has been broken or procedure not followed notification will be given by either party to the other in writing. Such notice will indicate the nature of concern and provide supporting evidence where relevant. Issues it is expected will be resolved through a meeting of designated officers and in the event that agreement cannot be reached will result in referral to an agreed mediator, the cost of such referral being split equally between both parties.

This agreement is made between * and *

Signed: _____

Date _____

On behalf of *

Signed _____

Date _____

On behalf of *