



---

O R K N E Y  
HOUSING  
ASSOCIATION LIMITED

---

**RENTED ALLOCATIONS**

**&**

**LETTINGS POLICY**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CONTENTS</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>SECTION ONE</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	
The Association	<b>3</b>
Geographical Context	<b>4</b>
Policy Formulation	<b>4</b>
Objectives	<b>5</b>
Local Liaison and Lettings Initiatives	<b>5</b>
Equal Opportunities	<b>5</b>
Purpose of the Policy Document	<b>5</b>
Availability	<b>6</b>
Policy Review	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION TWO</b>	
<b>Allocations Procedures</b>	
Admission to List	<b>7</b>
Method of Assessment	<b>7</b>
Joint Applications	<b>7</b>
Nominations	<b>8</b>
References	<b>9</b>
Transfers & Exchanges	<b>9-10</b>
Groups	<b>11</b>
Home Visits	<b>11-12</b>
Timing of Decisions/Island & Rural Schemes	<b>12</b>
Anti-Social Behaviour	<b>12</b>
Pets	<b>13</b>
Offer of a Tenancy	<b>13</b>
<b>SECTION THREE</b>	
<b>Accommodation Details</b>	
House Sizes	<b>14</b>
Location	<b>15</b>
Particular Needs (general, wheelchair, amenity)	<b>15-16</b>
Floor Coverings	<b>16</b>

**CONTENTS (Contd.)**

**SECTION FOUR**

**Miscellaneous**

Relationship Breakdown	<b>17</b>
False Misleading or Withheld Information	<b>17</b>
Personal Information/Confidentiality	<b>17</b>
Worsening of Circumstances	<b>18</b>
Right of Appeal	<b>18</b>
Complaints	<b>18</b>
Review of Applicants List	<b>18</b>
Change of Circumstances	<b>18</b>

<b>APPENDIX I</b>	Description of Housing Need Categories	<b>19-22</b>
-------------------	--	--------------

<b>APPENDIX II</b>	Points Schedule	<b>23-24</b>
--------------------	-----------------	--------------

**The Association**

Orkney Housing Association Limited is registered with Communities Scotland (Reg. No. HAL 164) and with the Registry of Friendly Societies (Reg. No. 2201R(S)) Charitable Status. It is a non profit making organisation providing rented and shared ownership accommodation for those in need of subsidised housing.

Demand for good quality affordable homes is far greater than the supply. We are, unfortunately, unable to house everyone quickly who applies to the Association.

## **Geographical Context**

Orkney has a population of approximately 19,600. To those outside Orkney it may appear one community but within Orkney there are wide variations.

The Association supports Orkney Islands Council's policy, contained in its Structure Plan and approved by the Secretary of State for Scotland, of seeking to support remote and fragile communities. All embracing solutions need to be found in these communities to support:-

- economic initiatives
- the social fabric, e.g., by ensuring that individuals with children of school age are not forced to move outside these communities in order to secure adequate housing, thus jeopardising the continuance of the local school

## **Policy Formulation**

In formulating this Policy the Association has taken account of law and best practice guidelines laid down in the following documents:

- SDD Circular 10/75
- Scottish Homes Guidance Notes 90/23 and 93/23
- Scottish Federation of Housing Associations/Scottish Homes Performance Standards
- SFHA/CS Raising Standards in Housing
- Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice in Rented Housing
- Managing Mobility - A good policy and practice guide for housing associations and co-ops - June 1993, Homes (Scottish Office).
- Housing Allocations in Scotland, a Practice Note (Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland with funding from the Scottish Office, Development Department).
- Good Practice in Housing Management - Nomination Arrangements; Good Practice Note 6 (the Scottish Office).
- Orkney Islands Council's Structure Plan as approved by the Secretary of State for Scotland.
- Housing and Economic Development in Remote Rural Areas of the Highlands and Islands (produced by consultants for Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Homes).
- Orkney Islands Council - Community Care Plan 1998-2001
- Orkney Islands Council - Children's Act Plan
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

## **Objectives**

- provide a fair and consistent method of assessing relative housing need amongst applicants.
- ensure the best possible match between house type or location and individual housing needs and preferences.
- take account of other housing options available to applicants.
- assist with mobility for family, health or employment reasons.
- ensure best use of housing stock e.g. by minimising voids and achieving social balance.
- complement the work of other housing providers in Orkney.
- take account, where possible, and within best practice guidance, of the aspirations of applicants and tenants.
- help increase the supply of housing in local communities.
- support the more remote and/or fragile communities in Orkney by ensuring their overall needs are taken into account or assisting them to achieve balance and stability.
- recognise, within the larger developments, the importance of housing need, and also the occasional need to balance a community through using social factors to create, within a development, a genuinely balanced community.

## **Local Liaison and Lettings Initiatives**

The Association will consult local groups such as Community Councils, whenever it is building new schemes outside Kirkwall and Stromness, on whether local lettings initiatives are sensible.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In assessing housing need and making allocations, the Association will not discriminate on the grounds of sex, marital status, family circumstances, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, religion, political or sexual orientation. Applicants are asked to provide details of their ethnic origin to assist the Association's monitoring of this Policy. The provision of this information on the application form is voluntary. Copies of the Policy are available in different languages and formats upon request.

## **Purpose of the Policy Document**

This document details the Policy and procedures for the allocation of the Association's rented housing stock. Its purpose is to inform applicants and any interested parties as to the method of assessment and selection employed by the Association when allocating rented housing.

## **Availability**

The Policy document is available for inspection in the Association's office, at the offices of Orkney Islands Council, at Communities Scotland or a copy can be provided on request. A summary is available to the general public and will be provided to all applicants and, on request, tenants of the Association.

## **Policy Review**

This Policy was reviewed in early 1998 and approved on 2 June 1998 with effect from 1 July 1998. Minor changes were made in November 1998 following a review of its first months' of operation. Changes have been made to ensure compliance with legislation introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. It will continue to be reviewed periodically by the Management Committee. Tenants will also be consulted on changes to the Policy. Comments on the Policy are always welcome and should be forwarded in writing to:

The Executive Director  
Orkney Housing Association Ltd  
39a Victoria Street  
Kirkwall  
KW15 1DN

### **Admission to List**

The Association will accept applications from anyone aged 16 years and over.

The Association has also designated certain properties for people requiring various types of support and these will be allocated outside the pointing system, having regard to both housing and support needs.

Applications should be made to the Association using the Association's housing application form. Only one application per person will be accepted but application may also be made to the Shared Ownership list on the same form.

The housing list will remain open and all applications will be assessed normally within two weeks. Applications from women who are fleeing violence or from persons who are roofless will be assessed normally within one working day.

Any applicant who is a close relative of any one of the following:

- a) a committee member or
- b) a former committee member ( in the previous 12 months) or
- c) a staff member or
- d) a former staff member (in the previous 12 months)

must complete full details in the declaration at the end of the housing application form. This does not mean they cannot be considered for an allocation but ensures that the necessary procedures are followed in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Schedule 7 Part 1.

(A "close relative" is defined as son/daughter (including step-child), brother/sister, mother/father, grandparent, grandchild, husband/wife)

### **Method of Assessment**

Priority for housing is assessed through the award of Priority Passes which are based upon housing need. See Groups (Page 11) and Appendix 1 (Page 19) for a detailed description of the housing need criteria. The allocations process also allows applicants to exercise a degree of choice of where they want to live and in what type of accommodation.

### **Joint Applications**

Where a joint application has been made by applicants currently living in separate accommodation, assessment will be based on the one whose circumstances are described in the application form. Where information is available on both, the assessment will be based on the circumstances which attract the most points at that time.

## **Nominations**

### a) Orkney Islands Council

Orkney Islands Council is invited to nominate applicants from their own housing list for 50% of the Association vacancies or new lets. All nominees will have been asked to confirm that they wish to be nominated and will have been given information about Association tenancies. Nominations will be in accordance with the Nominations Agreement between the Association and Orkney Islands Council. A nomination from Orkney Islands Council does not confer the right to an allocation as two nominations are requested for each vacancy and the allocation decision is the Association's.

Orkney Islands Council may also request the Association to provide accommodation for persons that they have assessed as homeless. The Association will comply with these requests except in exceptional circumstances. Cases where the Association are unable to provide accommodation will be referred to the Executive Director and discussed with Orkney Islands Council. Where agreement cannot be reached then a mutually agreed independent person will be identified to decide in the case.

### b) HOMES

Tenants of landlords participating in the HOMES Mobility Scheme can ask their landlord to nominate them to the Association. A separate list of HOMES nominees will be held by the Association for which a quota of vacancies will be available, on a one-in/one-out basis. (See Also Transfers & Exchanges on Page 9).

### c) Supported Accommodation

The Association has undertaken one development of supported accommodation for adults, normally between the ages of 16 and 64, with physical disabilities in support of Orkney Islands Council's Care in the Community Plan. Selection for these properties will be via a joint selection group which will look at both support and housing needs criteria, although the final decision will be the Association's. The selection group comprises the manager of the project and a multi-disciplinary professional team.

It is likely that the Association will build similar as well as entering into agreements with other bodies providing support to individuals or families with, e.g., learning disabilities or mental health problems.

## References

Where an applicant is currently a tenant, or has held a tenancy within the past five years, the Association will normally, with the permission of the applicant, contact the present and/or previous landlord(s) to investigate whether the tenancy has been conducted satisfactorily. No allocation of a tenancy will be made to applicants having rent arrears of more than one month in a currently held tenancy unless the Association is satisfied that a reasonable arrangement for the repayment of rent arrears has been made and adhered to, for 3 months, or there are extenuating circumstances. If an applicant unreasonably withholds permission to seek a reference, then the Association will treat this as withholding information. (See Page 17).

## Transfers and Exchanges

### a) Transfers to other Association property

Requests from tenants for a transfer to another Association property will be considered for the following reasons:

- i) Medical needs relating to the accommodation occupied
- ii) Change in household size resulting in overcrowding/underoccupation
- iii) Personal or social reasons e.g. racial harassment, relationship breakdown, employment.

### Conditions

1. The transfer must not result in overcrowding or under-occupancy of the new accommodation. (For exceptions see Section Three, House Sizes on Page 14).
2. The tenant must normally have a clear rent account arrears of not more than 1/12<sup>th</sup> of the annual amount payable.\*

\* Transfers could be considered subject to the level of arrears where there would be an improvement in social or personal circumstances, eg, through a reduction in outgoings, so long as (a) a repayment schedule had been agreed and adhered to for at least 3 months and (b) the likelihood that the repayment schedule will continue to be adhered to.

3. The tenant must not be in breach of their tenancy conditions except in cases where the breach is the reason or part of the reason for transfer.

### Assessment

Transfer applicants will be pointed on the same basis as new applicants. However consideration will be given to the best use of housing stock and wherever possible to the aspirations of the applicant(s). It may therefore be the case that a transfer applicant will be offered accommodation before an applicant with higher points if by doing so the needs of more applicants can be satisfied.

b) Nominations to another landlord

The Association is a member of the Housing Organisations Mobility and Exchange Service (HOMES) which gives tenants the opportunity to apply for nomination to another participating social landlord (includes Housing Associations and Councils) in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A separate HOMES application form must be completed giving reasons for wishing to transfer.

The main criteria for eligibility are:

- i) Employment
- ii) Social priority (e.g. to give/receive support)
- iii) Special reasons

c) Mutual Exchanges

HOMES also provide a HOMESWAP Service whereby applicants can apply to have their names placed on an exchange list.

A regularly updated list of HOMESWAP applicants wishing to exchange into Orkney may be viewed at Orkney Islands Council Housing Division. This is a self help scheme which means applicants reach agreement by direct contact with each other. However, the consent of both landlords is required before a swap can take place.

Further details about HOMES procedures are available on request.

d) Local Mutual Exchanges

Mutual exchanges can be arranged between the Association tenancies and those of Orkney Islands Council. Arrangements are similar to those for HOMESWAP and the prior written consent of both landlords is required.

Transfer conditions will also apply to Nominations and Mutual Exchanges.

## **Groups**

Applicants will be allocated to the following groups:

- |    |                          |    |                         |
|----|--------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| 1. | Direct applicants        | 5. | Supported accommodation |
| 2. | OHAL transfer applicants | 6. | OIC nominations         |
| 3. | HOMES applicants         | 7. | Special Cases           |
| 4. | Mutual exchanges         |    |                         |

Targets will be set for each group by the Management Committee and reviewed as required but at least once a year.

Each group in 1-6 will compete within their own group, but not outside the groups, eg Council nominations will only be compared with other Council nominations.

The special case group will, in any one year, be minimal and

- should demonstrate an exceptionally high level of need, greater than those on the general or transfer lists, e.g., a refugee population be to an applicant in housing need but who may have a smaller number of points than another if such an allocation would either achieve social balance or meet community criteria such as allocating to a family with children where a school was under threat of closure.

These cases will be determined by the Management Committee, names will not be given.

Tenants living in supported accommodation will compete for accommodation in the appropriate needs category, e.g., someone with physical disabilities will not compete against an individual with learning disabilities.

## **Home Visits**

Home Visits will be conducted for a number, normally two, of those suitable applicants with the most points when a vacancy occurs. The purpose of the home visit is to ensure that:

- a) all information relevant to housing need has been noted,
- b) all information provided on the form is accurate,
- c) the applicant has been awarded all the points to which they are entitled,
- d) the house for which they are being considered is suitable for their needs,
- e) any queries or concerns the applicant may have about their application are raised.

Tenancies will then be offered to those with the highest points subject to group quotas. Where two or more applicants have equal points the following may be taken into account:

- a) local connection
- b) the alternative options available or likely to become available to the applicant
- c) length of time in housing need and on the list

### **Timing of Decisions/Island and Rural Schemes**

In areas where a high turnover may be anticipated, e.g. Kirkwall or new lettings, the Association may batch home visits and consider applicants as and when vacancies arise.

Outside Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown and Dounby, in other words in island and rural areas, the Association will, where it receives due notice of a vacancy to be filled by a direct applicant:-

- immediately despatch posters to suitable points in the community, e.g. post office, local shop, doctor's surgery, inviting applications by a fixed date.
- on expiry of the period, undertake home visits in accordance with the above.
- delay lettings decisions by up to two weeks where it is aware this may assist a local employer advertising a vacancy.

In view of the fragile nature of Orkney islands and rural areas, the Association may, for applicants seeking to live in these areas, require an applicant to demonstrate a need to be housed in that particular area as opposed to Kirkwall or Stromness. Such a housing need will be demonstrated via employment or support criteria.

Staff have discretion not to undertake local advertising where due notice has not been given, e.g. keys have been returned without notice.

### **Anti-social Behaviour**

Applicants with a history of anti-social and disruptive behaviour will not be offered a Scottish Secure tenancy if such an allocation is likely to cause disruption to other tenants and the Association and related agencies cannot provide sufficient support. Such a restriction would only apply where facts can be substantiated by local authorities Housing and Community Social Services Departments, Police or other similar records, and where the Association was satisfied that it was essential in order to protect the rights of other tenants. In these circumstances a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will be offered and a support package put in place to ensure that the family are able to reside in their property without causing disturbance to their neighbours.

## **Pets**

Permission will be given to keep pets such as cats and dogs provided (a) they wear identity tags/collars, (b) they do not cause a nuisance to others, (c) the property is not shared accommodation. Full information about any pets an applicant would wish to bring to a new tenancy must be supplied before the tenancy agreement is signed.

## **Offer of a Tenancy**

Offers of a tenancy will be made in writing providing details of the accommodation and the rent. Tenancies will normally be Scottish Secure Tenancies providing security of tenure; Short Scottish Secure Tenancies will be offered in certain cases where:-

- Tenants have been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the past 3 years.
- A court has granted an anti-social behaviour order against a tenant (in these circumstances a Scottish Secure Tenancy would be converted into a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy for a limited period).
- Where accommodation was provided on a temporary basis.
- Where properties are leased from another body.

All Short Scottish Secure Tenancy offers, other than for shared accommodation will be reported, anonymously, to Management Committee via quarterly management information. If an applicant does not respond to an offer of tenancy within seven days, the offer may be withdrawn.

The entry date will be by agreement depending on the availability of the property but is unlikely to be more than 30 days from the date of offer. The Association reserves the right to alter the agreed entry date if this is necessary due to uncompleted works. Keys will not generally be available to the tenants prior to the signing of the Tenancy Agreement.

Where a house is (a) built to wheelchair standards and (b) the tenant no longer requires wheelchair accommodation or is no longer resident, then the tenant, and/or those remaining in occupation, will be offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy while they/the Association seek suitable alternative accommodation.

**House Sizes**

The number of bedrooms required for a household will be determined by the Association on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) A separate double bedroom is required for:
  - i) co-habiting parties of the opposite or same sex
  - ii) two children of the same sex under 16 years where the age difference is less than 9 years
  - iii) two children of different sex under 8 years
  
- b) A separate single bedroom is required for:
  - i) any other adult (over 16 years)
  - ii) any other child not able to share on the basis of a(ii) and a(iii) above.

In a household where a woman is pregnant the unborn child(ren) will be counted when determining the size of house for which the household will be considered (but will not be considered when assessing overcrowding).

A property with an extra bedroom may be offered if:

- a) there is a medical reason - recommendation will be required from the Chief/Depute Administrative Medical Officer or his/her nominated representative
  
- b) there are children from previous relationships with residential visiting rights who are resident for a substantial amount of the time and hardship would result if an extra room was not provided - full details of the visiting arrangements will be required.
  
- c) the vacant property is in a rural or island area where there is no social rented housing of the right size or none is likely to become available in the foreseeable future.
  
- d) the ages of the children are such that an extra room will be required in the next 12 months.

## **Location**

Applicants may express their preference for up to 2 locations on their application form where the Association has property or intends to build and will be given equal consideration for each choice. However, if 2 or more applicants have equal points, priority may be given to those for whom the vacancy is their only suitable option.

## **Particular Needs**

### General

The Association recognises that a proportion of its applicants will have particular housing needs. The Association will, through its planned building programme and this policy, address these needs, having regard to:

- Orkney Islands Council's published Community Care Plan and other assessments of needs and provision
- the specific requirements of individual applicants and any Care Plan which has been agreed

Such lettings may be directly to individual applicants or to groups with particular expertise who are providing social or health care support. Special arrangements will apply for allocation of accommodation where support is being provided.

The Association may from time to time set a target on the total number of lettings made to those requiring support and may, in certain cases, require to be satisfied that support is, and will remain, available in the interests of all parties.

Supported accommodation is covered on Page 8 at (c) and Page 11 - Groups.

### Wheelchair

The Association provides houses designed to wheelchair standard in most schemes of over 5 units. Applicants (or family members) with a disability who require housing suitable for wheelchair users will receive priority over any other person on the waiting list when these houses are being allocated.

Assessment of the adaptations required for the disabled applicant/family will be provided by the Occupational Therapy staff of Orkney Islands Council's Community Social Services Department. Prior to a wheelchair suitable property being allocated, a meeting involving Orkney Islands Council Housing Division, Occupational Therapist, Health Board and Association representatives will be held. This is to ensure no-one who needs such a property is overlooked. Wherever possible with new lets, allocations will be made well in advance of completion so that the adaptations can be incorporated at the construction stage.

If a disabled applicant/family member cannot be identified the Association may then allocate the property to a non wheelchair user household or to Orkney Islands Council for emergency accommodation on a temporary basis. Priority in this case may be given to an applicant for whom a short term tenancy is appropriate, thereby allowing a further opportunity for the house to be available to someone requiring the special features at a later date.

The Association may seek to recover possession of a Special Needs house if the household no longer requires the dwelling. In this case every effort will be made to provide suitable alternative accommodation for the household.

### Amenity

A high proportion of the Association's housing stock is built with special features designed to be suitable for the needs of applicants over the age of 60 and those with minor mobility problems. These features include level entry showers, lever taps, wider doorways, additional pathways, etc.

Those who require these special features will be given priority over any other person on the list when these houses are being allocated.

In the event that no such person has been identified for the property it will be allocated as for a non-amenity property.

### **Floor Coverings**

Tenants must supply their own floor coverings except in (a) amenity and wheelchair houses where non-slip covering in the kitchen and bathroom is provided by the Association.

## Relationship Breakdown

### Applicants

Where a relationship breakdown occurs with applicants who had been living as husband and wife but who no longer wish to be considered for a joint tenancy, a separate application will be accepted from each one. Each will retain the original date of application. Assessment for overcrowding will assume each requires a separate bedroom.

### Tenants

Where a relationship breakdown occurs with an existing Association joint tenancy the couple must agree between themselves who should retain the tenancy, having due regard to the **Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection)(Scotland) Act 1981**, where appropriate. An application for transfer may be submitted by the tenant relinquishing the tenancy. Where it is relevant to a transfer, the Association will require verification (e.g. from a court or solicitor) of any custody arrangements relating to the children involved in a relationship breakdown.

## False, Misleading or Withheld Information

Any offer of tenancy made as a result of such false or knowingly misleading/withheld information (including an omission) will be withdrawn and the application cancelled. Where a person is found to have obtained a house on the basis of such false information action may be taken to recover possession of the property.

## Personal Information/Confidentiality

All information provided by an applicant will be regarded as confidential. In certain circumstances the Association may require to discuss an applicant's details with another agency (e.g. Medical Profession, Housing, Housing Benefit and Council Tax, Community Social Services Departments or with relatives where support is being given/received). This will only occur where authority has been granted by the applicant. However, refused permission may force the Association to suspend or cancel the application. Financial details supplied by applicants for shared ownership accommodation will require to be verified by the Association.

The Association is registered under the **Data Protection Act 1998** allowing it to maintain computer and manual records of applicants' details. In accordance with the Act all applicants have the right of access to such data. The Association undertakes to provide this information on request within 2 clear working days. A small administration charge may be levied depending upon the frequency of the requests and the time involved.

## **Worsening of Circumstances**

Details of previous accommodation over the last 3 years and reason(s) for leaving will be requested. If an applicant has given up accommodation which (s)he could reasonably have continued to occupy the application may be cancelled or suspended for 12 months, and additional points would be withheld. The applicant may be asked for evidence of good grounds for such a move.

## **Complaints**

All applicants have a right to complain against a decision relating to their application. A copy of the Complaints Procedure is available on request but in summary anyone not satisfied with the way their application has been dealt with may ask for it to be reviewed at a more senior level. If this is not satisfactory the matter will be heard by a panel of voluntary committee members. Ultimately an applicant has the right to have their appeal heard by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. There is no further right of appeal against the Ombudsman's findings.

## **Review of Applicants list**

The applicants list is reviewed annually at which time all applicants are asked to confirm whether or not they wish to remain on the list. Failure to respond to the review will result in the application being removed from the list. One reminder letter will be sent giving a limited period for a reply.

## **Change of Circumstances**

Applicants whose circumstances change from those given on their application form must inform the Association. Their application will be re-assessed on the basis of the new circumstances and points awarded accordingly. If an applicant has failed to inform the Association about a change, and an offer of tenancy is made on the basis of out of date information, the offer will be withdrawn pending a re-assessment.

Direct applicants will be allocated to whichever of the six categories listed below in which they have most points. Points from all categories will be added together. OIC nominees will be allocated purely on a points basis.

**1. Substandard House Conditions**

Applicants whose housing is substandard either because of defects or because certain basic amenities are lacking. Points will be awarded on the basis of the information provided on the form but must be verified at the home visit, or if necessary by a property inspection.

**Dampness/Condensation:**

Points will not be awarded for:

- Condensation if it appears to be caused by avoidable under-ventilation

**Basic Kitchen Facilities:**

Points will be awarded where the following are not available:

- Sink and drainer, one worktop, one cupboard.

**Caravans and Mobile Homes:**

- Points will be awarded for being in a caravan and/or mobile home, whether owned or rented (a) at a basic number and (b) under applicable categories.

**2. Medical Need**

Any household with a member who has been identified as having a medical condition (mental or physical) which is (a) made worse by their present housing condition and (b) is likely to be improved or suffering alleviated by rehousing into more suitable accommodation.

Medical points will be awarded as follows:-

a) Low

because of a medical condition the sufferer's present housing is unsuitable, but rehousing is not urgently required.

b) Medium

the sufferer has a serious medical condition which would be improved by moving to more suitable accommodation.

- c) High  
the sufferer's present housing is completely unsuitable for their medical condition. The quality of the sufferer's life is seriously limited and would be greatly improved by moving to more suitable accommodation. Urgent action is recommended.

To ensure a consistent and informed approach, evaluation of needs will normally be by the Depute Administrative Medical Officer of the Health Board or his/her nominated representative.

### 3. Overcrowding

Households who have access to insufficient bed spaces for their needs. Adequate house size is determined by the Association as follows:

- a) A separate double bedroom is required for:
- i) co-habiting parties of the opposite or same sex
  - ii) two children of the same sex under 16 years where the age difference is less than 9 years
  - iii) two children of different sex under 8 years
- b) A separate single bedroom is required for:
- i) any other adult (over 16 years)
  - ii) any other child not able to share on the basis of a(ii) and a(iii) above.

The minimum bedroom sizes are:

Double Room	2 person	10m <sup>2</sup> (108ft <sup>2</sup> )
Single Room	1 person	7m <sup>2</sup> ( 75ft <sup>2</sup> )

In assessing whether overcrowding exists:

- a) Public rooms (living room, kitchen etc) will be disregarded
- b) Only permanent members of the household will be counted
- c) Any unborn child(ren) will not be counted

A single person occupying a bedsit will not be regarded as overcrowded.

#### **4. Insecure or Lacking a Tenancy**

- a) Applicants accommodation is regarded as insecure if:
  - i) It is tied to their employment
  - ii) They have a short or fixed term lease (a copy of their lease will be required indicating when the term expires. These points will be withdrawn after the expiry date unless there is evidence of legal action)
  - iii) they are in Bed & Breakfast, furnished accommodation or lodgings
  - iv) they are sharing with friends or relatives on a temporary basis (sons or daughters under 18 years still living in the family home are excluded)
  
- b) Applicants will be regarded as homeless only if they have been assessed as homeless by Orkney Islands Council Housing Department and have been accepted as being the authority's responsibility. If points are awarded in this category, they will not also be awarded in categories 3 and 5.

#### **5. Sharing Accommodation**

Applicants who are sharing facilities (WC, shower/bathroom, kitchen) with people outwith their own household. Their "household" is defined to mean all those included in their application for accommodation.

Also included are victims of a relationship breakdown who previously lived together but have satisfied the Association that they now wish to be housed separately. (See Section Four, Relationship Breakdown on Page 17)

#### **6. Personal and Social Needs**

Households whose present accommodation is unsuitable for a range of personal or social reasons for example:

- a) Financial hardship: e.g. high rent or housing costs (details of costs and household income may be required).
  
- b) Unsuitable location: e.g. isolation and lack of access to essential services (account will be taken of distance from public road, local bus services etc) and travelling difficulties.
  
- c) Unsuitable house layout: e.g. excessively steep stairs where small children, elderly or disabled people are involved; an elderly person experiencing difficulty because the house is too large for their needs.

- d) Need to live or remain in the area: e.g. for support, existing (or offer of) employment, education, family or other existing connection.
- e) Personal relationship difficulties and/or excessive personal suffering: e.g. relationship breakdown, family living apart, racial or other harassment, domestic violence.

Points will not be awarded in this category if the specific circumstances have already been pointed under medical needs.

Points can be awarded in each category at the following 3 levels reflecting the severity or urgency of the situation:

- Non-urgent - the circumstances are as reported but do not present as either of the below
- Priority - it is unreasonable to expect an individual to tolerate the situation
- Urgent Priority - danger to life and limb

In (d) where support is claimed via a family connection, other members of the family may be contacted to see if they are willing to give/receive support.

In (e) due to the high level of points available under Priority and Urgent Priority these will only be awarded where the Association has fully investigated the circumstances and is satisfied that the need for rehousing justifies such priority. For this purpose the Association will consult the Housing Division and may wish to consult other agencies already involved with the applicant or agencies who may be able to advise on the assessment (e.g. Community Social Services Department, medical, legal, teaching profession or the police). Such discussions with other agencies would only take place with the consent of the applicant.

## Points Schedule

## Appendix II

### 1. House Conditions

a) No inside flushing toilet	20
b) No internal bath/shower	15
c) Inadequate water supply	10
d) No hot water in bathroom	7
e) Problems with sewerage	7
f) Dampness arising from condensation	5
g) Rising penetrating damp	5
h) No wash hand basin	5
i) No hot water in kitchen	5
j) Lacking basic kitchen facilities	5
k) Excessive draughts/faulty doors/windows	5
l) Other structural defects (e.g. floors, roof)	5
m) Vermin with access to living area	5
n) Substandard electrical wiring	5
o) Other (Details to be provided)	5
Caravans and Mobile Homes	10

### 2. Medical Need

a) Low	10
b) Medium	30
c) High	50

### 3. Overcrowding

For each person lacking a bedspace	10
NOTE - Limited to a maximum of	30

#### 4. Insecure Tenancy and Homelessness

a) Insecure or lacking tenancy, tied accommodation, bed and breakfast, lodgings - no date for leaving .....	20
b) Short term tenancy with known date of expiry .....	30
c) Notice to Quit within 2 months .....	40
d) assessed as statutory homeless by OIC with an OIC obligation to re-house .....	40

If in (d), no points in categories 3 or 5 will be awarded.

#### 5. Sharing Accommodation

Single Person .....	10
Couples or Family Unit .....	20

#### 6. Personal and Social Need

	<u>Non Urgent</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Urgent</u> <u>Priority</u>
a) Financial hardship .....	5	10	-
b) Unsuitable location .....	5	10	-
c) Unsuitable house layout .....	5	10	-
d) Need to live or remain in the area .....	5	10	-
e) Personal relationship difficulties/excessive personal suffering .....	5	20	40