



ALLOCATIONS POLICY

**AS WITH ALL OF THE ASSOCIATION'S POLICIES,
THIS GUIDE, IN FULL AND IN PART,
IS AVAILABLE IN SUMMARY, ON TAPE, IN BRAILLE,
AND IN TRANSLATION INTO MOST OTHER LANGUAGES –**

**PLEASE ASK A MEMBER OF STAFF IF YOU WOULD LIKE
A VERSION IN A DIFFERENT FORMAT**



ALLOCATIONS POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Abronhill Housing Association is a registered social landlord, set up to provide and manage property for people in housing need in Abronhill, Cumbernauld, registered in 1993. The Association acquired properties by a unique combination of tenants' choice and trickle transfer during 1995 and 1996 and has since acquired properties through a new build project, tenants' choice transfers and acquisitions through other initiatives. It operates on a "not-for-profit" basis, and is run by an elected Management Committee consisting of local residents who employ a small staff to manage the Association on a day-to-day basis.

1.2 This document outlines the Association's Allocations Policy, one of the key documents we produce. In line with good practice, the underlying principle is to allocate our housing stock to those households displaying the highest levels of housing need.

1.3 The Association is committed to:

- Providing quality rented accommodation affordable to those in housing need
- Contributing to the physical, social and economic regeneration of the area
- Providing a safe environment in which all residents can live

1.4 The policy statement on allocations, reviewed and approved during May 2008, is implemented with the use of a points-based system

1.5 Housing Stock

1.5.1 The Association owns less than 220 properties in Abronhill and provides a factoring service for 25 owner occupiers. The type of housing presently provided by the Association is mainly for general needs and, with no current development funding commitment from the Scotland Government, our ability to provide housing for those with special needs is limited.

1.6 Formulation of Policy

1.6.1 This policy takes account of good practice documents such as, Performance Standards for Social Landlords (November 2001) and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations' Raising Standards document, Chapter 1, as well as seeking to comply with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

1.6.2 In line with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 the Association seeks to give priority (the legal term being "reasonable preference") to applicants in one or more of the following categories:



- (i) applicants occupying houses which do not meet the tolerable standard: ★
- (ii) applicants who are occupying overcrowded houses: or
- (iii) applicants who have large families
- (iv) applicants who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions
- (v) applicants who are homeless and or who are threatened with homelessness (within the meaning of Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by the 2001 Act)).

★ The tolerable standard requires that a property:

- ◆ Is structurally stable
- ◆ Is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp
- ◆ Has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating
- ◆ Has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house
- ◆ Has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house
- ◆ Has a water closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house
- ◆ Has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water
- ◆ Has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house
- ◆ Has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings

1.7 Equal Opportunities

1.7.1 Abronhill Housing Association aims to be an equal opportunities association. To this end we have a separate equal opportunities policy, supplemented by an Equality Action Plan.

1.7.2 This means that we will seek to ensure that all applicants have an equal right to access of this policy, and that:

- The Association will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any applicant, on the grounds of ethnic origin, sex, religion, marital status, gender, disability, sexuality or political belief as detailed within the Association's Equal Opportunities Policy
- In the provision of housing services, employment of staff and access to Membership of the Association we will seek to ensure equality of opportunity and equal treatment of everyone



- The records of the racial origin, gender and disability of each applicant will be monitored to fulfil the Association's commitment to equal opportunities

1.7.3 Other legislation governing Equal Opportunities for all applicants is within the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

1.8 Consultation

1.8.1 Consultation with the community and resident participation has always been one of the key aspects of the way in which the Association operates. We therefore welcome the new statutory provisions in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 which require all social landlords to take tenants' views into account when formulating key service delivery policies.

1.8.2 At the present time, there are two strands to policy consultation within Abronhill:

- firstly, we believe it is important to inform all tenants when a policy review is due, together with some information on what changes are likely to be proposed by the Association
- the next stage is to invite feedback from tenants on (i) how well they feel the proposals address the needs of the community and (ii) whether there are any particular amendments they would like to see.

1.8.3 In October 2002, the Association carried out a comprehensive Resident Satisfaction Survey, and part of this asked residents their views on how they would like to participate. A vast majority of tenants expressed a preference for newsletters. Two-thirds of tenants expressed a preference for open days and just over half wanted public meetings. However, less than half wanted to be consulted on allocations. This has been taken into account for the current review and will be taken into account in future reviews of this, and all other key, policies.

2.0 HOW THE POLICY WORKS

Methods of Assessment and Allocation

- 2.1 The Association operates a points system for allocating its housing. This is a system, which is easily understood and simple to administer. It is a fair system of assessment and does not discriminate against any applicant.
- 2.2 Each application for housing with the Association will be assessed and applicants will be notified of the number of points they have been awarded within 10 working



days of receipt of a completed application.

- 2.3 In operating this system the Association will ensure that priority is given to applicants who are in most housing need.

3.0 ADMISSION TO THE HOUSING LIST

- 3.1 Anyone who is 16 years or older has the right to apply for housing and to be admitted to our Housing List. Formerly the Association did not accept applications, which attracted so few points the applicant was unlikely to be offered a let. It is now a legal requirement introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 that all applicants be accepted. However, applicants will be advised of the Association's stock and will be given realistic advice of their prospects of being housed by the Association.

What Does Admission to the Housing List Mean?

- 3.2 Applicants must understand the difference between the right to be admitted to the Housing List and the right to be allocated a house. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives anyone over the age of 16 the right to be admitted to the Association's list. However, our turnover is very low and we are therefore unable to provide offers for the majority of applicants interested in housing in our area. Consequently, we cannot provide any guarantees that any applicant will be successful in being made an offer of housing.
- 3.3 All applicants will be advised of the likelihood of being housed by the Association once their points total has been assessed. This may be of particular importance to households whose applications attract few or no points and, unless there is a change in circumstances, it is extremely unlikely that the Association is going to be able to make an offer in the foreseeable future. Appendix 2 details information sent to people whose application attracts less than 80 points.

Periodic Review of the List

- 3.4 In order to help ensure that the information held is up-to-date and that each applicant still wishes to be considered for housing by the Association, the lists will be subject to review. There will be a constant review cycle in which all applicants will be invited to confirm their wish to remain on the housing list on an annual basis within one month of the yearly anniversary of their last contact with the Association.
- 3.5 At the time of the review, the Association will ask applicants to confirm that (i) all details held are still relevant or (ii) a change in circumstances has occurred and this needs to be taken into account. They will be advised that failure to return the postcard enclosed with the letter can lead to their application being removed from



the Association's waiting list. The Association will write to applicants, but applicants can respond by telephone, email or personal visit if this is an easier option. Where there is no response within 28 days, the applicant will be sent a second letter advising them that their application will be removed from the list. All of this will be made clear in the correspondence sent out. If their circumstances have changed applicants may be asked to complete a new application form. Applicants living at a different address will be asked to complete a new form.

- 3.6 If there is no response to a second letter, the applicant's name will be removed from the list. Applicants who subsequently contact the Association will be reinstated. The Association does not apply waiting time points and those applicants who do not have sufficient points to make an offer likely are not penalised by being removed from the list.

4.0 INTERNAL TRANSFERS

- 4.1 Internal transfers occur where a current tenant wishes to move to another one of the Association's properties. As with Housing List lets, allocations are made principally on the basis of housing need. All applicants for an internal transfer must therefore complete an application form, following which a number of points will be awarded. The Association operates a quota system under which 15% of allocations are offered to transfer applicants. This quota means that approximately one allocation a year is made to a transfer applicant. The applicant with the most points will be offered a let under the quota system.
- 4.2 All current tenants have the right to apply and be admitted to the Internal Transfer List. However, given the low turnover of stock, it is not possible to guarantee that any offers will be made, and applicants will be made aware of this.
- 4.3 Transfer applicants should also note that those with significant arrears may be suspended from the list, unless a repayment arrangement has been in place for twelve months. Transfer applicants will be advised that their application is suspended and have the right to appeal against the suspension.
- 4.4 Appeal against suspension should be made in the first instance to the Housing Manager. If the suspension is upheld by the Housing Manager, the applicant has the right to appeal to the Management Committee.

5.0 MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY

- 5.1 Association tenants may arrange Mutual Exchanges:
- (i) With other Association tenants in the Abrohill area



- (ii) With other public sector landlords in the United Kingdom
- (iii) Through national schemes for exchanges across the country

5.2 The Association will maintain a register for persons seeking a Mutual Exchange, and this will be available to all tenants at the Association's office. Conditions of the Association's Mutual Exchange Policy are as follows:

- (i) A tenant wishing to exchange houses with another tenant must first obtain the Association's written consent to the exchange, although this will not be unreasonable withheld. The person with whom they wish to exchange with must also obtain permission from his/her landlord who may have certain conditions regarding Mutual Exchanges.
- (i) The Association will not normally approve a Mutual Exchange if the property would become overcrowded or under occupied.
- (ii) Any necessary repairs or replacements, which are the responsibility of the outgoing tenant, must be attended to the Association's satisfaction before an exchange can proceed. The Association will not carry out any redecoration.
- (iii) Both tenants wishing to exchange will be visited by the Association's Housing Officer. The Association tenant's house will be inspected. Any repairs required to bring the property up to a reasonable standard must be carried out before permission to exchange will be granted.
- (iv) If the exchange is approved the incoming tenant must occupy the property within a reasonable period. Failure to take up residence within one month will result in ending the tenancy of that property.
- (v) The incoming tenant must occupy the property for at least six months
- (vi) In the event of any of the parties giving false or misleading information or deliberately withholding relevant information, the Association will take action for recovery of possession or to reverse the exchange through the courts.
- (vii) The new Tenancy with the Association will be Scottish Secure Tenancy in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Incoming tenants will be informed that they will have the modernised Right to Buy. This cannot be



exercised until September 2012 and may not be available then, depending on Scottish Government, local authority and association decisions.

6.0 THE TENANCY AGREEMENT

6.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduces the Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST), and the vast majority of lets after 30 September 2002 will be made on this basis.

6.2 In certain very limited circumstances, however, the Association may decide to let on the basis of a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. The circumstances are:

- where the tenant/joint tenant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the past three years
- if the tenant or member of the household is subject to an anti-social behaviour order
- accommodation let on a temporary basis to someone in receipt of housing support services

6.3 The short SST will be let for a period of at least six months and is subject to tacit relocation in the same way as a Short Assured Tenancy was. We will, however, aim to convert any short SST to a full SST within 12 months.

6.4 The Association will not unreasonably reject a request for a joint tenancy with another household member.

7.0 MOBILITY SCHEMES

7.1 HOMESWAP is an exchange scheme operated throughout the United Kingdom to assist local authority and social landlord tenants to contact each other to arrange an exchange.

7.2 The Association supports the principles of the scheme and will:

- advice any Abronhill tenant of the scheme
- advice a tenant of another local authority or social landlord wishing to move to Abronhill of the scheme

8.0 SUCCESSION, ASSIGNATION, SUB-LETTING AND LODGERS

Succession

8.1 Succession to a Scottish Secure Tenancy normally occurs when a tenant dies and



there is at least one other person left in the household. The law is very clear on who is eligible to succeed a tenancy (the **qualified person**) and also specifies the order in which each category is given priority.

- 8.2 Where there is a joint tenancy, the tenancy automatically remains with the other joint tenant(s).
- 8.3 In all other circumstances, the order is:
- a) the tenant's spouse or partner, providing that the house has been their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death
 - b) if (a) does not apply, then the tenancy may be offered to a member of the tenant's family, providing that it was their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death
 - c) if neither (a) nor (b) applies, then the tenancy may be offered to the carer, providing that the carer gave up their only or principal home in order to move in with the tenant before his/her death
- 8.4 The type of tenancy given after succession is a full Scottish Secure Tenancy.
- 8.5 Where a house has been designed or substantially adapted for the use of someone with special needs, only spouses, partners, joint tenants or persons with similar special needs can succeed the tenancy. Others who would otherwise be eligible to succeed the tenancy will be offered alternative accommodation by the Association.

Assignment

- 8.6 Assignment occurs when a tenant/joint tenant gives up their tenancy in favour of someone else who occupies the house as their only or principal home.
- 8.7 Under normal circumstances, the Association will agree to the assignment provided that the person intending to take over the tenancy has had permission to reside with the applicant and that prior written permission has been given to the assignment ~ permission will not be unreasonably withheld. The assigned tenancy will be on the basis of a full SST.

Sub-Letting

- 8.8 Tenants may normally sub-let their house to another person for a period of up to one year if they are going to be absent on a temporary basis (for example, extended holiday, working/training/studying away for up to one year, prison) provided that the Association's prior written permission has been given ~ this will



not be unreasonably withheld. At all times, however, the tenancy remains in the name of the tenant and cannot be succeeded to by sub-lessee.

- 8.9 The tenant remains responsible for the rent, even although he/she may have come to an arrangement with the sub-lessee for reimbursement. The tenant must also ensure that the sub-lessee does not behave in a manner that would constitute a breach of the Tenancy Agreement (for example, anti-social behaviour) or the Association may take steps to remove the sub-lessee.

Lodgers

- 8.10 Tenants may have lodgers, providing that the Association's prior written permission has been granted – this will not be unreasonably withheld. Tenants should note, however, that we will not permit lodgers to move in if overcrowding results, if the proposed lodger has an outstanding ASBO, or if he/she has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the past three years.
- 8.11 Lodgers have no rights of succession, nor can the tenant assign the tenancy to a lodger.

9.0 WORKING WITH NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

- 9.1 The Association works in partnership with the Council in three main ways:
- (i) via a Nominations Agreement whereby the Council is asked to provide nominations for 50% of our annual lets
 - (ii) by assisting the Council in re-housing homeless applicants. This operates in accordance with the Homelessness Protocol agreed between the Council and all the social landlords operating in the area.
 - (iii) By assisting the Council in the development of a Common Housing Register, currently due to be implemented in October 2008. The Association is committed to participating in a Common Housing Register for the benefit of applicants within the constraints of the financial implications of the scheme. The Association is committed to advising tenants and applicants of the Common Housing Register when it is implemented.
- 9.2 The Association is committed to complying fully with the duty under Section 5 of the 2001 Act which requires the Association to comply with any request made by the Council to provide accommodation for a homeless household, unless there is a statutorily acceptable reason for not doing so.



10.0 LETS TO STAFF OR COMMITTEE OR MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILIES

- 10.1 The staff and Committee of the Association (and their families) are prevented by law from obtaining any benefit as a result of their connection with the Association. The appropriate legislation is Schedule 7 Part 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. This means that any lets made to staff, Committee or their families **must only be done** on the basis of housing need as defined in Appendix I of this guide.
- 10.2 In other words, the let would have been made to that person in any case as he/she exhibited the greatest housing need at the time the selection was made.
- 10.3 The Association has a Schedule 7 Part 1 Register in which it details every allocation made in this way. This provides additional safeguards to our tenants and members as this Register is inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator as part of its regulatory function and our internal auditor as part of any audit visit, with individual allocations being selected at random and checked for appropriateness by either of these parties. Penalties for breaching this legislation are significant.

11.0 DENIED ACCESS, SUSPENSIONS & EXCLUSIONS and REMOVAL FROM THE LISTS

Suspensions from the Housing List

- 11.1 Abronhill Housing Association will ensure a continuous opportunity for people to apply for housing, be assessed using the needs-based points system and be able to access the housing list. **This means that, in the vast majority of cases, we will not deny access to, or suspend anyone from, the Housing List.** (It is important to note that the Association will no longer **exclude or refuse** an application, the difference being that a suspension will be for a specified period of time and we will retain the applicant's details during this time).
- 11.2 However, in the following circumstances, the Association **will suspend** an application:
- Where an applicant has rent arrears equivalent to one month's charge and an where an arrangement to repay this amount has not been adhered to for a period of three months.
 - Where there is a current Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) against the tenant or a member of the household to be re-housed, an eviction in the last three years or violence to staff in the past three years. (The final criterion would have to be evidenced and legal advice sought on an individual case



basis).

- 11.3 Applicants who are suspended from the list will be notified of this in writing. An explanation will be provided on the reasons and the time period that the suspension is to apply will be clearly noted. Applicants will have the right of appeal against suspension. Appeal against suspension should be made in the first instance to the Housing Manager. If the suspension is upheld by the Housing Manager, the applicant has the right to appeal to the Management Committee.

Suspensions from the Transfer List

- 11.4 In addition to the above, internal transfer applicants with rent arrears of over three months' rent **OR** where a Notice of Proceedings, for rent arrears which exceed one months' rent, is outstanding will require to have kept a repayment arrangement for at least twelve months, otherwise their application will be suspended until these criteria have been met.

Removal from the Lists

- 11.4 It will not be usual practice for the Association to remove applicants from the lists and, where this does occur, it will be confined to the following circumstances:
- the applicant has been offered a tenancy by us and this has been accepted
 - the applicant has requested to be removed from the list
 - the applicant has died
 - the applicant has not responded to the review process

12.0 ALLOCATING A PROPERTY

- 12.1 The Association will keep ten lists of applicants, one for each of the five different sized properties the Association owns and one internal transfer list for each of the five different sized properties the Association owns. The Association has entered into a nominations agreement with North Lanarkshire Council under which 50% of net lets will be offered to the Council to assist them in their statutory obligations. When allocating a vacant property from its own list the Association will allocate to the applicant with the most points on the appropriate list. When allocating a property to a Council nominee, the Association will seek three nominations in accordance with the Nominations Agreement. The nominee with the most points, as pointed in accordance with the Association's points system, will be offered the property. If they refuse the offer, the applicant with the next highest number of points will be offered the property.



In order to meet our obligations to Association tenants a list of tenants seeking transfer to alternative accommodation will be kept. Tenants will be asked to complete an application form and this shall be pointed on all aspects except tenure. The Association will operate a quota system for lets to internal transfer applicants of 15% of lets a year.

In order to meet our obligations under the Matrimonial Homes legislation the Association will operate a quota system for lets under the Matrimonial Breakdown legislation.. However, although it is difficult to set a meaningful target given the extremely low turnover experienced by the Association (on average 17 lets a year), the Association has set a quota of 5% a year as we would expect not more than one allocation each year. In addition the Management Committee has undertaken to seek one nomination a year, a quota of 5%, from Enable, a local housing group seeking to provide independent accommodation for its clients. As we expect to let a very small number in this way over the year, where this does occur, a report, prepared by the Housing Officer and endorsed by the Housing Manager, will be retained for audit inspection within the house file. Details on numbers only will be passed to the Management Committee as part of the annual report on the allocation policy. Housing staff will make selections throughout the year on a rotational basis (as outlined in the allocations procedures) to help ensure that the nomination percentage is broadly achieved on an ongoing basis.

- 12.2 The figures outlined above are not absolute figures, which must be attained. Rather, they are indicative to help ensure that there is some balance within the lets made. If there is an imbalance towards the end of a year, for example, this does not mean that all subsequent lets will be made in order to “catch up”.
- 12.3 The Nominations category of 50% **includes** lets made under Section 5 – ie to provide accommodation for homeless people on request of the Council. We have decided to combine these two categories for the purposes of the quotas. This is principally because the outturn percentage under the Nomination Agreement (50% on its own) has been low since the Association began operating. This category will be kept under review and can be amended as required following discussion with the Council.

13.0 MEASURING THE OUTCOMES OF THE POLICY

- 13.1 This policy was reviewed in May 2008, approved, and will be reviewed every three years unless there are substantial changes, e.g. legislation which will impact on the policy. It is anticipated that the policy will be reviewed within one year of the implementation of a Common Housing Register. In order to review this policy effectively, the Management Committee must be able to assess how well the ways



in which the policy has been operated accords with the agreed objectives.

13.2 The current reporting framework used by the Management Committee provides quarterly reports and an annual report on numbers on the housing lists and details on lets made. This will continue to be the case, however, the annual report will contain the following **additional** information:

- the number of cases where points have been awarded in the “exceptional circumstances” category
- details on any Short Scottish Secure Tenancies let in the year
- details on any instances where the Association has not complied with a request from the Council to provide accommodation to a homeless household
- the number of suspensions applied in the year and the reasons for these
- the approximate number of summary leaflets requested/taken in the year
- details of alternative formats requested
- equal opportunities monitoring information (this will be supplementary to the outturn report on the Equality Action Plan)
- number of lets to internal transfer applicants, housing list applicants, council nominees, mutual exchanges, successions/assignments and HOMESWAP

13.3 There will also be a commentary on how the main objectives of the policy have been achieved, together with suggestions on any improvements that need to be made at the next review (or immediately if this is required).

13.4 A summary of this report will be disseminated to the tenants and members as part of one of our regular newsletters and will also be used as part of the consultative process. Other interested parties can receive this on request.

14.0 WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY WITH OUR DECISION ON YOUR APPLICATION

14.1 The Association is committed to getting it right every time and providing a first class service to all of our tenants, applicants and potential applicants. The allocations process can, however, be complex and, occasionally, mistakes can be made or there can be differences of opinion where an element of judgement is required. In the first instance, this process does not differentiate between a query and a complaint, recognising that a query may become a complaint if a mutually satisfactory outcome is not made to a query.

14.2 Every applicant therefore has the right to appeal against any of our decisions. The preferred way of doing this is for the applicant (or someone contacting us on their behalf) to raise the query informally with the member of staff concerned. For



example, if an applicant feels that they should have medical points but none have been awarded, the Housing Officer who processed the form should be contacted in the first instance.

- 14.3 If the query cannot be dealt with informally to the applicant's satisfaction, then appeal should be to the Housing Manager. We would prefer the contact to be in writing, but this is not a requirement and choosing not to do so will not in any way affect the outcome of your appeal. All decisions will be provided in writing (in the applicant's preferred format/language) with our reasons explained as clearly as possible. A copy of the Complaints Procedure will also be passed to the applicant at this point, if this has not been done earlier.
- 14.4 If the applicant remains dissatisfied, there is a right of appeal to the Management Committee. This will be delegated to a small sub-Committee comprising three or four members of the Committee. The applicant has the right to be represented, but can choose not to. The decision of the sub-Committee will be conveyed in writing.
- 14.5 If the applicant is still unhappy, there is a final recourse to the Ombudsman – please refer to the Association's complaints procedure.



THE POINTS SYSTEM

Part A – Working Out How Many Rooms Are Required

- One living room for each household

Plus

- One bedroom for the applicant and his/her partner

Plus

- One bedroom for each person aged 16 years or over

Plus/or

- One bedroom for up to 2 persons of the same sex who are both aged 8 or under

The above will be used by the Association when calculating overcrowding or under-occupation points

Part B – Assessing Housing Need

The Association has two categories of need: Priority 1 and Priority 2.

Priority 1 Assessments

This category is reserved for applicants who are experiencing any form of severe harassment at their current address, including that which is racially or religiously motivated or domestic violence. This category does not work on a points system as a Priority 1 application will be offered the next vacancy of the correct size (ie the application will go to the top of the list). Priority 1 applications are rare.

In the unlikely event of there being more than one Priority 1 applicant for the same house size at the same time, the length of time that the harassment has been going on will be used as a tie breaker.



All applicants in this category will have to provide evidence of the harassment, for example from the Police, Social Work Department, or other agency. In all cases where English is not an applicant's first language, a translator will be offered and all documentation will be provided in a language of the applicant's choice.

Priority 2 Assessments

The vast majority of applicants (and lets made via the housing list) will be done as Priority 2. Indeed, it would not be unusual for all lets in any given year to be Priority 2.

Please note that, in all cases, details provided will be confirmed by the Association via a home visit prior to any offer of accommodation being confirmed. Where details are not verified, the relevant points will be deducted and any pending offer will be withheld. In certain cases, additional documentary evidence may be required – this will be advised to the applicant at the time of application.

Properties will be allocated to the applicant with the highest number of points on the list for the size of house to be let. In the event of two applicants having an equal number of points, the applicant with the most tenure points will be allocated the property. If tenure points are identical, an applicant living in property below the Tolerable Standard will be offered the let. If neither applicant is living in a property below the Tolerable Standard the applicant awarded the most overcrowding points will be allocated the property. This process will be continued through the points awarded for lack of facilities, sharing facilities, repair, dampness, medical, harassment and social points. If the two highest pointed applicants have been awarded identical points in every respect, the applicant living in their current circumstances for the longer period shall be offered the let.

1. Overcrowding and Under-Occupation

For every bedspace lacking	10 points
For every bedroom surplus to need	6 points

Where an applicant has part-custody of children, they will be included in the application. A copy of the custody/court order or written confirmation from a solicitor is required. Informal arrangements will not be sufficient.

Where an applicant is pregnant, the new child will be counted as part of the household upon receipt of the Birth Certificate or other relevant evidence.



2. Medical Priority

Medical points are awarded where re-housing would alleviate an applicant's medical condition. There are three groups:

Medical A – Essential/severe mobility difficulties	20 points
Medical B – Urgent/some mobility difficulties	10 points
Medical C – Advisable/minor mobility difficulties	5 points
Applicants requiring ground floor accommodation ~ for every step to a maximum of 20 steps	1 point

All applicants wishing to be considered for medical priority points should complete a self-assessment form. The Association's staff can assist with this if required.

Applicants may be advised to seek clarification of how their current housing impacts on their medical condition to assist staff in awarding medical points. The Association has a set of procedures it uses in assessing requests for medical points. Points will be awarded where an applicant's medical condition will be relieved or whose living circumstances will be improved by alternative accommodation. This may involve asking the applicant to provide a report from their GP, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, nurse, or other medical professional.

Where medical points are awarded because a tenant is unable/has difficulty climbing stairs, only a ground floor property with no internal stairs will be offered.

It is important to note that medical points will only be awarded where BOTH of the following apply:

- **The medical condition and/or quality of life is being exacerbated by the applicant's present living conditions**

AND

- **The property sought will improve that condition and/or the applicant's quality of life**



3. Insecurity of Tenure/Homelessness

Where an applicant does not have a Scottish Secure Tenancy or is living “care of” another household, Insecurity of Tenure points will be awarded.

No permanent accommodation	50 points
Insecure or private tenant	15 points
Lodger *	25 points
Hostel resident	25 points
Applicants with a written Notice to Quit	30 points
Owner occupying applicants with a repossession order	30 points
Household kept apart by their present accommodation	20 points
Adult children seeking independent accommodation for themselves and their family	25 points
Adult children seeking independent accommodation	15 points
Caravan dweller	25 points

If the applicant becomes homeless, they will be awarded 50 points. In addition, if the household is statutorily homeless, they will be referred to North Lanarkshire Council who has a legal obligation to find alternative accommodation. This is because the Association cannot offer a cast-iron guarantee that an offer will be made quickly enough, whereas the Council has a statutory duty to provide accommodation (although this could initially be temporary).

Points will only be awarded for a Notice to Quit that has been issued within the previous six months.

Lodgers will be defined as people with formal lodger’s agreement and as people sharing with friends, relations or immediate family, including separating couples and will be awarded 25 points. Adult children living in the parental home with a new family unit (partner and/or child/ren) will be awarded lodger points. Single adult children in a household seeking independent accommodation will not normally be regarded as lodgers and will be awarded 15 points.

Owner occupiers and tenants of councils, housing associations, including Abronhill Housing Association, co-operatives or partnerships will not



normally be awarded any points for their tenure. They will be entitled to points under all other categories.

Tenants of Abronhill Housing Association will be listed separately in recognition of the Association's commitment to meet the housing needs of their own tenants. Points will be awarded as appropriate under other points categories. A quota system of 15% of annual lets will operate.

Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their housing circumstances.

4. Lack of Amenities

No bath or shower	10 points
No wash hand basin	5 points
No hot water supply	15 points
No inside wc	15 points
No access to cooking facilities	10 points
No sink	10 points
No central heating system	5 points
No separate living room	5 points

The maximum number of points awarded in this category is 75.

5. Sharing Amenities

When sharing the following with another household.

Sharing a toilet	10 points
Sharing a bathroom or shower room	7 points
Sharing access to a hot water supply	10 points
Sharing access to a wash hand basin	3 points
Sharing a sink	7 points
Sharing cooking facilities	7 points
Sharing a living room	3 points

The maximum number of points awarded in this category is 47.

6. Condition of Current Property

Rising or penetrating dampness	Up to 10 points
Serious condensation or mould growth	7 points
Below Tolerable Standard	15 points



Serious general disrepair

Up to 10 points

A member of the Association's staff team will confirm the above prior to any offer being made.

7. Social/Family Need

These points are awarded when an applicant demonstrates a need to live in Abronhill either to give or to receive support. The person receiving the support will be required to produce a letter from their GP, hospital consultant, nurse, Occupational Therapist, physiotherapist, Health Visitor, or other medical professional confirming this support (this requirement is waived for applicants receiving Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance).

Social/Family Need

20 points

Health Resources

20 points

8. Vulnerability due to violence, abuse or harassment

Applicants suffering actual domestic violence will be awarded 10 points.

Applicants will be required to provide medical or police evidence of actual domestic violence.

Applicants suffering threatened violence will be awarded points to a maximum of 8 points. Corroborative evidence or written statements in support of the application will be required.

Applicants suffering sexual, racial or other abuse or harassment will be awarded points to a maximum of 10. Corroborative evidence or written statements in support of the application will be required.

Abronhill Housing Association
Unit 10, Abronhill Shopping Centre
Cumbernauld, G67 3AZ

Tel: 01236 457948 Fax: 01236 781661 Email: abronhillha@btconnect.co.uk



INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHOSE APPLICATIONS ATTRACT LESS THAN 80 POINTS

The Association is obliged by law to accept all applications. However, as applicants will be aware from the Information Sheet issued to all enquirers, the Association owns less than 220 properties. It is not possible to house all those who apply and people whose applications attract less than 80 points are unlikely to be made an offer of rehousing.

Right to Appeal ~ All applicants have the right to appeal against the points awarded. Information about the allocations policy and the points system are available, free of charge, from the office. Please tell the Association of any change in your circumstances so appropriate changes can be made to the points awarded.

Award of Points ~ The Association's waiting list is structured to meet the requirements of people in house need, so applicants with a secure home (e.g. a bought house or one rented from an accountable landlord like a council or Registered Housing Association are not awarded any points for tenure. It is felt these applicants have more opportunities to solve their housing problems than those without such security.

Quotas ~ The Association maintains a quota system under which an allocation may be made to each of the following: an Association tenant as an internal transfer, an Association tenant who needs rehoused following the breakdown of a relationship and a supported tenant of Enable or Key Housing Associations so that these organisations can meet their obligations. It is recognised that meeting the needs of Association tenants frees up a house for a waiting list applicant. The Association also has an agreement with the Council under which half of all lets are offered to the Council to help them meet their statutory obligations.

Mutual Exchanges ~ The Association operates a mutual exchange register which lists the name, address and house size of tenants who would like to swap homes with someone whose home would meet their needs. Tenants of any Council or Association can apply.

Mortgage to Rent ~ Owner occupiers who are experiencing financial difficulties may wish to enquire about a Government scheme under which they can sell their home to a housing association or council and continue to occupy it as a tenant. More, free information is available from the Association, Citizens Advice Bureau or other housing and money advice agencies.

Private lets ~ There is a shortage of socially rented properties in Cumbernauld and a number of private landlords provide accommodation to let. The website www.cumbernauldestateagents.co.uk may be useful. More information on private



letting is detailed overleaf.

PRIVATE LETTING AGENCIES

Your Move, 13A Tay Walk, Town Centre, Cumbernauld, Central Scotland, G67 1BU,
Tel 01236 780818

UK Home Lets, 130 St Vincent Street, Glasgow, G2 5HF, Tel 0871 641 9922

HomeLink, 22A Main Street, Coatbridge, ML5 3AE, Tel 01236 700248

Village Estates Cumbernauld, 2 The Wynd, The Village, Cumbernauld, G67 2SU,
Tel 01236 636101

The Property Store, 31 Dovecastle Drive, Strathaven, South Lanarkshire, ML10
6BH, Tel 01357 528942

TIPS ON RENTING IN CUMBERNAULD

- Let lots of agencies know what you are looking for so you get a really good selection to choose from.
- Inform the agent of your criteria (location, budget, furnished/ unfurnished, occupation date requirement, tenancy period and any other aspects that are important to you).
- Expect to pay a deposit of at least one months rent, possibly more. Possibly some administration charges.
- You may be required to provide references.
- Ensure you read and understand the tenancy agreement. The Citizens Advice Bureau may check this for you. Clarify what is NOT included in the rental fee, such as council tax, utility bills, ground maintenance etc.
- Examine the inventory prepared by the agent and keep a copy.
- Check restrictions, sub letting, pets etc. Can you redecorate?
- Notify defects in writing as soon as they become apparent (even if you do not want them remedied).
- Establish what is covered under maintenance (boilers, refrigerators, radiators etc).
- Usually, you will not have to deal with the landlord directly. Should you have any problems or queries, direct them to your agent first.
- Other issues to consider are: parking, neighbours, noise levels, public transfers availability etc.