



# **Williamsburgh**

## **H O U S I N G   A S S O C I A T I O N**

**• L i m i t e d •**

### Allocations Policy and Procedure

This policy can be made available in different languages and other formats such as Braille, large print or tape, on request.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Williamsburgh Housing Association is a locally-based provider of quality, affordable, rented housing in areas throughout Renfrewshire.

We are committed to providing housing for those in housing need, offering choice, while also considering the best use of our properties, in relation to promoting balanced and stable communities in the areas in which we operate.

The Association is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and good practice. In this regard, we acknowledge Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions (November 2006) : GS2.1, which states in respect of equal opportunities that:

“We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work”.

Accordingly, we shall ensure that specifically in regard to the allocation of properties, all applicants are treated equally, irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

## 2. SUMMARY : PERFORMANCE STANDARDS, GOOD PRACTICE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Performance Standards

The Association, in preparing this policy and the related procedures has given consideration to and sought compliance with, the following:

Performance Standards, as defined by Communities Scotland – the regulatory body for housing associations. The relevant Activity Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and 4.2 state:

- **AS1.1 Access to housing**  
“We ensure that people have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process. We work with others to maximise and simplify access routes into our housing.”
- **AS1.2 Lettings**  
“We let houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need; makes best use of available stock; maximises choice; and helps to sustain communities.”
- **AS1.3 Tenancies**  
“We offer the most secure form of tenancy compatible with the purpose of the housing. The agreement makes clear the rights and duties of the tenant and landlord. We act to uphold these rights and duties in a fair and responsive manner.”
- **AS1.4 Housing support needs**  
“We are responsive to people’s individual housing support needs and help them to sustain their tenancies.”
- **AS4.2 Partnership working**  
“We work actively with other organisations, and within our own organisation, to ensure that the needs of homeless people are met appropriately and as quickly as possible.”

## 2.2 Good Practice Guidance

- Raising Standards in Housing
- Civil Partnerships in Scotland
- Suspending Applicants on Housing Registers

## 2.3 Legal Framework

The legislative framework which affects the allocation of properties includes:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and 2001
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965
- The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

### **3. TENANT AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

As a result of the tenant participation provisions in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 the Association is statutorily obliged to consult with tenants on changes to housing management policies. This includes changes to the policy and practice of allocating properties.

We will consult with tenants on our Register of Interested Parties, and those participating in our Area Committees in order to obtain their views on this allocations policy.

At the point of signing up new tenants for their homes, we will obtain their views on our allocation policy and procedures.

#### 4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The allocation policy and associated procedures aim to ensure that the following principles are complied with, in the allocation of our houses:

- To ensure that people have fair, continuous and open access to our housing list and assessment process.
- To ensure priority is given to those applicants in the greatest housing need.
- To work in partnership with other bodies and organisations where possible, to identify and alleviate housing need.
- To ensure all people applying for housing are treated equally, irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.
- To ensure applicants are provided with good, accurate information and advice, enabling them to make informed choices about housing provided by the Association.
- To make the best use of available housing stock, and use the allocations process to assist in the creation and maintenance of communities where people want to live and remain.
- To ensure our working practices are transparent, are supported with full audit trails and take cognisance of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- To ensure that we achieve high standards of customer service.
- To be fair, efficient and non-discriminatory.
- To ensure the confidentiality of all applicants.
- To encourage participation by involving applicants, tenants, committee members and staff, in the development and implementation of the policy and procedures.
- To monitor performance and respond to changing patterns of need.

5. CONTROL OF PAYMENTS AND BENEFITS: SCHEDULE 7 OF THE HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2001

Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places certain restrictions on housing associations registered with Communities Scotland. The law restricts the payments and benefits that housing associations can grant to:

- Employees
- Former employees
- Close relatives of current or former employees
- Current RSL board members
- Former RSL board members
- Close relatives of current and former RSL board members. ('Former' in these instances, will mean one year prior to the date of application).

Under the terms of Schedule 7 and as determined by Communities Scotland, a person is a close relative if :

- a) He or she is the spouse, or he or she cohabits with that person (whether the same or different sexes), or
- b) He or she is that person's parent, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, brother or sister.

To ensure that close relatives identify themselves, when applying for housing, the Association has incorporated a question on the application form, enquiring as to any relationship with employees or RSL board members.

The Association may grant a tenancy, transfer of tenancy or mutual exchange to any one within the restricted categories provided that the person:

- Fully meets the Association's allocations criteria, as contained within this document.
- If the relationship is with an employee, the employee has had no involvement or influence over the process by which the Association allocated the tenancy in question.
- The granting of the tenancy is approved by the Management Committee.

6. **ALLOCATION PRIORITIES**

We will allocate our houses to applicants in the following order of priority:

- existing residents within improvement contracts
- residents of regeneration areas
- other housing lists – housing list and transfer list  
(In this context 'regeneration areas' covers Housing Action Areas, Housing Renewal Areas, Regeneration Areas etc.)

Allocation priority for residents within improvement contracts and regeneration areas will be determined by the order in which contracts are scheduled to commence.

#### 6.1 Existing residents within improvement contracts

The Association is committed to area regeneration through the provision of rehabilitated and new build properties. Direct permanent moves will be offered to residents within this category. This will reduce the number of decant flats required to ensure that improvement contracts are not delayed.

Where, however, decant accommodation is required, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement will be offered, from the Association's unimproved or improved stock.

Only householders and their family members resident at the time of declaration, as confirmed by the resident survey, will be considered for rehousing in this category. The housing management section will require a report from the development section giving details of each applicant and family composition, special needs requirements etc.

Residents within this category will be held on a separate list and receive the first choice of available properties.

Where a resident secures accommodation, other than that offered by the Association, their application will be deleted from the list and no longer considered for rehousing.

Allocation priority for residents within an improvement contract will be determined by the order in which closes will be handed over to the contractor.

Should the situation arise that only two residents remain within a close, they will be classed as 'at risk', and be prioritised over other remaining residents within the identified contract.

Where more than one resident qualifies for the same accommodation, their present circumstances will be assessed in

accordance with the points system within this policy, to determine allocation priority.

## 6.2 Residents of regeneration areas

The Association is committed to housing led regeneration within Renfrewshire, and will work to provide rehabilitated and new build houses. To progress the regeneration process, special lettings initiatives will be created for specific areas, where necessary. This may involve joint working with other agencies. All lettings initiatives will be subject to approval by the Housing Management Sub Committee. A full list of lettings initiatives is detailed at Appendix 1.

Direct permanent moves will be offered to residents within this category. This will reduce the number of decant flats required to ensure that improvement contracts are not delayed.

Where, however, decant accommodation is required, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement will be offered, from the Association's unimproved or improved stock.

Only householders and their family members resident at the time of declaration, as confirmed by the resident survey, will be considered for rehousing in this category. The housing management section will require a report from the development section giving details of each applicant and family composition, special needs requirements etc.

Residents within this category will be held on a separate list and receive the first choice of available properties.

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Allocation priority for residents within an improvement contract will be determined by the order in which closes will be handed over to the contractor.

Should the situation arise that only two residents remain within a close, they will be classed as 'at risk', and be prioritised over other remaining residents within the identified contract.

Where more than one resident qualifies for the same accommodation, their present circumstances will be assessed in accordance with the points system within this policy, to determine allocation priority.

### 6.3 Other housing lists

All other applicants will be held on their respective housing list dependant on the type of application they have and the property they require. These lists are as follows:

#### 6.3.1 Housing list

This list includes applications received from all sources with the exception of internal transfers and residents within improvement contracts or regeneration areas. The list is subdivided into the type of need – general, amenity or wheelchair and then by the size of property that the applicant is entitled to.

#### 6.3.2 Transfer list

This list comprises applications received from existing tenants of the Association. The list is subdivided into type of need – general, amenity or wheelchair, and then by the size of property that the applicant is entitled to.

### 6.4 Referrals from other agencies

The Association is committed to working with other agencies in addressing housing need. A full list of agencies approved by the Housing Management Sub Committee is attached at Appendix 2.

All applications received from referral sources will be added to the Housing List and the appropriate sub category.

In addition, the Association currently has an agreement in place with Renfrewshire Council to accept applicants nominated by them. When all possible allocations have been made to those in our priority groups, i.e., Improvement Contracts and Regeneration Areas, allocation of the remaining properties will be split between nominations received from Renfrewshire Council (50%) and our Housing List.

### 6.5 Definition of property types

To enable applicants to have the fullest information regarding the type of housing they will be considered for, a definition of our amenity and wheelchair standards will be provided with our housing and transfer application forms. Please refer to Appendix 3.

## 6.6 Advertising specific properties

Where it is proving difficult to source an applicant for a specific property, the Association may, from time to time, advertise the individual property for let, through various means including:

- Website
- Advertisement in our office, or those of local housing providers, support agencies etc.
- Advertisements in the local press
- Advertisements in local libraries, community centres, doctors surgeries etc.

Applications received, as a result of these advertisements, will be considered in accordance with this policy.

In the event that advertising does not generate potential applicants, and all other appropriate channels have been exhausted, the Association may seek applicants from other sub categories of our lists as follows:

- Wheelchair property – applicant may be sought from amenity list, then general list.
- Amenity property – applicant may be sought from the general list.

## 7. THE HOUSING LIST

### 7.1 Access

As stated in Section 6, Allocation Priorities, we currently operate four types of housing list:

- Existing residents within improvement contracts
- Residents of regeneration areas
- Housing list
- Transfer list

In order to maximise each applicant's chance of obtaining housing suitable to their individual needs and circumstances, we have a further three sub categories within each list:

- General needs
- Amenity needs
- Wheelchair needs

Applicants will be placed appropriately, dependant on the information supplied.

Each list can be accessed by anyone aged 16 or over.

Application forms can be obtained in several ways, as follows;

- Telephone request
- Attending our office
- Email request
- Download from our website – [www.williamsburghha.co.uk](http://www.williamsburghha.co.uk)
- Collection at any of our area surgeries – Johnstone Town Hall (every second Wednesday) and Cherrie Centre, Renfrew, (every second Thursday.)

The Association provides an information pack to prospective applicants along with their application form. Details regarding number, type of properties and turnover information, within our areas of operation will be made available, to enable all applicants to exercise choice in selecting their desired locations.

Prospect interviews will be offered to all applicants to discuss their housing application in detail and the availability of housing in their chosen areas.

Application forms will be acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt.

## 7.2 Admission to the general housing list

Applications from persons aged 16 years or over are accepted onto the housing list. Only one current application is permitted per applicant.

Association staff will assist with the completion of the application form in our office, or at an applicant's home, if required, due to the applicant's medical circumstances.

An appendix to the application form, detailing the verification or supporting evidence required for certain categories of points, will accompany each application form. Please refer to Appendix 4.

There is no limit to the choice of areas an applicant can select, although applicants will only be selected for house types suitable to their needs – e.g., if an applicant has requested ground floor accommodation due to an inability to manage stairs, they will not be selected for upper floor accommodation, or a property with internal stairs.

On receipt of a completed application form, each applicant's circumstances and needs will be assessed, and points awarded, in accordance with those set out in this Allocations Policy. Their application will then be applied to the sub category that is most appropriate to their needs. Applicants with little or no housing need, as determined by the Allocations Policy, will still be added to the Housing List.

Where an application is received giving the current address as 'care of' one of our existing tenants, the tenant's house file details will be verified. If the applicant is not registered as living at the tenant's address, the tenant will be contacted regarding this.

Tenancy reports will be obtained from previous and current landlords for a 5 year period. This will only apply where there are current or previous landlords.

The following table provides information on our system of acknowledging and processing application forms received:

Application Stage	Timescales	
Application form received	Acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt	
Provisional points letter issued	Sent within 14 days of receipt of application form	Applicant has 28 days to respond
Application reassessment	Revised points letter sent within 14 days of receipt of response	
Application complete, no circumstances to be verified	Points letter issued within 14 days of receipt of application	

The provisional points letter will detail any further information required by the Association, in order to verify the applicant's circumstances. If the information requested is not received within 28 days from the date of request, or there has been no contact from the applicant to advise of possible delays in providing the information, the provisional points will be reassessed by the Association and, in certain circumstances, points may be removed, thereby affecting their position on the list.

Those applicants whose provisional points fall below 20 will be advised in their provisional points award letter of their limited rehousing prospects, and be given the option to remain on the housing list.

Reassessment may also result in the application being moved within the three sub categories of our housing list.

Offers of housing will be made to those whose circumstances result in them being awarded the greatest number of points. In the event that there is more than one applicant with the same number of points and entitled to the same property, priority will be given to the applicant who has been in housing need for the longest time.

Where all required evidence has been supplied and the applicant is being made an offer, the applicant will be interviewed by a member of the Association's allocations staff, to

confirm that the details on the application form are correct and that points have been awarded correctly. At the interview, the applicant will be given pre-tenancy advice and informed about the services of our Tenancy Intervention Officer.

Any change in circumstance must be notified to the Association in writing. Where a change of circumstances is a change of address, the applicant will be asked to complete a new application form and the existing form will be deleted.

### **7.3 Merging applications**

Two households who wish to be rehoused together may have their housing applications merged. Neither applicant should currently have a suitable house to accommodate both households.

Requests to merge applications in order to provide mutual family support will be regarded sympathetically, as a response to social needs, for example community care or cultural needs such as the extended family of ethnic minority groups.

Each applicant will be counselled separately about the effects of merging their applications in relation to points, suitable housing and the prospects of rehousing.

The applicant who currently has the highest priority or points will be treated as the main applicant and the other applicant will not be awarded points. A cross reference will be entered on both applications.

The total number of rooms being used by both sets of applicants will be considered against total bedrooms required. Overcrowding and Sharing Facilities points will be awarded only once.

When a merged application results in an offer of housing, the two applicants will be offered a joint tenancy. If this is not acceptable, the sole tenancy will be offered to the main applicant.

#### 7.4 Admission to the transfer list

Applications from existing tenants are accepted onto the transfer list. Only one current application per existing tenant is permitted.

Transfer application forms can be obtained in several ways, as follows:

- Telephone request
- Attending our office
- Email request
- Download from our website – [www.williamsburghha.co.uk](http://www.williamsburghha.co.uk)
- Collection at any of our area surgeries – Johnstone Town Hall (every second Wednesday) and Cherrie Centre, Renfrew, (every second Thursday.)

Association staff will assist with the completion of the application form in our office, or at an applicant's home, if required, due to the applicant's medical circumstances.

Transfer applications are assessed and pointed in the same way as housing list applications.

As with applications made to the housing list, the circumstances of transfer applicants require to be verified. To do this, the Association will compare the details on the application to those currently held on the house file.

The following table provides information on our system of acknowledging and processing application forms received:

Transfer Application Stage	Timescales	
Transfer application form received	Acknowledged within 48 hours of receipt	
Provisional points letter issued. Where necessary, request for household circumstances to be clarified	Sent within 14 days of receipt of application form	Tenant has 28 days to respond
Application reassessment	Revised points letter sent within 14 days of receipt of response	
Application complete, no circumstances to be verified	Points letter issued within 14 days of receipt of application	

The provisional points letter will detail any further information required by the Association, in order to verify the applicant's circumstances. If the information requested is not received within 28 days from the date of request, or there has been no contact from the applicant to advise of possible delays in providing the information, the provisional points will be reassessed by the Association and, in certain circumstances, points may be removed, thereby affecting their position on the list.

Reassessment may also result in the application being moved within the three sub categories of our housing list.

Offers of housing will be made to those whose circumstances result in them being awarded the greatest number of points. In the event that there is more than one applicant with the same number of points and entitled to the same property, priority will be given to the applicant who has been in housing need for the longest time.

Any change in circumstance must be notified to the Association in writing.

Prior to any offer of alternative accommodation being made, the following conditions must be met:

- There must be no more than one month's rent outstanding.
- There must be no sales ledger arrears.
- There has been no serious breach of tenancy.

In addition, a house inspection will be carried out to identify any repair work to be undertaken by the tenant, before the move can be sanctioned. The tenant will be advised of any such work, in writing, and given 7 days to complete it.

Account will be taken as to whether the above conditions have been met when considering whether an offer should be made. In addition, reference will be made to:

- Outstanding debt
- Ability to pay
- Existing payment arrangements and how they have been maintained over the previous 12 week period
- Extent of the damage to existing property
- Medical and social needs for a move

Such cases will be discussed with the Housing Manager prior to a final decision.

The Association will also give consideration to requests received from existing tenants who wish to move within the tenement in which they live, where the tenant's medical needs require a move to a lower or ground floor, but where there is little or no other housing need. Such requests will require the completion of the relevant medical questionnaire and must satisfy the Association's criteria for awarding medical points. Where such documentation is provided, each case should be presented to the Housing Manager who may sanction an award of points in order to facilitate the specific move.

## 7.5 Removal of an applicant from the housing or transfer list

The Association will remove an applicant or tenant from the housing or transfer list, in the following circumstances:

- The applicant or tenant has requested removal. If such a request is received verbally, the applicant or tenant will be asked to confirm this in writing. The Association's staff can assist in the preparation of the letter, if requested by the applicant or tenant. If the written confirmation is not forthcoming within a 5 day period, the verbal request will be acted upon. Confirmation from the Association will be sent within 7 days of receipt of the letter, or 7 days from the date that the verbal acceptance is effected.
- The Association is notified of the death of the applicant or tenant.
- The applicant or tenant has failed to respond to the periodic review of the housing or transfer list.
- Where the tenant has terminated their existing WHA tenancy, thereby making the circumstances on the application form redundant.
- Where the applicant or tenant has been successful in obtaining a mutual exchange, thereby making the circumstances on the application form redundant.
- Where the applicant has submitted a change of circumstances, but the existing address is different, thereby making the details provided on the application form inappropriate.
- Where correspondence has been returned "Gone Away" or "Addressee Unknown" or similar, after two attempts to contact them.

#### 7.6 Deferring applicants from the housing list

The Association will defer applications for housing where the applicant has advised us that they wish to remain on the list, but are not actively seeking rehousing at this time.

#### 7.7 Delaying applicants from the housing list

Where the Association has requested verification information from an applicant and it remains outstanding after the timescale indicated, their status will be amended to "Evidence requested

but not supplied in timescale", thereby delaying further processing and consideration of their application.

## 7.8 Suspending applicants from the housing or transfer lists

The Association can suspend applications for a specified period of time. Where a suspension is applied, the applicant will be notified of the reason for the suspension, the timescale involved and advised of any action that can be taken to end or appeal the suspension.

Suspensions will apply in the following circumstances.

### 7.8.1 Outstanding Debt

Applicants will be suspended where they owe arrears directly attributable to their current or former tenancy with the Association, or an other landlord. The arrears can include:

- Rent arrears
- Factoring arrears
- Rechargeable repairs
- Costs incurred to clean or remove furniture from the house vacated by the applicant for a previous tenancy

In considering the arrears, the debt must not exceed one twelfth of the annual rent and be no more than five years old.

Applicants with such a debt but who have an agreement in place to repay and have maintained that agreement for at least 12 weeks, will not be suspended under this category.

Mortgage arrears will not be included as a reason for suspension.

Applicants will not be suspended as a result of a housing benefit overpayment that was clearly a result of errors made by housing benefit administration. This will require to be confirmed by the housing benefit section.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to advise the Association when they have kept to their arrangement for the 12 week period, reduced the debt to the equivalent of one twelfth of the annual rent, or cleared the debt in full.

### 7.8.2 Asylum seekers

Asylum seekers who are subject to immigration control will be suspended from receiving offers of housing, until such times as they can demonstrate that they have been granted leave to remain.

### 7.8.3 Anti social behaviour

The Association will withhold offers from an applicant, or a member of their household where there is evidence of anti social behaviour, including, but not limited to:

- relevant criminal convictions (i.e. relevant to a tenancy or community safety)
- drug dealing from a tenancy
- prostitution from a tenancy
- fire-raising
- extensive damage to a landlord's property, or
- harassment or threats to neighbours

When considering suspension of this nature, the Association will ensure that the suspension is reasonable, through consideration of the following criteria:

- the nature, frequency and duration of the conduct
- the extent to which the conduct is the consequence of acts or omissions of people other than the applicant
- the effect the conduct is having on other people
- any alternative action taken by the landlord to address the conduct

The applicant will be suspended where there is clear robust evidence of the behaviour, supported by the current or previous landlord and/or other agencies – e.g. police, social work, Renfrewshire Council ASIST team etc.

Applicants, or a member of their household, who have had an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) served on them or been evicted in the last 3 years for anti social behaviour, may be suspended as it has been established that the anti social behaviour took place.

Where the Association decides to offer re-housing to an applicant or a member of their household, who has been evicted in the last 3 years for anti social behaviour, or has had an

ASBO served against them, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will be granted initially.

In offering a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, the Association will take all possible steps to ensure the provision of appropriate support to enable the subsequent conversion of the tenancy to a Scottish Secure Tenancy.

If the tenant or a member of their family continues to act in an anti social manner, the Association may seek possession under the appropriate conduct grounds in Schedule 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be reviewed every 6 months. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant provides clear and substantiated evidence that they no longer pose a risk.

All applications considered for suspension within this category, must be approved by the Housing Manager.

#### 7.8.4 Condition of house or tenancy

An offer of housing may be withheld from any applicant who has failed to adhere to the conditions of their tenancy agreement.

Matters relating to the tenancy may include neglect of the property, condition of the garden or common areas, control over pets, rubbish and vandalism.

If a home visit or tenancy reference shows a failure to adhere to the tenancy agreement, the application can be suspended for a period of 3 months. The severity of the circumstances will be considered in making any decision to suspend in this category.

The suspension can be reviewed earlier where the applicant has demonstrated that they have rectified the situation.

#### 7.8.5 Refusals of offers of housing

Applicants will receive a maximum of 3 offers of accommodation. These offers will be based on the information supplied on the application forms, and any subsequent communications.

Where an applicant refuses a second offer of accommodation, they will be invited to review their application, areas of choice

and type of accommodation required, with a member of the Association's staff.

In addition, a letter will be issued advising them of the Association's policy of a maximum of three offers.

When an applicant refuses their third offer, their application will be suspended for a period of 6 months. After 6 months a review letter will be sent to the applicant to establish whether they are still interested in housing with the Association and if their circumstances have changed in any way. The applicant will have 28 days to respond. If the applicant fails to respond to the review letter, a reminder will be sent giving them a further 28 days to confirm whether they wish to remain on the list. If no response is received the application will be removed from the list.

#### 7.8.6 False information

Where an applicant has deliberately given false or misleading information, to gain advantage over other applicants, then the Association will suspend their application for a period of 6 months. At the end of this period the applicant will be invited to attend an interview to discuss their application, following which, the applicant may submit a new application.

The suspension may be lifted within the 6 months, where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances in respect of housing need.

Applicants receiving an offer of housing will be required to declare that they have not knowingly given false or misleading information to obtain the tenancy.

Should it come to the Association's attention that this has occurred a Notice of Proceedings for Possession may be served and legal action instructed to bring the tenancy to an end.

#### 7.8.7 Registered sex offenders

Where a registered sex offender (as defined by the Sex Offenders Act 1997) applies for housing or is nominated for housing, the Association will suspend the application until the Police and/or Social Work Department provide a risk assessment. The Association is committed to minimising the risk to local communities and a decision to offer a tenancy will be taken in conjunction with the Police and Social Work Department.

#### 7.9 Worsening of house conditions

Where it appears that an applicant has purposely changed address or acted otherwise to worsen their housing circumstances, in an attempt to obtain additional points, the applicant will not be suspended. Any additional points, however, will not be awarded for a period of 6 months from the date that the change is reported to the Association.

## 8. INFORMATION, AWARENESS AND ADVICE

The Association will actively promote its services to the wider community and provide information about our housing stock and how to gain access to it, in the following ways:

- provide promotional material for display in the offices of other landlords, area surgeries, local libraries, community centres, doctors surgeries etc.,
- include within correspondence to applicants,
- advertise in the local press,
- include on the Association's website,
- through liaison with other agencies including Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health, Social Work Department, Women's Aid and Citizens Advice Bureau.

All written communication supplied by the Association will be in plain English and can be provided in other languages, formats, large print and Braille on request. The Association's website also provides the services of Browsealoud, a speech enabling software that reads the pages aloud, free of charge, to those who are visually impaired.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided by the applicant will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be used solely for the purposes of assessing their housing need and the allocation of housing. The only exception to this is where information is gathered for equal opportunities and client group monitoring for statistical purposes. This information however, will not contain any personal details that could reveal the identity of the individual.

## 10. JOINT ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARTNER AGENCIES

### 10.1 Nomination arrangements with Renfrewshire Council

The Association has an agreement with Renfrewshire Council to make available a percentage of our net lets (i.e. properties remaining following allocation within all other priority groups detailed within this policy) to nominated referrals. This figure is independent of Section 5 referrals. Nominations must demonstrate a minimum of one element of housing need, as detailed within this policy.

When this need is identified, the nominated applicant will be required to provide supporting documentation, in addition to the Association's standard requirements on proof of personal identity. On receipt of this, points will be awarded as detailed within this policy and one offer of suitable accommodation will be made. Should the offer be refused, the application will be returned to Renfrewshire Council

### 10.2 Referral arrangements with other organisations

The Association may enter agreements, with specialist organisations who deal with particular client groups, to designate a quota of lets each year to people referred by them.

Any such arrangement will be for client groups, whose specific needs do not readily place them as a priority within this allocations policy.

Referral arrangements under this category, will be agreed on an individual basis with each referring organisation by the Housing Management Sub Committee and will not be subject to the supporting evidence requirements of other applicants, with the exception of proof of identity.

Current referral arrangements are detailed at Appendix 2, which is updated, as and when required.

### 10.3 Section 5 Referrals

Williamsburgh Housing Association is committed to contributing to providing accommodation for homeless persons, as detailed within Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Cognisance is also taken of the Scottish Executive's pledge to abolish the priority need test, to ensure that by 2012, all who are unintentionally homeless are entitled to a permanent home.

We have an arrangement in place with Renfrewshire Council for receiving and accepting applications referred to us under Section 5 legislation. Where the Association is in a position to make an offer of suitable accommodation, proof of identity for the applicant and those wishing to be rehoused with them, will be required. This may be provided by the Homeless Persons Unit at Renfrewshire Council. Applications in this category, will be made an award of points as detailed in this policy.

## 11. REVIEWING AND MONITORING THE LISTS

In order to ensure that our housing lists are accurate and up to date, we will conduct a comprehensive review of all current applicant's circumstances during the year 2007, and each year thereafter, on the anniversary of their date of application.

At the review, applicants will be contacted asking them to confirm whether they wish to remain on the housing list and requesting that they confirm in writing their intentions within 28 days.

Where the applicant does not confirm their wish to remain on the housing list, a reminder will be issued requesting their response within 14 days. If after the 14 days has elapsed, there has been no communication from the applicant, their application will be removed from the list.

Where confirmation is received, a fresh application form will be forwarded to the applicant for completion and return, within 28 days. Thereafter, the application will be assessed in accordance with this policy.

If the application is not received within 28 days a reminder will be issued requesting return within one week. If after the one week period has elapsed there has be no communication from the applicant, their application will be removed from the list.

In addition, If any correspondence is returned by the Post Office as "GONE AWAY", "ADDRESSEE UNKNOWN" or similar, one further attempt at contacting the applicant will be made in writing. Should there be no response to the second item of correspondence, or it is returned under the same circumstances, the application will be removed from the list.

All hard copies of applications and correspondence will be removed to a holding location and held for a period of 6 months, after which time, if no contact is made by the applicant, they will be disposed of.

12. DATA PROTECTION

The Association will store personal information provided on both our computer and filing systems. At all times we will act in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Applicants may request copies of the information that the Association holds on file. All such requests will be processed in accordance with the Association's Data Protection Policy.

## 13. ALLOCATION OF HOUSING

### 13.1 Reasonable preference

In accordance with Section 20(1) of the 1987 Act, as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the Association seeks to ensure that "reasonable preference" is given to applicants in one or more of the following categories:

- occupying houses which do not meet the tolerable standard
- occupying overcrowded houses
- have large families
- living under unsatisfactory conditions
- homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness (within the meaning of Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by the 2001 Act))

The Association will use a points system to assess housing need and will achieve reasonable preference by ensuring that the above categories attract a sufficiently high number of points.

All offers of housing will be signed by two members of the housing management team including the housing manager. In her absence, the second signature will be that of a housing officer.

### 13.2 Assessing health needs

In order to assess health needs fully and award appropriate points, the Association will consider the severity and urgency of the overall problem being faced, with the emphasis being on the extent to which rehousing will reduce or alleviate the difficulties the applicant is currently facing. A self assessment medical questionnaire will be required, together with any supporting documentation.

Only one award of medical points will be awarded per household.

Each self assessment medical questionnaire will be assessed by two members of the housing management section.

Applicants who are awarded medical points will only be considered for house types which meet their medical needs, for example, where an applicant is unable to manage stairs, they will not be considered for properties with internal stairs or upper level flats. In addition, where an applicant has been awarded medical points and secured a permanent move to suitable accommodation, any subsequent transfer request will not receive medical points for the same condition.

Medical priority will be divided into three categories, as follows:

Priority A – highest priority

- applicants who are currently unable to leave their home due to a medical condition
- applicants who due to a medical condition are unable to manage stairs. In this instance, all stairs leading to their home will be considered. Applicants in this category will be offered ground floor accommodation where there are no access steps to their front door
- applicants who have a physical disability and whose current accommodation prevents them from performing key living tasks – for example, applicants who are wheelchair bound, but whose home is not suitable for a wheelchair user and as such they are unable to bathe or shower without assistance

The above list is not exhaustive. Each case will be assessed on its own merits.

### Priority B – second highest priority

- applicants who can manage stairs to certain levels will be considered for a move to a property on a lower floor. In these circumstances, access stairs leading to the property being offered must be less than any in the applicant's current living circumstances
- applicants suffering mental health problems due to social, harassment or abuse issues
- applicants who require a suitably adapted home due to an existing medical condition – for example, applicants who have arthritis and require an adapted property
- applicants who require an additional bedroom due to a medical condition requiring specialist equipment to be located at home, or where a resident carer is required on a full time basis

The above list is not exhaustive. Each case will be assessed on its own merits.

### Priority C – third priority

- applicants who require an additional bedroom due to a medical condition that requires a resident carer on a part time basis, or where the applicant's partner has difficulty sleeping as a result of the applicant's medical condition
- applicants suffering from mental health conditions
- applicants suffering from other medical conditions

The above list is not exhaustive. Each case will be assessed on its own merits.

Where an applicant falls into more than one of the above priority groups, points will be awarded based on the group with the highest priority.

### 13.3 Harassment and abuse

The Association recognises that harassment and abuse can take many forms and operate at different levels. We seek to act promptly in assessing each applicant's circumstances and, where requested or required, will arrange an interview with a member of the housing management section, to ensure that all relevant details are known and taken account of in the assessing of the application.

When dealing with applicants who are suffering harassment or abuse, we will do the following:

### 13.3.1 Safety

Do our best to ensure the applicant's safety. Advice will be offered regarding other agencies who may be able to assist. These agencies may include for example, Women's Aid, Racial Equality Councils, Police and Social Work.

### 13.3.2 Confidentiality

To ensure the applicant's safety, we will never contact the perpetrators. The applicant will be asked to provide details of where they can be contacted safely.

### 13.3.3 Belief

Applicants will be asked to provide all supporting documentation that they can to verify their circumstances. We recognise, however, that this may not always be possible.

Applicants who approach the Association on several occasions for advice and assistance due to harassment or abuse, will not be penalised. We recognise that leaving an abusive partner may take considerable time, with partners sometimes leaving and returning on several occasions before leaving for good.

Where more than one family member has been the subject of harassment or abuse, only one award of points will be given.

Examples of where points may be awarded include:

- where the applicant (or persons to be rehoused with the applicant) have been the subject of physical or sexual abuse
- where the applicant (or persons to be rehoused with the applicant) have been involved in seeking an anti social behaviour order against their neighbour, which has been unsuccessful and the applicant (or family member), is still being abused or threatened
- where the applicant (or persons to be rehoused with the applicant) have been the subject of verbal abuse
- where the applicant (or persons to be rehoused with the applicant) have been subject to threats against their wellbeing

The above list is not exhaustive. Each case will be assessed on its own merits.

#### 13.4 Homelessness

Where the Association receives a direct application outwith the Section 5 referral process, as detailed in section 10.3 of this policy, i.e. where the applicant has deemed themselves homeless, the Association's staff will advise the applicant to contact Renfrewshire Council's Homeless Person's Unit, in order that an assessment within the terms of the legislation can be made.

This advice may be in the form of a written letter, a telephone call, or in person.

Such applicants will, in addition, be considered in accordance with this policy.

##### **13.4.1 Homelessness amongst existing tenants**

Where an existing tenant advises the Association that they can no longer live in their existing home due to a relationship breakdown, and as such are homeless, the Association will give consideration to the granting of two tenancies. In cases where children are part of the household, the party with responsibility for the children will retain the matrimonial home.

Reasons that will be considered as relationship breakdown in this category include;

- suffering domestic violence from a member of the household (the household member must already be identified in the house file), whether or not they have had to flee the family home
- suffering harassment from a member of the household (the household member must already be identified in the house file), whether or not they have had to flee the family home
- irreconcilable relationship breakdown with their partner (the partner must already be identified in the house file)

In these circumstances, both parties concerned will require to be interviewed by a member of the Association's housing management section. When the Association is satisfied that the relationship has completely broken down, the party leaving the

matrimonial home must complete an application form for housing and this will be assessed in accordance with this policy.

### **13.5 Sustainable communities**

The Association is committed to the creation of balanced sustainable communities – *‘people continuing to want to live in the same community, both now and in the future’* – *Raising Standards, Chapter 1*. The elements which make up a balanced sustainable community will change according to the needs and aspirations of different communities at different times.

In order to achieve sustainable communities, the Association will be mindful of the need to give reasonable preference to certain groups, when using discretion and will consider the following:

- match people with appropriate properties (e.g. to meet physical mobility needs)
- avoid potential clashes of lifestyle. Each set of circumstances will be considered individually
- avoid over concentrations of one particular household type or housing need type in one area, estate, street or close (e.g., avoiding high levels of child density or an unduly high proportion of vulnerable single people)

Such cases may result in the property not being allocated to the applicant with the highest number of points. In these cases, the reasons for bypassing an applicant with a higher points total will be documented and approved by the Housing Manager.

### **13.6 Qualifying criteria for size of accommodation**

The Association must make best use of the stock available. The qualifying criteria for the size of accommodation which would normally be offered are detailed at Appendix 5 – Occupation Guidelines. There may be exceptions to these guidelines for example:

- to avoid over concentrations of one particular household type or housing need type in one area, estate, street or close (e.g., avoiding high levels of child density or an unduly high proportion of vulnerable single people)
- where the appropriate list for property size has been exhausted

Applicants will not normally be offered accommodation which would result in under occupation, however, there may be exceptions to this, for example, where a need has been demonstrated for an additional bedroom to accommodate a resident carer.

In cases where an applicant has access, but not joint or sole legal custody of a child, they will not be allocated a house larger than that for which the applicant would normally qualify.

### **13.7 Care in the community**

The Association recognises the housing needs of the increasing number of people seeking housing, as a result of leaving institutional care or as an alternative to institutional care.

We will provide individual tenancies to such applicants, who have been assessed and referred to us by Renfrewshire Council's Joint Commissioning Team. In these cases, applicants will be required to complete a housing application form and the Joint Commissioning Team will complete a personal profile for each individual to be housed. Such applicants will not be subject to the Association's verification requirements, with the exception of proof of identity.

### **13.8 Lettings initiatives**

The Association's Allocations Policy will be subject to a review every two years in order to ensure that it remains compliant with legislation and is meeting the Association's aims.

We are aware, however, that there are some problems within certain types of housing stock or locations and are committed to a flexible approach in tackling these issues.

Particular problems may include:

- a property being refused more than three times for reasons relating directly to the size, type or location of the property
- long void periods, in comparison to similar property within the area
- high turnover within the property, i.e., an individual property being allocated 3 or more times within 12 months

In these situations the Association may introduce lettings initiatives. These must be approved by the Association's Housing Management Sub Committee. A full list of approved lettings initiatives is attached as Appendix No.1

Lettings initiatives may be used for example to:

- achieve a better balance of age groups or family sizes
- increase the attractiveness of less popular house types
- reduce the number of empty properties in an area and reduce turnover

All lettings initiatives will be reconsidered during the review of the allocations policy.

### 13.9 Sensitive lets

There may be occasions where a property which becomes available requires to be treated as a sensitive let. Examples where a sensitive let might apply would include:

- where it would be inadvisable to house an applicant beside a current tenant due to a potential clash of lifestyle
- where the applicant is vulnerable, and the existing make up of the close or street could be deemed unsuitable

Such cases may be designated sensitive lets, and may result in the property not being allocated to the applicant with the highest number of points. In such cases, the reasons for bypassing an applicant with a higher points total will be documented and approved by the Housing Manager.

### 13.10 **Special allocations**

A 'special' allocation should be deemed as such only if it cannot be addressed within this allocations policy or requires a variation from the policy. If this is the case, the approval of the Housing Management Sub Committee must be sought.

Special cases should be exceptional. Any such requests must be made in writing by the applicant, clearly stating their reasons for seeking a special allocation outwith the terms of the policy. All such requests must be accompanied by a comprehensive report by the area housing officer providing specific information about the type of house and location required. Both the letter and

report will be considered by the Housing Management Sub Committee at their next scheduled meeting.

A decision by the Housing Management Sub Committee is binding. Cases will not be reconsidered unless the circumstances have changed.

Cases approved as special allocations will be granted priority for specific house types in specific areas, according to the Committee's decision on the appropriate way to resolve the situation.

Special allocations cases will be considered before all other applications for housing.

Only one offer of housing will be made in the special case category, as all relevant factors will have been established prior to the case being heard by the Housing Management Sub Committee. If the offer is refused, the priority awarded will be removed.

### 13.11 Allocation of housing designed for wheelchair users

Within the Association's stock there are properties specifically designed or adapted for the users of wheelchairs. The wheelchair user can be the applicant or a family member.

When such properties become available, they will be allocated from the list specifically for wheelchair users, as follows:

- applicants who have a wheelchair need will be considered in order of their points
- if there are no applicants with a wheelchair need, applicants on the amenity housing list will be considered, in points order
- if there are no applicants from any of the above and all other avenues have been exhausted, applicants from the general list will be considered

#### 14. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

It is considered good practice to monitor performance. As such, the Association operates a system that reviews and measures our performance in relation to allocations.

Reports are presented to the Housing Management Sub Committee on a quarterly basis. These are detailed at Appendix No.6.

## 15. POINTS SYSTEM

### 15.1 General

Our system of awarding points, based on housing need, is designed to recognise and give appropriate weighting to the problems caused by overcrowding, poor housing conditions, homelessness or persons threatened with homelessness etc.

Each application received by us will be assessed and points awarded in terms of need, in accordance with this policy. In addition, the most suitable type of housing will be established – e.g. general needs, amenity housing or wheelchair housing, and the application will be placed on the most appropriate queue.

We continue on an ongoing basis to receive new requests for housing. In addition, the circumstances of our existing applicants may change. As such, our queues do not remain static and the queue positions of individuals are subject to change. Applicants are advised to discuss their application, circumstances and choices, on a regular basis with a member of the Association's allocations staff, in order to obtain accurate housing prospects advice.

### 15.2 Awarding points

All points will be awarded provisionally, based on the information supplied within the application form. Applicants will be advised of their provisional points, together with details of the evidence required to confirm the award and make the points permanent.

Should the evidence supplied be more than 6 months old, a request for up to date information may be made.

There is no maximum limit to the number of points that can be awarded.

### 15.3 Applicants with low or zero points

Applicants awarded less than 20 points will be advised that rehousing is unlikely and given the opportunity to either remain on the list or to have their application removed.

## 15.4 Points categories

There are 16 categories in which points can be obtained:

- Approved List of Agencies
- Special Allocations
- Nominated Applicants
- Homelessness - Section 5 Referrals
- Homelessness – Direct Applications
- Harrassment/Fleeing Violence
- Lacking Facilities
- Overcrowding
- Sharing Facilities
- Living at Height
- Underoccupation
- Medical Factors
- Support
- Youthbuild
- Employment/Educational Opportunities
- Social Factors

### 15.4.1 Approved list of agencies

Where an application is accepted from any of those identified on our approved list of agencies (as detailed on Appendix No.2), a one off award will be made.

In such cases one offer of accommodation will be made and if this is refused, the points will be removed and the applicant will be invited to complete an application form, for assessment in accordance with this policy.

Referrals from approved list of agencies	400
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### 15.4.2 Special allocations

Where a special allocation has been approved by the Housing Management Sub Committee, a one off award of 400 points will be made.

### 15.4.3 Nominated applicants

Applicants accepted through our Nomination Agreement with Renfrewshire Council for specific properties, will be made an award of 400 points.

#### 15.4.4 Homelessness : Section 5 Referrals

When Section 5 referrals are received and duly accepted by the Association, they will be awarded 400 points.

Due to the legal obligation placed on the Association to provide accommodation to Section 5 referrals, there is currently no set target for these allocations.

#### 15.4.5 Homelessness : direct applications

Applicants who apply directly to the Association as homeless, will be assessed as follows:

<p><b><u>No Fixed Abode</u></b></p> <p>This applies to applicants who have no permanent address and move between houses of friends/relatives, or who are rough sleepers.</p>	125
<p><b><u>Potentially Homeless</u></b></p> <p>This applies to applicants who are threatened with homelessness. If it is likely that he/she will become homeless within 2 months e.g. Notice of Proceedings has been issued/someone leaving prison/leaving the armed forces/ loss of tied accommodation/leaving hospital care/ properties that are scheduled for demolition/owners whose homes are being repossessed or where a sale is due to conclude.</p>	100
<p><b><u>Houselessness</u></b></p> <p>This applies to applicants currently living in temporary accommodation, e.g. bed and breakfasts/hostels/ caravans/staying care of friends or families as their registered permanent address.</p>	50
<p><b><u>Homelessness Amongst Existing Tenants</u></b></p> <p>This applies to existing tenants where it has been confirmed that they are unable to occupy the family home e.g. fleeing violence, abuse or harassment.</p>	20
<p><b><u>Relationship Breakdown</u></b></p> <p>This applies to applicants where a relationship has broken down with a partner, sibling or parent.</p>	10

#### 15.4.6 Harassment/fleeing violence

Points will be awarded in this category as follows:

Suffering Harassment	20
Fleeing Violence	20

#### 15.4.7 Lacking facilities

Points are awarded to applicants who own or rent accommodation which does not have basic facilities. Lodgers are considered as sharing facilities, and are dealt with in section 15.4.9.

When an applicant indicates that they lack basic facilities, this will require to be verified by either the present landlord or by a visit to the home by a member of the Association's housing management staff. Disputes as to whether facilities are below the tolerable standard as defined by current legislation may be referred to the local authority Environmental Services Department for confirmation.

Points will be awarded in this category as follows:

Inside toilet	10
Fixed bath or shower	10
Hot water supply	10
Separate kitchen	10
Separate living room	10
Inadequate ventilation	10
Rising or penetrating damp	10
Full central heating (gas or electric)	10
Serious disrepair to the property including the common parts	10
Awaiting demolition	25
This applies where the date of demolition is unknown, or beyond 2 months from the date of application. When the date of demolition is known to be within 2 months these points will be removed, and points awarded as per the homeless category of Potentially Homeless.	

#### 15.4.8 Overcrowding

Overcrowding is a key factor in determining housing need.

A household consists of those whose permanent home is with each other. It includes those who would normally live together but are unable to do so, due to the lack of suitable accommodation and also includes children who are students living away from home during term times. It does not include lodgers and temporary guests whose usual residence is elsewhere.

Single applicants currently occupying properties designed for single occupancy will not be entitled to overcrowding points unless a change in circumstances results in additional household members e.g. baby born to the household. Medical confirmation will be accepted 12 weeks prior to the date of confinement, where overcrowding will occur as a result of the pregnancy.

The Association will not grant existing tenants permission to overcrowd their home under any circumstances, e.g. permission will not be granted to allow a friend/relative to reside if it would result in the property being overcrowded.

When assessing overcrowding points for existing tenants, we will cross check those household members detailed on the housing application form with those on the house file.

For each additional double bedroom required	40
For each additional single bedroom required	20

Families who are forced to live apart due to lack of suitable accommodation will receive an award, as per the above table.

#### 15.4.9 Sharing facilities

Points are awarded to applicants who have to lodge in someone else's home or a hostel/home of multiple occupation where the basic facilities are shared.

Living room	5
Kitchen	5
Bath or shower	5
Toilet	5

#### 15.4.10 Living at height

This category recognises that certain households such as persons of pensionable age or families with young children (i.e. children 10 years and under) may experience difficulty living on the upper floors of flatted properties.

To assist applicants living in these circumstances who wish to move to a lower level, the following points will be awarded:

Where there is a person aged 60 years and above within the household.	5
Where there is a child under 10 years of age within the household	5

#### 15.4.11 Underoccupation

Underoccupation points are awarded to applicants living in properties too large for their current family composition, who wish to move to smaller, more suitably sized accommodation.

<b><u>Existing tenants who are underoccupying the property</u></b> This is an initial award that is made in an effort to recognise the needs of existing tenants and to assist the Association make best use of our property.	40
<b><u>Each bedroom surplus to requirements</u></b> These points apply to both existing tenants and applicants on our housing lists.	20

#### 15.4.12 Medical factors

The award of medical points will only apply where the applicant's present accommodation adversely affects the medical condition suffered and the property sought will ease or improve their circumstances.

A medical self-assessment form should be completed for the household member to be considered under this category. Only one such award will be made per household, with points being granted in respect of the applicant with the highest medical priority.

The Association may ask for supplementary information where appropriate, which after assessment may result in the medical priority being amended, and the points altered.

Medical priority will be divided into three categories, as follows;

Priority A Points will be awarded in this category for severe health/and or mobility problems.	50
<u>Priority B</u> Points will be awarded in this category for moderate health and or mobility problems.	20
<u>Priority C</u> Points will be awarded in this category for more general health problems.	10

Additional medical points may be awarded.

Categories marked * are applicable only where the applicant requires suitably adapted accommodation and will not be awarded where the applicant is looking to obtain mainstream general needs housing.	
No turning circle*	5
These are awarded where a member of the household is a wheelchair user.	
<u>Widened doorways required*</u>	5
These are awarded where a member of the household is a wheelchair user.	
<u>Lower kitchen work surfaces*</u>	5
<u>Lower light switches/raised sockets*</u>	5
<u>Shower or wet floor *</u>	5
<u>External/Internal stairs</u>	1 per stair
All stairs leading to the property from the public footpath and those inside the home will be considered.	

#### 15.4.13 Support

Points in this category will be awarded where an elderly or vulnerable person requires support from a relative living within the Association's areas of operation and where the applicant is either the person requiring or giving the support.

<u>Applicant is providing support</u>	10
<u>Applicant is receiving support</u>	10

#### 15.4.14 Youthbuild

Points will be awarded to applicants who are trainees participating in the Youthbuild scheme who have housing needs.

Youthbuild	10
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#### 15.4.15 Employment/educational opportunities

Points will be awarded to applicants who require to move into the Association's areas of operation to secure education or employment.

Employment	10
Education	10

#### 15.4.16 Social factors

In exceptional circumstances, social factors will be taken into account where it can be shown that alternative accommodation could alleviate the conditions in which people live, or improve the quality of life of applicants, or members of their family.

Examples might include:

applicants living in fear due to:

- racial harassment
- domestic violence
- threats or violence from outwith the home

Cases falling within this section will be dealt with sensitively and on their own merits based upon the evidence.

Examples of evidence requirements include:

- police reports
- case conference reports from Renfrewshire Council's ASIST team
- social work reports
- doctor reports
- education department reports
- hospital reports
- reports from other advice agencies or support groups

The decision to award points under this section will be made by the housing manager and will be ratified by the Director. The number of applicants rehoused under this category will be reported to the Housing Management Sub Committee on a quarterly basis.

In such cases one offer of accommodation will be made and if this is refused, the social factor points will be removed from the application. In these circumstances the application will be reassessed and pointed in accordance with this policy.

## 16. TRANSFER OF TENANCY

### 16.1 Mutual exchange

The Association encourages mutual exchanges, as they can relieve pressure on the transfer list and provide an additional opportunity for tenants to move to more suitable accommodation. They also allow the Association to make best use of our housing stock.

A mutual exchange occurs when two tenants exchange houses with the agreement of both the Association and the other landlord, who must be either a local authority, a registered social landlord, a water authority or a sewerage authority. Any Williamsburgh Housing Association tenant can seek an exchange where the other tenant holds a Scottish Secure Tenancy or short Scottish Secure Tenancy.

Exchanges are, however, not limited to two parties and three-way exchanges can take place, provided that all landlords are in agreement.

Lettings restrictions (e.g. housing designated for elderly or disabled persons) apply when mutual exchanges are being considered.

Mutual exchange applications will be considered in all cases, but will only be approved where the incoming household meets the allocations guidelines as outlined in this policy.

The following are examples of where the request for an exchange would not be considered reasonable, and where approval is unlikely to be given:

- we have served a notice warning that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of the conduct of a tenant
- we have obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- where the incoming tenant would have no need for a house which has been designed or adapted for special needs
- the proposed exchange would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding, or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's Allocation Policy
- under occupation would result
- one of the houses will be affected by works due to be carried out by the landlord, e.g. demolition
- the exchange would breach a local letting initiative
- the context of the application is unacceptable to WHA, e.g. requests for exchanges as a result of financial inducement on the part of either of the applicants (in advertisements or by any other means) or where there are grounds to believe that either party has attempted to mislead the other
- either party would be giving up a special needs facility that they require and would be moving to a less suitable house

- either party is in arrears of rent or other charges, relating to the property

These examples do not in any way alter the Association's general right to refuse permission on reasonable grounds.

A report on the condition of the Association's property will be prepared before the exchange is approved. Any required repairs caused by the tenant's negligence must be completed at the tenant's expense before an exchange is authorised. Poor decoration would not normally be regarded as grounds for refusing to grant an exchange.

The outgoing W.H.A. tenant must ensure that the house is completely emptied and that all furniture and personal fittings are removed from the property. Failure to do this, will incur a charge which will be pursued.

In the event that the incoming tenant is happy to accept existing items of furniture and fittings, an agreement must be completed, signed by both parties and presented to the Association, prior to the exchange being approved.

## 16.2 Succession

If a tenant of the Association dies, the tenancy may be inherited by one of the following people in the following way.

### Level One

- the husband, wife or co-habitee, if the house was their only or principal home, on the tenant's death, or
- a joint tenant, if the house was his or her only or principal home, on the tenant's death

In the case of a co-habitee, he or she must also have occupied the house as his/her only or principal home, for at least 6 months immediately before the tenant's death. If more than one person qualifies for the tenancy under Level One, they

must decide among themselves who should get the tenancy. If they cannot agree, the Association will decide.

In the event that the successor is not currently recorded on the Association's house file, evidence that the house has been occupied as their only or principal home for at least 6 months, must be submitted to the Association before the succession can take place. This evidence should be in the form of official documentation e.g. bank statements, letters from Council or Government offices, dating back a period of 6 months prior to the tenant's death.

#### Level Two

If no-one qualifies at Level One, or a qualifying person does not want the tenancy, it may be inherited by a member of the tenant's family provided:

- he or she is at least 16 years of age at the date of the tenant's death
- the house was his or her only or principal home at the date of the tenant's death

If more than one person qualifies for the tenancy under Level Two, they must decide among themselves who should get the tenancy. If they cannot agree, the Association will decide.

In the event that the successor is not currently recorded on the Association's house file, evidence that the house has been occupied as their only or principal home for at least 6 months, must be submitted to the Association before the succession can take place. This evidence should be in the form of official documentation e.g. bank statements, letters from Council or Government offices, dating back a period of 6 months prior to the tenant's death.

#### **Level Three**

If no-one qualifies at Level One or Level Two, or a qualifying person does not want the tenancy, it may be inherited by a carer provided:

- he or she is at least 16 years of age at the date of the tenant's death
- the house was his or her only or principal home at the date of the tenant's death
- he or she gave up another only or principal home before the death of the tenant

- he or she is providing, or has provided care for the tenant or a member of the tenant's family

If more than one person qualifies for the tenancy under Level Three, they must decide amongst themselves who should get the tenancy. If they cannot agree, the Association will decide.

In the event that the successor is not currently recorded on the Association's house file, evidence that the house has been occupied as their only or principal home for at least 6 months, must be submitted to the Association before the succession can take place. This evidence should be in the form of official documentation e.g. bank statements, letters from Council or Government offices, dating back a period of 6 months prior to the tenant's death.

Where the house has been designed or substantially adapted for a person with special needs, someone qualifying at Level One will have the right to succeed to the tenancy on a first succession. Where the house has been substantially adapted for a person's special needs and someone qualifies for a tenancy at Levels Two or Three, the Association has the right to terminate the tenancy and offer that person suitable alternative accommodation unless they have that need. Where, in the case of such a property, at the point of the second succession, someone who qualifies at Levels One, Two or Three does not have special needs requiring accommodation of that kind, the Association will have the right to terminate the tenancy and offer that person suitable alternative accommodation.

When the successor completes their tenancy agreement, it will be stated clearly how many rights of succession remain.

### 16.3 Assignment

If a tenant wishes to assign the tenancy i.e. pass the tenancy onto someone else, they must firstly obtain the Association's written permission.

Applications to assign the tenancy must be made in writing providing the following details:

- details of the proposed change including to whom the tenancy is to be assigned
- the name, family composition, and previous addresses for the last 3 years, including landlord details
- when the assignment is to begin

The house must have been the only or principal home of the person to whom the tenant wishes to assign the tenancy for at least 6 months, prior to the date of the written request.

In the event that the assignee is not currently recorded on the Association's house file, evidence that the house has been occupied as their only or principal home for at least 6 months, must be submitted to the Association before the assignment can take place. This evidence should be in the form of official documentation e.g. bank statements, letters from Council or Government offices, dating back a period of 6 months prior to the tenant's death.

While the Association will not unreasonably refuse permission for an assignment, reasonable grounds for refusing permission include:

- the Association has served a notice warning the tenant that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of their conduct
- the Association has obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- the tenant is in breach of other conditions of the tenancy
- the proposed change would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's allocation policy
- the Association intends to carry out work to the house (or the building of which the house forms part) which would affect the part of the house connected with the proposed change

- under occupation would result from the assignment. In these circumstances the Association reserves the right to refuse the assignment, but if doing so purely for this reason, will offer alternative accommodation in accordance with the guidelines detailed in this policy. Each case will be assessed on its own merits taking cognisance of the remaining household member's circumstances and demand for the size of accommodation
- where either party has given false information in relation to the assignment
- where the proposed assignee has pursued a course of anti-social conduct, or has been convicted of using a previous tenancy for illegal or immoral purposes, or has had an ASBO granted against them, or a member of their household, within the last three years

These examples do not in any way alter the Association's general right to refuse permission on reasonable grounds.

#### 16.4 Sub let

The Association will allow a tenant to sublet their Association house on a temporary basis, if they and their household will be unable to reside there and do not wish to give up the tenancy.

Applications to sub let the tenancy must be made in writing, providing the following details:

- the name, family composition, and previous addresses for the last 3 years, including landlord details of sublessee
- when the sub let is to begin
- duration of sub let
- the proposed monthly rent, together with any other charges, and deposit

The Association will seek references from current and previous landlords.

The Association will not unreasonably refuse permission for a sub let, however, reasonable grounds for refusing permission include the following:

- the Association has served a notice warning that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of the tenant's conduct
- the Association has obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- the tenant is in breach of other conditions of the tenancy
- the proposed change would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's Allocation policy
- under occupation would result from the sub let
- the rent or deposit proposed is unreasonable
- where either party has given false information in relation to the sub let
- where the proposed sub lessee has pursued a course of anti-social conduct, or has been convicted of using a previous tenancy for illegal or immoral purposes, or has had an ASBO granted against them, or a member of their household, within the last three years

Tenants who wish to sub let their property must enter into a Short Assured Tenancy Agreement with their sub lessee. If the Association's permission is given for the sub let to proceed, we will provide an agreement and the relevant notification which requires to be served, prior to signing the Short Assured Tenancy Agreement.

These examples do not in any way alter the Association's general right to refuse permission on reasonable grounds.

## 17. JOINT TENANCIES

The Association realises that a tenant's circumstances can change through time and there may be occasions when they wish their spouse, co-habitee etc. to enjoy the security of having their name on the tenancy. If a tenant does wish another person to be a joint tenant, both must apply to the Association in writing.

The other person must use the house, or intend to use the house, as his or her only or principal home. The Association will not unreasonably refuse permission.

Each request will be considered individually, but permission is unlikely to be granted if:

- the Association has served a notice warning that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of the tenant's conduct
- the Association has obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- the tenant is in breach of other conditions of the tenancy
- the proposed change would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's Allocation policy
- where either party has given false information in relation to the joint tenancy
- where the proposed joint tenant has pursued a course of anti-social conduct, or has been convicted of using a previous tenancy for illegal or immoral purposes, or has had an ASBO granted against them, or a member of their household, within the last three years

A joint tenant may, at any time, end his or her interest in the tenancy of a property by giving 4 weeks written notice to the Association and the other tenant. Such a notice will not terminate the tenancy.

Where a joint tenant has abandoned their tenancy, the Association can, if we have reasonable grounds, serve a notice of abandonment giving 4 weeks notice of our intention to bring the joint tenant's interest in the tenancy to an end. If we are satisfied at the end of the four week period that the joint tenant has abandoned the tenancy, we may serve another notice. This notice will terminate the joint tenant's interest in the tenancy in not less than 8 weeks. The second notice will not, however, terminate the tenancy.

18. PERMISSION TO RESIDE

Any tenant, wishing another person to move into their property must first get the Association's written permission. To do this they must provide the following:

- the name, and previous addresses for the last 3 years, including landlord details
- the date the person is to move in
- duration of their stay

The Association will seek references from current and previous landlords.

The Association will respond to applications within 28 days either accepting or rejecting the request.

The Association will not unreasonably refuse permission to reside, however, reasonable grounds for refusing permission include the following:

- the Association has served a notice warning that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of the tenant's conduct
- the Association has obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- the tenant is in breach of other conditions of the tenancy,
- the proposed change would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's Allocation policy
- where either party has given false information in relation to the request for permission to reside
- where the person requiring permission to reside has pursued a course of anti-social conduct, or has been convicted of using a previous tenancy for illegal or immoral purposes, or has had an ASBO granted against them, or a member of their household, within the last three years

**These examples do not in any way alter our general right to refuse permission on reasonable grounds.**

## 19. LODGERS

Tenants must seek written permission to take in lodgers. Permission will not be unreasonably withheld. Any request should include the following:

- the name, and previous addresses for the last 3 years, including landlord details
- the date the person is to move in
- duration of their stay
- the proposed monthly rent, together with any other charges and deposit

The Association will seek references from current and previous landlords.

Each request will be considered individually, but permission is unlikely to be granted if:

- the Association has served a notice warning that we may seek eviction on certain grounds because of the tenant's conduct
- the Association has obtained an order for a tenant's eviction
- the tenant is in breach of other conditions of the tenancy
- the proposed change would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding or would be designated as overcrowding according to the Association's Allocation policy
- the rent or deposit proposed is unreasonable
- where either party has given false information in relation to the request
- where the proposed lodger has pursued a course of anti-social conduct, or has been convicted of using a previous tenancy for illegal or immoral purposes, or has had an ASBO granted against them, or a member of their household, within the last three years

The examples do not in any way alter our general right to refuse permission on reasonable grounds.

20. CIVIL PARTNERSHIP ACT 2004

The Association will take into consideration the aforementioned legislation where couples register their partnership under the provisions of the Act.

## 21. HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS

### 21.1 Strategic context

In order to provide balanced and sustainable communities, the Association aims to match the profile of our stock with housing need and demand. This is to avoid over-concentrations of any particular size or type of property, within each of the areas in which we operate.

Historically, we have sought to retain a valuable supply of 2 apartment properties as well as prioritising the supply of new amenity and wheelchair accommodation. We recognise, however, that the demands and expectations of those seeking to be housed by the Association have changed significantly in recent years and, while there is still a need for 2 apartment properties for some client groups, our current stock profile now has more 2 apartment properties, mainly located within the east end of Paisley, than the current and future anticipated demand requires. The focus of our development activity is, therefore, to increase the proportion of larger family homes within our stock profile, whenever possible.

Other significant recent developments include the emergence of the Local Housing Strategy for Renfrewshire and the developing Strategic Housing Investment Framework and Plans agenda. We are committed to work pro-actively with Renfrewshire Council and Communities Scotland to address the issues highlighted by these developments, but also to promote the Association's aims and objectives in respect of achieving the best balance between our stock profile and the housing needs that are presented to us. Given the wider environment in which we operate, we may not be able to concentrate entirely on the provision of the larger family homes that are in short supply, but with each development opportunity that we have, we will always strive to improve the overall balance and mix of our stock.

Every new development that the Association undertakes, will be based on a Strategic Brief. This document is produced at the outset of each scheme and includes a section entitled "Why the project is needed". This section responds to the expectations set out in the strategic documents for Renfrewshire, but also promotes the Association's aims and objectives, in respect of the number, size and type of accommodation to be provided.

Historically, the provision of amenity housing has been restricted to the ground and first floor of rehabilitated properties. Within our recent new build developments including Johnstone and Renfrew, we have been able to include amenity housing in main door ground and first floor accommodation, with garden facilities. We have also recognised an emerging demand for some larger family homes to be to amenity standards, where a member of the family has particular needs.

In recognition of the limited funds available to Renfrewshire Council for the provision of care and support for elderly and infirm people, we have given consideration to the potential for creating some "Very Amenity" accommodation. Such properties incorporate features to assist people with mobility and other needs. Thus providing another means to support independent living.

We continue to give priority to the provision of wheelchair accommodation. In addition to that provided in rehabilitated property, we aim to incorporate wheelchair provision in all our new build schemes. In response to demand, these can now range in size from 3 to 5 apartment homes.

Based on the priorities noted above, the Association continues to set targets for the desired house mix to be achieved within each scheme. By this means, our active and successful development programme will enable us to continue to provide a wide range of new build housing, encompassing all types of properties to contribute to a balanced stock profile, that also includes more specialised accommodation for disabled and older people.

Following the demise of the Common Housing Register, it is the Association's intention to undertake a review, the results of which will better inform our analysis of housing needs and emerging trends. At our next review, the policy will be further developed to take account of the detailed information emerging from this process.

In the meantime, our housing management staff continue to work closely with our development team in respect of changes in demand for accommodation.

## 21.2 Stock profile

Our stock profile, at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, is as follows:

<b>Total Number of lettable properties</b>	<b>1,452</b>
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<b>Total housing stock for rent by apartment size</b>					
1apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt	6apt
8 (0.60%)	703 (48%)	506 (35%)	220 (15%)	14 (1%)	1 (0.40%)

<b>Total housing stock for rent by house type</b>		
General Needs	Amenity	Wheelchair
1,058 (73%)	322 (22%)	72 (5%)

<b>Total housing stock for rent by property type</b>				
Tenemental	Cottage Flat	Flat (not within a tenement)	Maisonette	House
1,210	62	59	3	118

Williamsburgh Housing Association properties fall within our three areas of operation – Paisley (East and North), Johnstone and Renfrew. Each area comprises the following:

<b>Paisley East and North – 1,093 properties</b>					
<b>Total housing stock for rent by apartment size</b>					
1apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt	6apt
8	559	380	143	3	0
<b>Total housing stock for rent by house type</b>					
General Needs	Amenity	Wheelchair			
799	231	63			
<b>Total housing stock for rent by property type</b>					
Tenemental	Cottage Flat	Flat (not within a tenement)	Maisonette	House	
1,078	0	6	0	9	

<b>Johnstone – 223 properties</b>					
<b>Total housing stock for rent by apartment size</b>					
1apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt	6apt

0	83	87	50	2	1
<b>Total housing stock for rent by house type</b>					
General Needs		Amenity		Wheelchair	
144		72		7	
<b>Total housing stock for rent by property type</b>					
Tenemental	Cottage Flat	Flat (not within a tenement)	Maisonette	House	
52	62	32	2	75	

<b>Renfrew – 136 properties</b>					
<b>Total housing stock for rent by apartment size</b>					
1apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt	6apt
0	61	39	27	9	0
<b>Total housing stock for rent by house type</b>					
General Needs		Amenity		Wheelchair	
115		19		2	
<b>Total housing stock for rent by property type</b>					
Tenemental	Cottage Flat	Flat (not within a tenement)	Maisonette	House	
80	0	21	1	34	

### 21.3 Provision of specially adapted housing

The Association continues our endeavours to increase the supply of amenity and wheelchair housing within Renfrewshire. In addition, we have played an active role, in working in partnership with Renfrewshire Council's Joint Commissioning Team, in developing and securing housing specially adapted and suitable for individuals with varied support requirements.

We also seek to assist in the rehousing of adults with learning difficulties and accept referrals from various agencies including Social Work and Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health. A full list of our agencies currently approved by our Housing Management Sub Committee is attached at Appendix No.2.

#### 21.4 Annual lettings plan 2007/2008

The Association currently owns 1,450 lettable properties. During the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007, the Association made a total of 201 allocations in the following categories:

Direct applications	128	64%
Nominations	0	0%
Section 5 referrals	28	14%
Internal transfers	10	5%
Returning tenants (to specific regeneration developments)	7	3.5%
Mutual exchanges	1	0.5%
Special needs housing with support	7	3.5%
Decant accommodation	2	1%
Lease agreement	18	9%

It should be noted that, as the Association was part of the Renfrewshire Common Housing Register during 2006/07 there was no need to pursue nominations.

## 21.5 Targets for 2007/08

In setting targets for our allocations for 2007/2008 cognisance has been taken of the following:

- lettings initiatives
- number of lets made in previous years
- it should be noted that there are no developments scheduled to come off site during the year 2007/08
- turnover of special needs housing
- restoration of the Nominations Agreement

Direct applications	42%
Nomination agreement	30%
Internal transfers	6%
Approved list of referral agencies	10%
Lettings initiatives	6%
Mutual exchanges	2%
Special needs housing with support	2%
Others not defined above (e.g. successions, assignments)	2%

All figures are based on a percentage of total lets made.

The lettings plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

## 22. COMPLAINTS

We are committed to ensuring that our services are provided in an efficient and effective manner. For example, we provide quality services within set time scales, to recognised standards. Dealing with complaints is part of our general customer care policy to ensure that services are delivered in line with policy commitments.

Where an applicant feels that this policy has not been adhered to correctly and as a result is aggrieved by any allocation decision, they should, in the first instance, obtain a copy of the Association's Complaints Policy. This can be obtained in the following ways:

- Telephone request
- Attend our office
- Email request
- Download from our website – [www.williamsburghha.co.uk](http://www.williamsburghha.co.uk)
- Collect at any of our area surgeries – Johnstone Town Hall (every second Wednesday) and Cherrie Centre, Renfrew, (every second Thursday.)

23. REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Housing Management Sub Committee will have regard to this policy, as per our review timetable. The policy will be reviewed every two years. Any revisions deemed necessary can be considered at this time ensuring that it responds to changing circumstances.

This review will take place following the appropriate consultation with residents, as outlined in our Tenant Participation Strategy.

## Appendix No.1

### Lettings Initiatives

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Date Commenced</b>
Blackhall	December 2006
Seedhill Road – C.T.I.	May 2007

## Appendix No.2

### Approved Agencies

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>
Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health – Management Agreement for 6 allocations per annum	June 1998
Key Housing Association – Management Agreement for support	August 2000
Women’s Aid – Management Agreement for 8 allocations per annum	July 2001

### Appendix No.3

#### Amenity and Wheelchair Standards

Wheelchair accessible accommodation is generally bungalows or ground floor main door flats, except in tenemental refurbishment projects, where the main entrance door may be from the common close, provided suitably ramped and step free access can be achieved.

Amenity houses will generally be 2 apartment flats and 2 apartment flats with a flexible room. These will generally be located on the ground or the first floor in both cottage flats (each with its own door) or in tenemental properties.

The key differences between our amenity and wheelchair accessible properties are detailed in the following table:

<b>Features of Amenity and Wheelchair Accessible Houses</b>		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Amenity</b>	<b>Wheelchair Accessible</b>
<b>Bathroom</b>		
Shower over bath	Yes	No
Level access shower tray or "wet floor"	No	Yes
Full height tiling at bath / shower	Yes	Yes
Half height opening shower screen	No	Yes
Shower curtain and rail	Yes	Yes
Quarter turn lever taps	Yes	Yes
Grab rails to be fitted as and when required	Yes	Yes
Non slip vinyl flooring	Yes	No
Non slip vinyl flooring with cove skirting	No	Yes
<b>Kitchen</b>		
Wall units and boiler at lower height	Yes	Yes
Quarter turn lever taps	Yes	Yes
Lowered worktop at sink and hob	No	Yes
Tall oven housing unit with electric oven supplied	No	Yes
Gas hob supplied	No	Yes

<b>Features of Amenity and Wheelchair Accessible Houses</b>		
<b>Element</b>	<b>Amenity</b>	<b>Wheelchair Accessible</b>
<b>Electrics</b>		
Sockets higher	No	Yes
Room thermostat lower	No	Yes
Extra wide light switches	Yes	Yes
Switches on sockets at outside of socket faceplate	Yes	Yes
<b>Doors</b>		
Wide doors (as per mainstream houses)	Yes	No
Extra wide doors	No	Yes
Kickplates on doors to prevent damage	No	Yes
<b>Heating</b>		
Designed to be warmer (24°C rather than 22°C)	Yes	No
Designed to be even warmer (25°C rather than 22°C)	No	Yes
Low surface temperature radiators	No	Yes
<b>Clothes drying</b>		
Clothes poles	Yes	No
Rotary drier capable of being raised and lowered	No	Yes

## Appendix No.4

### Supporting Evidence Required

Proof of address	Applicants must provide proof of address for all people in the moving and non-moving group, on the application form i.e. bank statement, official document etc. A copy of current tenancy agreement should be supplied, if applicable.
Proof of identification	Applicants must provide proof of identification for all people in the moving group i.e. passport, driving licence, birth certificate etc. If pregnant, copy of maternity certificate (MAT B1).
Potentially homeless – evidence of current circumstances to be provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice of proceedings.</li> <li>• Notice to quit.</li> <li>• Copy of discharge papers if leaving the armed forces.</li> <li>• Letter confirming date to leave tied accommodation.</li> <li>• Copy of a letter from the bank/building society confirming date property is being repossessed.</li> <li>• Copy of a legal document confirming a sale is due to conclude.</li> <li>• Letter from a doctor or a support agency confirming the date required to leave current accommodation, hospital, prison, residential care or supported accommodation.</li> <li>• Current closing/demolition/environmental health order.</li> </ul>
Homelessness amongst existing tenants	Written confirmation from police, Social Work, Education Department, or ASIST regarding the need to leave the property due to harassment, abuse or fleeing violence.
Houselessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written confirmation from hotel or B&amp;B and/or receipts to verify residence.</li> <li>• Site registration documents or written proof of residence, if staying in a mobile home/caravan.</li> <li>• Written confirmation from the person providing care of accommodation verifying that address is temporary.</li> </ul>

Property lacking facilities or below tolerable standard	<p>Copy of report/letter from Environmental Services or landlord confirming that house does not meet tolerable standard or is lacking facilities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an inside toilet</li> <li>• a separate kitchen or living room</li> <li>• a fixed bath or shower</li> <li>• hot water supply</li> <li>• inadequate ventilation</li> <li>• full central heating (gas or electric)</li> <li>• rising or penetrating damp</li> <li>• serious disrepair to the property</li> <li>• due for demolition</li> </ul>
Medical factors	Completed medical form and any relevant documents of support.
Support	Written confirmation of requirement to give or receive support. This should be accompanied by evidence that the support is required i.e. proof of DLA carers allowance, attendance allowance, Blue badge, benefit award letter etc.
Moving to be close to work or place of education or to improve employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of wage slip confirming employment.</li> <li>• Written confirmation of acceptance onto further education course.</li> <li>• Correspondence with prospective employers.</li> <li>• Information from job centres.</li> </ul>
Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police reports.</li> <li>• Case conference reports from Renfrewshire Council's ASIST team.</li> <li>• Social Work reports.</li> <li>• GP's reports.</li> <li>• Education Department reports.</li> <li>• Hospital reports.</li> <li>• Reports from other advice agencies or support groups.</li> </ul>

Fleeing violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Police reports.</li><li>• Case conference reports from Renfrewshire Council's ASIST team.</li><li>• Social Work reports.</li><li>• GP's reports.</li><li>• Education Department reports.</li><li>• Hospital reports.</li><li>• Reports from other advice agencies or support groups.</li></ul>
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This list is not exhaustive and the Association reserves the right to request or accept similar information for any of the categories.

## Appendix No.5

### Occupation Guidelines

The following occupation guidelines will apply to ensure the best use of our housing stock.

<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Family Composition</b>
1 apt - 1 person	1 living/bedroom/kitchen	1 single person
2 apt - 1 person	1 Living room, kitchen, one single bedroom	1 single person
2 apt - 2 persons	Living/kitchen, one double bedroom	1 couple, or 1 single person
2 apt - 2 persons	Living room, kitchen, one double bedroom	1 couple, or 1 single person
3 apt - 3 persons	Living room, kitchen, one double bedroom and one single person	Family (single parent, or couple), with one child, regardless of age.
3 apt - 4 persons	Living room, kitchen and two double bedrooms.	Family (single parent, or couple), with two children of same sex up to age 16 of oldest child, or different sexes up to age 10 of oldest child.
4 apt - 4 persons	Living room, kitchen, one double bedroom and two single bedrooms.	Family (single parent, or couple) with two children regardless of sex of children.
4 apt - 5 persons	Living room, kitchen, two double bedrooms and one single bedroom.	Family (single parent or couple) with three children. The two children sharing the double bedroom can be of different sexes up to the age of 10 years for the eldest, or if same sex up to the age of 16 years.

4 apt - 6 persons	Living room, kitchen, three double bedrooms	Family (single parent or couple) with four children. Children sharing each double bedroom can be of different sexes up to the age of 10 years for the eldest, or if same sex up to the age of 16 years.
5 apt - 6 persons	Living room, kitchen, two double bedrooms and two single bedrooms	Family (single parent or couple) with four children. Children sharing double bedroom can be of different sexes up to the age of 10 years for the eldest, or if same sex up to the age of 16 years.
5 apt - 7 persons	Living room, kitchen, three double bedrooms and one single bedroom	Family (single parent or couple) with five children. Children sharing double bedroom can be of different sexes up to the age of 10 years for the eldest, or if same sex up to the age of 16 years.
6 apt - 7 persons	Living room, kitchen, two double bedrooms and three single bedrooms	Family (single parent or couple) with five children. Children sharing double bedroom can be of different sexes up to the age of 10 years for the eldest, or if same sex up to the age of 16 years.

Please note the following:

- Where couple is stated, it refers to different and same sex partners.
- Overcrowding points will be awarded when the elder of same sex children sharing a bedroom reaches their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday and when the elder of different sex children sharing a bedroom reaches their 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Where a parent has shared custody of one or more children which is supported by legal evidence, they will be considered for the appropriately sized property.
- At 16 years of age any child remaining in the family home will be considered for a single bedroom.
- Other adult family members, e.g. grandparent, will be considered for a single bedroom.

### Properties with flexi rooms

We have included flexi rooms in some of our new build properties. These are not bedrooms and can not be classed as such.

## Appendix No.6

### Performance Reports

#### Housing List

- Number on Housing List by property type
- Number on Housing List by demand for apartment size
- Ethnic Origin of applicants

#### Transfer List

- Number on Transfer List by property type
- Number on Transfer List by demand for apartment size
- Ethnic Origin of applicants

#### Lettings Activity

- Summary of lettings Activity
- Offers made
- Refusal reasons

#### Allocation of Properties

- Properties allocated by source of let
- Properties allocated by property build type
- Properties allocated by property type
- Properties allocated by property size
- Properties allocated where social factor points have been awarded
- Properties allocated under Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

#### Tenancies Granted

- Ethnic origin of applicants where tenancies have been granted

#### Tenancy Terminations Report

- Tenancies terminated by reason for termination
- Tenancies terminated by relocation detail
- Tenancies terminated by property build type
- Tenancies terminated by property type
- Tenancies terminated by property size
- Ethnic origin of tenancies terminated

#### Voids

- Void properties by property build type
- Void properties by property type
- Void properties by property size