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HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

ALLOCATIONS POLICY

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The information in this document is available in other languages or on tape/CD, in large print and also in Braille.

For details contact the Association on 0141 578 0200 or e-mail: admin@hillheadhousing.org

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

Section 1: INTRODUCTION

This policy describes how Hillhead Housing Association 2000 manages access to its housing list, and how it lets houses to people on the list. Copies of this policy, our procedures and a much shorter summary are all available to our customers, on request.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

This policy is important for the following reasons :

- Letting (or allocation) practice is critical in establishing and sustaining the community within Hillhead.
- The allocation policy is central to our general strategy of promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion. To do this, we give priority to people living in housing need. Housing need is explained in detail in Section 5.
- We are legally required to give reasonable preference to particular groups when allocating houses. For example, people living in overcrowded conditions or homeless people. But this policy also includes good practice issues, for instance, by taking account of applicants' preferences when offers are made.
- Allocation practice is important to maximise rental income for example by reducing numbers of empty properties. This, in turn, enables us to provide quality services to tenants and other service users.
- We are committed to developing effective consultation procedures so that tenants and other service users can participate in policy development; these commitments are explained in Section 7.

1.2 FORMAT OF THE POLICY

The policy has been developed in sectional format to improve clarity and to enable easy updating through future reviews. Appendices are also provided to give specific information to tenants and service users.

1.3 AUTHORITY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

The Management Committee of the Association gives delegated authority to the Housing Manager, to allocate housing except where Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 applies. In this case, an allocation must have the prior approval of the Committee of Management.

Notes:

Hillhead Housing Association 2000 is generally referred to as "we" throughout this policy. The word "house" is used as a general term to refer to all house types. The words "letting" and "allocation" are both general terms used to describe policy making and practices surrounding house letting.

Section 2: POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 AIMS

The main aim of this Policy is to tackle a variety of housing needs. Housing need is defined in this policy by reference to:

- legal and professional standards such as the tolerable standard that determine minimum acceptable housing conditions
- social standards that take account of individuals' preferences and aspirations and
- affordability, that is, rents that tenants can afford to pay.

We have also developed this policy to ensure that letting practice is effective, efficient, fair and accessible to all service users.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- meet relevant legal and good practice standards, for instance, the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended), the Scottish Executive Circular 1/2002 and Communities Scotland regulatory standards. (Appendix 1 details legal and good practice guidance)
- prevent and eliminate discrimination in lettings practice on grounds of sex or marital status, racial grounds, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or personal attributes, including belief or opinions.
- promote equality initiatives concerning the above grounds, for instance, developing accessible housing in consultation with disabled people. (Appendix 4)
- create balanced and sustainable communities; by "balanced communities" we mean communities that contain a broad range of households from all sections of society. This involves meeting people's preferences, whenever possible, as well as meeting their housing needs.
- determine letting priorities based on a comprehensive assessment of local housing needs and demand; this includes promoting exchanges and house transfers of existing tenants as their needs change.
- support applicants by providing good quality information and advice on housing options; and to treat information in confidence in line with our legal obligations under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- let empty houses in line with set time scales thus maximising income from rents.
- establish effective partnerships with the local authority and other local housing associations to meet housing need, for instance, to tackle homelessness.
- provide comprehensive staff training that covers law, good practice and policy and procedures.

- monitor performance through our internal performance management system. (Section 6)
- process appeals and complaints quickly and fairly. (Appendix 7)
- review this policy at least every three years (Section 7). We may require to amend this policy, though, if legal changes occur. Amendments will only be made after we consult with tenants and other service users. We will publish any significant policy amendments within six months.

2.3 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is emphasised that this policy is linked to a number of other policies, procedures and strategies. Some of these are not included in this policy as it would make this document too lengthy. Those not appended are available on request.

Examples include the:

- Appeals procedures (Appendix 7)
- Suspension policy (Appendix 3)
- Health & Access Needs Procedures
- Lettings Plan (Appendix 10)

Section 3: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

We have established this policy to meet relevant legal and good practice standards. This section summarises the main legal requirements under the following headings:

- accessing the housing list
- priority needs
- allocating houses
- information

3.1 REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The Association is committed to working in accordance with “Performance Standards for social landlords”, published by Communities Scotland.

“Performance Standards” oblige us to:

- Ensure that people have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process.
- Work with others to maximize and simplify access routes into our housing.
- Let houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need; make best use of available stock; maximise choice; and help to sustain communities.
- Ensure that our approach to letting houses is well managed, and that we achieve high standards of customer service, information and consultation.
- Periodically assess our performance in achieving these standards. In addition, we are required to report annually to Communities Scotland and are inspected by them every few years. Their findings are published and available to all interested parties.
- Apply relevant legal provisions concerning entitlement to access the housing list for asylum seekers and other foreign workers.

3.2 ACCESSING THE HOUSING LIST

Any person who is sixteen years or more is entitled to access the housing list. Application forms are available at the Association’s office; from the offices of the other Common Housing Register partners; and on online through the website XXXXXXXXXXXX.

On request, we assist applicants to complete their housing application form. Applicants are advised of this service in the information that we provide.

Our application form can be made available in other languages and formats on request, for instance, in large print. We also make available interpreting services, as required, and cover costs of providing this service.

3.3 PRIORITY NEEDS

In accordance with legal requirements, we give **reasonable preference** to applicants who are:

- homeless or threatened with homelessness
- living in housing below the tolerable standard
- living in overcrowded houses or in large families
- living in unsatisfactory housing conditions

These terms are explained in detail in Section 5. For example, the tolerable standard and overcrowding have specific legal definitions (Appendix 2).

In addition to these groups, we also recognise that policy should address other needs if it is to be effective. All the housing needs and requests that we take into account in the letting process are also detailed in section 5.

3.4 ALLOCATING HOUSES

We take no account of the following issues when letting houses:

- length of time applicants have lived in Hillhead or the wider East Dunbartonshire area
- any housing debt such as rent arrears or re-chargeable repairs, that is not owed by the applicants
- housing debt that has since been paid
- non-housing debt such as council tax owed either by applicants or another household member
- applicants' age unless we have designed or specifically adapted the houses for people of a specific age, for example, sheltered housing
- applicants' income or any property that they own; income of household members is also ignored

We also take no account of rent arrears that are less than one month's rent when allocating houses. In such cases, however, we would require applicants to make a reasonable repayment arrangement to clear the arrears.

This rule also applies in respect of housing debt that is more than one month's rent if people:

- make an agreement to repay the debt
- make payments for at least three months, and
- continue to make payments

We also ignore whether or not an applicant lives in the East Dunbartonshire area if the applicant :

- works in the area or has been offered employment in the area
- wants to move into the area to find employment and we are satisfied of this
- wants to move into the area to be near a relative or carer for support
- has special social or medical reasons for being re-housed in the area
- is subject to harassment and wants to move into the area
- runs the risk of domestic violence and so wants to move into the area

The law specifies three restrictions that are unlawful, namely requiring that:

- applications are in force for a minimum period before considering applicants for housing
- a divorce or judicial separation is obtained
- applicants no longer live with some other person

3.5 INFORMATION TO APPLICANTS

We provide tenants and other service users with advice and information about this policy on request. We also provide a brief guide to the policy with each Application for Housing sent to all applicants.

Applicants are entitled to access information that they have supplied concerning their housing application. They are also entitled to view other personal information; we can only withhold personal information on specific grounds specified in the **Data Protection Act 1998**. We will provide this information, on request, within twenty working days.

We do not, in general, charge for this service; a charge may however be applied in the case of repeated requests to access file information.

Section 4: APPLYING FOR A HOUSE

This section summarises the key issues involved in processing housing applications. We operate detailed staff procedures that cover the whole allocation process.

Section 5 details the type of allocation system we operate.

4.1 ASSESSING APPLICATIONS

Applicants for housing can access our housing list by completing the Common Housing Register application form which is sent to applicants. We offer applicants assistance to complete this form on request. We also provide interpreters or signers, as appropriate; we meet the costs of providing this service.

We assess applications within **twenty** working days of receiving the fully completed form; and send applicants details of their award of points.

Existing tenants of the Association may apply for a transfer using the same application form.

Tenants also have other legal rights. For example, they have the right to exchange houses with any other Scottish secure tenant. This is subject to receiving our approval that we cannot withhold unreasonably. Details of our exchange procedures are available on request.

Tenants may apply to have a joint tenancy with another person either staying (or intending to stay) with them. Details of our joint tenancy procedures are available on request.

Applicants may apply for particular house types. Information on house types and turnover is contained in the information leaflet "A Guide to Your Housing Application".

We also accept nominations from East Dunbartonshire Council for a proportion of houses becoming vacant each year. The proportion is generally 50% but this may vary according to the needs of the development programme.

4.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

We treat all information provided by applicants in confidence. We seek applicants' permission to discuss application details with other agencies, as appropriate. For instance, we may contact previous landlords to confirm details concerning terms of let regarding other tenancies. Personal references are not requested.

We are registered under the **Data Protection Act 1998**. Records concerning personal details of applicants and tenants are processed strictly in line with legal requirements.

4.3 ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

We are committed to promoting accessible housing. For example, we discuss particular access requirements with individual applicants to ensure that offers made are appropriate. We also consult with disabled people during the development of housing projects, including making reasonable adjustments to create accessible houses.

4.4 APPLICATION DETAILS

We check application details before offers are made to confirm information concerning applicants' housing needs and preferences. This may include carrying out home visits and seeking confirmation of details from other landlords.

Visits may also be carried out by other landlords, for example, visiting applicants living outwith the East Dunbartonshire area.

We notify applicants of the visit in advance; contact is made by phone or in writing. When visiting applicants, our staff follow clear procedures to ensure respect for applicants' privacy and home. This is important to meet our commitments under the Human Rights Act 1998.

The purpose of the home visit is simply to confirm details provided in the application form. If details are accurate, we make the offer. If details seem to be inaccurate, we ask applicants to clarify matters within three working days.

If applicants do not provide details, we may withdraw the offer. The application may also be deferred; details of when we defer applications are contained in our suspension procedures.

4.5 APPLICANT'S CONDUCT

We may withhold offers of housing if applicants **deliberately** worsen their housing situation to gain priority. In such cases, applications may be suspended in line with the principles of our suspension procedures. Details of this policy are available on request.

We may also suspend applications on grounds of inappropriate conduct. For example, applicants may have a history of serious anti-social behaviour that has breached existing tenancy conditions or other law. In line with good practice, we seek to minimise numbers of suspensions and monitor them on a regular basis.

4.6 NUMBER OF OFFERS

We do not set a maximum number of offers that may be made to an applicant. When a house is refused, we ask for a reason and note this.

However, in order to avoid delays in letting, where an applicant has refused three offers of suitable housing, we will contact them to discuss these reasons and, if necessary, amend the

information on the application form to reflect, more closely, the applicants choices.

If offers on particular houses are refused on three occasions, we investigate reasons for refusal before making further offers. We then implement appropriate measures to let the houses in question as quickly as possible. This may include advertising or contacting several applicants who have expressed interest.

4.7 CHOICE OF AREAS AND HOUSE TYPES

We have divided the Hillhead area into six letting areas which reflect both geography and demand. This information is provided on the Housing Application Form to enable applicants to select their areas of choice.

Applicants may apply for as few or as many of these areas as they wish. They may also select their preferred house types. Applicants may also change their choice of area and house type at any time.

We offer appointments to discuss housing applications and to give advice on housing options. Housing staff explain clearly about the nature of lettings process and that the housing list changes continuously.

4.8 APPLICATIONS AND HOUSE SIZE

The following rules concerning the size of house for which applicants may apply are outlined below.

Applicants may apply for a house that is one bedroom larger than needed. They will, however, only be considered for such housing after addressing the needs of other applicants who require the larger housing.

In this policy, a separate bedroom is required for:

- each couple (of the same or opposite sex)
- each person aged 14 or over
- two children under 8 irrespective of sex
- children of the opposite sex aged 8 or over
- any other remaining child

Bedrooms under 110 sq. feet in area (approx. 10 sq. metres) will be classified as single bedrooms for one occupant only. Bedrooms under 50 sq. feet are not classified as bedrooms.

4.9 REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

We carry out annual reviews of applications based on the month that the application was registered. This is essential to ensure that housing list information is accurate so that we minimise numbers of refusals.

We request applicants to notify us within **ten** working days whether or not they want to remain on the housing list. Applicants are advised of this process when they complete their application form. Applicants also acknowledge in this form that applications may be deleted if they fail to respond to the review. We also issue one reminder letter giving applicants a further **ten** working days to confirm if they want to remain on the list.

4.10 CONDITIONS OF LET

We explain tenants' rights in detail when tenants sign their tenancy agreement. This includes information concerning rules that apply to transfers and mutual exchanges. This reflects our general commitment to promoting awareness of tenants' rights. We also use this meeting to identify any particular household needs. For instance, we ask tenants whether they have any accessibility requirements such as receiving information in large print.

Section 5: LETTING HOUSES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In letting houses, we operate a points system involving a number of different groups. This is known as a groups plus points system. This system is essential for three reasons :

- It enables us to meet our legal obligations to give reasonable preference to a range of housing needs. These are set out in Section 3.
- It promotes our objective of creating a balanced community mix. For example, we rehouse a range of households including single people, sole parents and family households. We also encourage applications from a range of groups to promote inclusive communities, for example, applications from disabled people and applications from black and minority ethnic communities.

We set a lettings target each year for the individual groups. This target is subject to ongoing review as identified needs change. Targets also take account of the choices and aspirations of individual applicants.

- It meets good practice guidance as this approach is recommended in areas with high levels of housing need. It enables us, for example, to address housing needs other than the limited range of reasonable preference groups covered in law.

The Groups and Points system is described in detail below.

5.2 HOUSING GROUPS AND POINTS

It is essential to include the reasonable preference groups in our policy. It is important, too, to meet good practice requirements by ensuring that our allocation policy addresses local issues.

For these reasons, then, we have established three main groups. Applicants will be placed in only one group based on the one that has the highest share or target of lets

The groups along with the needs that they cover are as follows:

5.2.1 Legal Priority Group

(a) **Housing below the tolerable standard** (for definition, see Appendix 2)

A house is below the tolerable standard if it fails to meet any one of the above elements.

We award applicants living in housing below the tolerable standard **sixty points**.
Verification required : Written evidence to confirm that housing is below the tolerable standard. For example, certificates from Environmental or Building Control Services.

If applicants' homes are subject to demolition or closing orders, they receive another **seventy five points** from the date the order applies.

Verification required : A copy of the formal notification of demolition or closing order

(b) Accessibility - High

Accessibility covers housing that is not adequate to meet people's housing needs due to severe access and mobility difficulties. Anyone in the household may be considered for accessibility points.

There are two levels of assessment of applications with accessibility needs. Those with the most severe access needs will be awarded **one hundred points** and will be placed in the priority housing group.

Those with the lower level of accessibility needs will be placed in the Local or Outwith Needs Group, as appropriate. See Section 5.2.2 or 5.2.3.

Additional household members who also have accessibility needs, receive half of the level of points they would be entitled to if it was the first award within the household. For example, they would receive **fifty** or **fifteen** extra **points**.

Applications are generally assessed by housing staff. Where a complex or specialist assessment is required or where there is a request either from a member of staff or applicant for an independent assessment, this can be carried out by the Clinical Medical Officer of the Greater Glasgow Health Board, as required.

Applicants with the same points total are prioritised by **date of application**.

Verification required : From Health & Access Needs Assessment Form or from an independent assessment

(c) Legal Overcrowding

We use two standards to assess levels of overcrowding. The first standard is the legal or statutory overcrowding standard. This meets with our legal obligations to address problems of overcrowding.

The legal standard assesses overcrowding by reference to either the room or space standard. The space standard is broken when the number of people living in a house exceeds the permitted number. This takes account of both numbers of rooms and the floor area of individual rooms.

The legal definitions of overcrowding are given in Appendix 2

We award legally overcrowded households **one hundred** points; no further overcrowding points are given. Priority among applicants is decided by date order.

The second overcrowding group is found in the Local Needs Group section 5.2.6(d)(iii).

Verification required : Confirmation of rooms/floor areas from existing landlord. If there is no other way of obtaining the information, then a visit may be required to verify the floor area.

(d) Homeless People and Those Threatened with Homelessness

At present, there is a legal definition of homelessness which specifies particular groups of applicants who are legally entitled to be accommodated. The statutory responsibility for discharging this legal duty lies with the local authority.

There is however, a legal duty contained within the Housing Scotland Act (2001), for Housing Associations to assist the local authority in the discharge of its duties by accepting homeless referrals under Section 5 of the Act.

The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 extends the scope of the legislation over a period of time until 2012 when all unintentionally homeless persons will be entitled to be accommodated.

Broadly speaking, homeless applicants are those who have no accommodation which they have a legal entitlement to occupy. For the purposes of this policy, those who are living in the family home will be considered to have this legal entitlement.

The legal definition of being threatened with homelessness means likely to become homeless within **two** months. This will include some who live in the family home where their occupation of it is imminently under threat; and persons in other types of insecure accommodation such as short assured tenancies which are being terminated.

Although the Association does not have the statutory responsibility for accommodating homeless people or those threatened with homelessness, except through its duty to assist under Section 5 of the above-mentioned Act, in terms of good practice, it does have a responsibility to try to alleviate and prevent homelessness through its Allocations Policy.

For this reason therefore, a proportion of houses being let will be to referrals from the local authority of people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. There will also be a proportion of lets to others from the Association's own Housing List, who are threatened with homelessness. This second group will be dealt with under the Local Needs Housing Group below.

Verification required : A nomination from EDC

5.2.2 Local Needs Group:

Local needs cover a wide range of needs concerned with letting houses. These reflect local housing need issues, as well as good practice guidance. For example, alleviating underoccupation of the housing stock to meet the needs of large families or households, who may be presently overcrowded.

(a) Insecurity of Tenure

Insecurity of tenure covers applicants in the following six groups:

- people moving among relatives and friends
- people threatened with homelessness (more than 2 months)
- Her Majesty's service personnel
- private sector applicants
- tied tenants in East Dunbartonshire

Forty points are awarded to all of the categories above. In the case of applicants becoming homeless before they are rehoused, they will be referred to the local authority to be dealt with through its homelessness policy.

(i) People moving among relatives and friends

This covers applicants who move frequently among relatives and friends who do not want to be rehoused as homeless applicants. This includes applicants who move between at least two addresses each year.

Verification required : Applicants are required to supply details of all temporary addresses in support of their claim. At least two temporary addresses must be supplied and these will be checked out to establish eligibility. At the pre-allocation visit, the temporary nature of the accommodation will be confirmed.

(ii) People threatened with homelessness in more than two months

This covers applicants asked to leave accommodation by relatives or friends but where they are allowed to stay for up to a further twelve months.

Verification required : Confirmation from householder that the applicant cannot continue to reside at present address and must leave within 12 months.

(iii) Her Majesty's Service Personnel

This covers HM Armed Forces personnel who have previously lived in East Dunbartonshire **immediately** before joining the Armed Forces. All other Services Personnel wishing to apply for a house are dealt with in line with the general policy provisions.

Members of the armed forces are encouraged to make an application as soon as possible before their discharge. Applications will normally be deferred during periods of service.

Verification required : Written confirmation of discharge.

(iv) Private Sector

This covers :

- tenants living in the private rented sector whose tenancy is ending. For example, a short assured tenancy where the landlord has followed proper notice procedures and their previous tenancy was conducted satisfactorily.

If tenancies are ended because of breach of tenancy conditions, we apply our general suspension policy rules.

- Owner occupiers who face repossession actions may also be in a position of insecurity. Issues that we consider are the date of repossession or whether possession actions have been suspended.

Applicants who are unable to afford their rents or mortgages may qualify for insecurity points; affordability of payments is an important element of housing need. (See section 2.1)

Applicants will receive the points award from the date they are given formal notification of their tenancy ending. In the case of financial difficulties, points are awarded when details are confirmed.

Verification required : Copy of formal notification of the landlord ending the tenancy or of mortgage default; or evidence of rent/mortgage payments and household income which confirm that it is unaffordable to the applicant household.

(v) Tied Tenants in East Dunbartonshire

This covers tenants who **must** occupy accommodation in the East Dunbartonshire area as part of their employment duties.

Applicants should advise us formally of the tenancy ending by giving us reasonable notice. This should be at least **one year** if any prospect of rehousing is to be possible. It is likely that where notice of less than one year is given then a homeless application may have to be activated.

Points are awarded under this category when tenancies are being ended by the employer, for example, on grounds of retiral. It does not include ending of tenancies on voluntary grounds.

Verification required : written confirmation from employers that the tenancy is ending.

(b) Underoccupation

The points award is based on the following standard :

- one bedroom is required for couples of the same or opposite sex.
- one bedroom is required for each person of fourteen and over
- one bedroom is required for two children (of the opposite sex) under eight
- one bedroom is required for two children (of the same sex) under fourteen
- one bedroom is required for each single person

A standard **Fifteen** Points are awarded to all tenants and owners where there are two or more rooms in addition to the household's needs.

For tenants of the Association and the other Common Housing Register partners in East Dunbartonshire, the policy on underoccupation aims make the best use of our housing stock, by releasing housing which is underoccupied and in very short supply, in order to meet the housing needs of larger households.

Only high demand housing will be considered for an award of points under this policy. For the Association's purposes this will be three or four bedroomed houses. Tenement and cottage flats are excluded from this policy.

For the each additional room in excess of the household's needs, **Twenty Points** per room will be awarded in addition to the **Fifteen Points** awarded to all tenants and owners who are underoccupied by two rooms or more.

Applicants may apply to move to a house that has less bedrooms than their present house but more than strictly required by the above standard. Applicants may, therefore, move to a house that may still be under-occupied but the under-occupation is less.

Where a house was underoccupied at the point of allocation, no points will be awarded for underoccupation, for one year, except in the following circumstances :

- the level of underoccupation has increased since the allocation
- there are other housing needs factors which were not present at the time of allocation

(c) Sharing Amenities

This section applies to applicants who share amenities with other people not of their household. A household means any person or persons wanting to live on their own; this includes existing family members who now want to live on their own. Such family members may have always lived in the house, or moved in temporarily.

The policy covers all housing applicants who are staying with family or friends in either the private or public sectors.

Applicants who share amenities with other members of their household do not receive sharing amenities points; nor does it apply where tenants have sublet part of their property or taken in lodgers.

For each amenity shared we award **five points**. Amenities for which points are awarded are as follows:

- bath or shower
- inside toilet
- kitchen

If a bedroom is shared, points may also be awarded for overcrowding.

In the case of applicants living in bedsits or houses in multiple occupation, an award of **ten points** is made in recognition that householders have no room exclusively used as a bedroom or are sharing other communal facilities with strangers.

(d) Unsatisfactory Housing

(i) House Condition

We award points to applicants if their house fails to meet reasonable standards other than the tolerable standard. For example, houses may be in a state of disrepair but not be below the tolerable standard.

The qualification for points under this category, based on elements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, is outlined at appendix 5.

Applicants whose housing fails to meet a reasonable standard receive a total of **forty points**.

(ii) Accessibility – Medium Priority

Housing applicants living in accommodation considered unsatisfactory for accessibility reasons in the medium to longer term are awarded **thirty points**.

Verification required : From Health & Access Needs Assessment

(iii) Overcrowding

The second category of overcrowding that we address is overcrowding involving families living in accommodation that is too small for their needs. Although such

families are **not** legally overcrowded, they are overcrowded when measured against modern acceptable levels of occupancy.

This covers any accommodation that is not large enough for the household in question and therefore, single people and couples may qualify under this second category. For example, a one apartment or bed-sit is deemed as being too small for couples. Couples in this policy includes same sex partners.

We assess each application against a minimum acceptable standard. This standard assesses overcrowding in relation to numbers of bedrooms needed. Unlike the legal standard, it excludes the living room from the calculation.

The standard that we apply is as follows:

Bedrooms Required

Each couple (of same or opposite sex)*	One
Adult and child	Two
Two people of same sex (fourteen or over)	Two
Two children of same sex (under fourteen)*	One
Two children of different sex (seven or less)*	One
Two children of different sex (eight or more)	Two

Bedrooms under 110 sq. ft. (approx. 10 sq. metres), will be classified as single bedrooms and points will be awarded where these are occupied by two or more persons. Bedrooms under 50 sq. ft. are not counted as habitable rooms.

We award **ten points** for each additional bedroom required by households. A household means any person(s) wanting to live separately.

Notes:

In some cases, additional rooms may be required on medical grounds. Applicants will be requested to provide written details where this applies.

Members of the applicant's household who are **temporarily** absent are taken into account when assessing levels of overcrowding and awarding points. The applicant may be requested to confirm that the house is the person's only or principal home.

If families are split, children are considered to be part of the household when they reside there for **at least three and a half** days each week.

Since this represents joint or majority custody, the Association will require to have evidence of this in the form of a Court order, legal agreement, confirmation from an official body such as the Social Work Department or evidence of child benefit

payments; or a letter from the other parent where the agreement is informal.

Verification required : From Housing Application form confirmed at pre-allocation visit

(e) Families and Social

Housing need is often considered against standards that detail deficiencies such as housing below the tolerable standard. This approach emphasises the **physical defects** of housing standards. As indicated in paragraph 2.1, though, we recognise that housing need also involves other needs such as personal aspirations and social or support needs. This section of the policy, therefore, outlines the range of factors that attract points for other reasons.

(i) Social Needs

In certain cases, it is important to give rehousing priority to applicants who are victims of abuse, discrimination, harassment or anti-social behaviour. In these situations, the case is referred to the Housing Manager, who has delegated authority to make the award of points.

Discrimination or harassment may be on grounds of sex or marital status, racial grounds, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or personal attributes, including belief or opinions.

If applicants wish to live in East Dunbartonshire for certain reasons defined in law, we ignore whether they live in the area. Applicants living both within and outwith East Dunbartonshire qualify for this category. These are social reasons, including fleeing harassment and domestic violence situations. (Section 5.1.2)

Applicants subject to discrimination, harassment, domestic abuse, or other anti-social behaviour should be advised to make a Homeless claim. Alternatively, for the Association's own tenants, consideration will be given to moving the applicant household to similar accommodation within Hillhead if this would resolve the problem. The Housing Manager will have discretion to decide where this is appropriate and on the type of alternative housing to be offered.

Verification required : Evidence of discrimination or harassment from at least **one** appropriate source, such as the police, social work, the Antisocial Behaviour section or TACT (Tackling Anti-social behaviour and Conflict Team), will be required if available. In cases of domestic violence, this may not be possible.

(ii) Mobility Schemes

Applicants may apply to be rehoused in Hillhead under a recognised Mobility scheme. Applicants in this group form a separate group, within the allocation process, based on **date of application** but do not receive an award of points.

(iii) Housing Support

We try to assist with rehousing of people with housing support needs. For example, we work with social work and health departments to address the needs of people rehoused through community care programmes.

Groups and/or Points are awarded as follows :

- Cases which have been community care assessed or where a housing support package is available will be awarded **ninety points**.
- Cases where confirmation is available from a health or professional source that support is needed, but it falls short of an available care package being in place, will be awarded **thirty points**.
- Applicants wanting to move into the area to be nearer a relative or carer for support and applicants with particular social or medical reasons for needing to be housed in the area, will not be awarded additional points, but will be held in the Local Applicant Group under **date of application**.

Verification required : Confirmation of the social or medical reasons from health care professionals; social work or other recognised agency and confirmation of support being provided by the support provider.

(iv) Young People – leaving care

Supported Accommodation Projects

Young people find it increasingly difficult to access public sector housing. We work with social work and health departments to address the needs of young people requiring rehousing, normally through a support package being put in place.

Young people who have had a housing support assessment and have been identified as being able to sustain a tenancy, with or without support, will be given a degree of priority. Applicants who co-operate with the through-care team and applicants who satisfactorily progress through the Canal Project will be awarded **ninety points** for re-housing. All other young people who undertake a housing support assessment will be awarded **thirty points**.

Any young person who does not accept the housing support, or required support, from health and social work/housing teams will be placed either in the Insecurity of Tenure or Sharing Amenities categories. In cases that require significant

housing support, in order for a tenancy to be sustained, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy may be offered which will link to an appropriate support package being in place.

(v) Families' Needs

We recognise a number of other needs relevant to the East Dunbartonshire council context.

These are discussed under the following headings:

- families with children living in common entry flats
- families without gardens
- schooling

Families with Children living in Common Entry Flats

Families with children under fourteen are considered to have access difficulties where they have to use external stairs to access their flat at, or above, the first floor. For example, parents having to take prams and supervise children upstairs.

We award points as follows subject to a maximum level of **eighteen points**:

Floor Level	Points
Living on first floor	Three
For each floor above first	Five

To obtain points under this category, applicants must move to accommodation that is more accessible. For example, moving from a top floor flat to a first or ground floor flat.

Families without Gardens

In recognition of the importance of gardens for families with children, we award points to families without gardens. This includes all households without exclusive use of garden areas.

We award **ten points** under this category to families with children under fourteen.

Schooling

Applicants whose children have specific learning support needs that are only met by particular educational establishments will be considered for housing nearer such schools.

We award **twenty points** for applicants whose children require specific learning support.

(f) Preference

This refers to applicants who live within Hillhead and have no points but who have expressed a personal preference for wanting to move to another type of house in Hillhead. Both housing list and transfer applicants are included in this category. Although such applicants have no priority housing need, it is important to record all preferences for a move, as this can influence future housing development opportunities.

We decide priority among applicants based on **date of application**.

(g) Management and Economic Grounds

It is essential that the allocation policy includes discretion and is not based simply on inflexible procedures. Indeed, avoiding "blanket policies" is important to meet legal requirements. Discretion, on the other hand, must be subject to detailed monitoring in the interests of public accountability.

We have established procedures for addressing management issues. For example, we monitor letting trends to evaluate whether any areas are becoming difficult to let. In such cases, we would consider implementing a management initiative called a lettings initiative to reduce numbers of empty housing. **See Appendix 6** - Management Grounds for further information.

In developing such initiatives, we will give reasonable preference to specific groups in accordance with law. We may, however, modify existing practice to take account of particular issues. For instance, restricting lets to households with children, if child density is at present extremely high.

(i) Employment

Applicants who do not reside in East Dunbartonshire but work here are placed in a group, within management and economic grounds, if moving to the area means they will be closer to their place of employment. Key incoming workers are also placed in this category.

We set an annual target of applicants who may be rehoused under this category.

A key worker is someone who is essential to the operation of council services,

industry or commerce and their knowledge and skills are in scarce supply. Cases will be considered by the Housing Manager.

(ii) Split up Families

Split up families where two social rented properties are returned in exchange for one similar or larger property. A target will be set where such circumstances are identified.

(iii) Management Transfers

Management transfer initiatives may be used to make best use of the stock such as reducing underoccupation thereby releasing houses to meet the needs of larger households. This also helps to meet our legal obligation to give reasonable preference to meeting the housing needs of large families.

We may promote transfers to release houses that have been designed or adapted to meet the needs of disabled people.

Tenants who are experiencing difficulties in their present tenancy which cannot be resolved, may be offered a transfer to housing which is broadly similar to their existing home.

Applicants under Management and Economic grounds will receive no points but will be held in **date of application**.

Further management procedures are outlined at **Appendix 6** to address the above types of scenarios.

5.2.3 Other Needs Group :

- outwith the area
- aspirational
- people living in caravans

(a) Outwith Needs

The Outwith Needs group covers applicants who have housing needs but who live outwith the East Dunbartonshire area. This group does not include applicants who live outside the area who have one of the local connections mentioned in 5.1.2.

Applicants in this group are held in points order but their prospects of rehousing are restricted due to the high levels of demand from the priority and local needs groups.

(b) Aspirational Needs

This refers to applicants who live outside East Dunbartonshire and have no points but who have expressed personal reasons or preferences for wanting to live here.

Examples of people in this category, based on current information, are those living in neighbouring areas wishing to move or for reasons such as accessing local schools or good quality housing.

We decide priority among applicants based on **date of application**, however their prospects of rehousing are very restricted due to the high levels of demand from priority and local needs groups as well as people with housing needs wishing to move into East Dunbartonshire.

(c) People Living in Caravans

This covers people who live in permanent caravans and those living in mobile or touring caravans within East Dunbartonshire. For applicants to be considered under this category, they should be living in East Dunbartonshire for at least **six months** continuously.

Caravan dwellers with no site to pitch their caravan are treated as homeless people. East Dunbartonshire Council have a separate policy and provision for gypsy travellers and enquiries regarding siting of their caravans should be referred to them.

Applicants living in mobile or touring caravans, who have not been permanently resident in East Dunbartonshire for **six months** continuously, will be assessed the same way as applications received from people without local residence connections.

5.2.4 Placing applicants in groups

We assess applications received and the computer system places applicants in the appropriate groups.

We set targets concerning the number of houses to be allocated to each group. Targets are reviewed on an ongoing basis to take account of statutory obligations, local housing needs and the number of registered housing applications in each group.

We use time on the list (**date of application**) to decide priority between applicants whose points totals are the same within the same group.

We provide applicants with advice about their housing options based on local factors such as turnover of houses and types of houses throughout the council area.

It is also emphasised that allocation of houses does not depend simply on the numbers of points awarded. An award of points does not guarantee an applicant of ever being re-housed. For example, having less points in a particular group may not affect prospects of rehousing if applicants with more points have strict rehousing preferences. Again, rehousing may occur more quickly for certain groups because the number of lets awarded to these groups are higher (higher target of lets).

The points awarded for all elements of need are shown, for easy reference, in the Points Ready Reckoner (see Appendix 9). Applications may be suspended for a number of reasons; these are detailed in our suspension procedures (see Appendix 3).

Section 6: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

We recognise the importance of monitoring this policy to ensure that objectives are met. The following information is published and reported to the Management Committee on a half yearly basis. It can also be viewed by any interested persons at the Association's office.

We monitor numbers of suspensions and reasons for suspensions.

6.1 ISSUES MONITORED

Issues that we monitor include the two main areas covered under the Communities Scotland regulatory framework, namely access to the list and lettings made. Critically, monitoring also includes important information on equal opportunities.

6.1.2 Housing Applications

- number of new applications received, including by factors relating to age, disability, ethnicity and gender
- number and percentage of applicants processed and acknowledged within target time limits

6.1.3 Reviewing the Housing List

- number and percentage of applications reviewed
- number and percentage of applications deleted

6.1.4 Housing Allocations

- applicants rehoused by group, including by factors relating to age, disability, ethnicity and gender.

6.1.5 Local Authority Nominations

- number of successful nominations, that is, individuals housed, by factors relating to age, disability, ethnicity and gender.

6.1.6 Putting Things Right

- number of appeals submitted and outcomes, including gathering information on reasons for appeal; this also considers qualitative issues such as quality of advice provision to service users.
- number of complaints submitted and outcomes, including gathering information on reasons for complaints.

- key allocation issues raised through our Tenant Satisfaction surveys and actions taken in response.

6.2 EQUALITY INITIATIVES

In order to promote our equality objectives, we monitor accessibility issues concerning the housing stock. For example, we monitor demand for housing from disabled people and consult with them on appropriate adjustments to include in our development and modernisation programmes.

We monitor how quickly we let stock that is designed or adapted to meet the housing needs of particular groups. For instance, housing stock designed for older people.

We implement positive action programmes to encourage people to apply for housing where particular groups are under-represented in our housing stock. For example, we encourage applications from people living in black and minority ethnic communities.

Applicants are asked to complete a separate monitoring sheet to allow us to gather the relevant information. This information is used to ensure that we comply with our legal obligations to promote equality and prevent discrimination.

Section 7: CONSULTATION AND REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three years or as otherwise agreed with tenants and other service users through our tenant participation strategy. Targets are reviewed yearly based on an assessment of letting trends.

We use the following methods as part of our consultation and review procedures:

- performance statistics produced on a bi-monthly basis, including targets.
- reports to Committee every six months.
- Tenant consultation on a yearly basis. This is done using a variety of methods, including personal contact, questionnaires, satisfaction surveys, Tenant Events and through the Tenants newsletter. This process involves both individual tenants, as well as tenant organisations.

Both the performance statistics and Committee reports are available at the Association's office.

The performance indicators are analysed to establish if objectives and local needs are being met; if not, recommended changes to policy will be brought forward and implemented after consultation with tenants and other service users.

APPENDICES

Points Ready Reckoner

- Appendix 1: Law and Good Practice**
- Appendix 2: Standards**
- Appendix 3: Suspension Policy**
- Appendix 4: Positive Action Initiatives**
- Appendix 5: House Condition**
- Appendix 6: Management Grounds**
- Appendix 7: Appeal and Complaints**
- Appendix 8: General Rules for the Allocation of Houses**
- Appendix 9: Points Ready Reckoner**
- Appendix 10: The Lettings Plan**

APPENDIX 1 : LAW AND GOOD PRACTICE

This section summarises the main law and good practice guidance that regulates allocation practice. It is not intended as a precise statement of the law.

LAW

Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended)

Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended)

Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)

Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)

Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Human Rights Act 1998

Scotland Act 1998

Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act 2001

GOOD PRACTICE

SEDD Circular 1/2002: Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Housing Lists and Allocations, Scottish Executive

Performance Standards for social landlords and homelessness functions, COSLA/Communities Scotland/ SFHA, 2001.

Chartered Institute of Housing: Standards.

SFHA/Communities Scotland: Raising Standards.

APPENDIX 2 : LEGAL STANDARDS

Below Tolerable Standard (BTS) and Overcrowding

SUB-STANDARD HOUSES – The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 - PART IV Sections 85 - 86

85 - (1) It shall be the duty of every local authority to secure that all houses in their district which do not meet the tolerable standard are closed, demolished or brought up to the tolerable standard within such period as is reasonable in all the circumstances.

(2) In determining what period is reasonable for the purposes of subsection (1), regard shall be had to alternative housing accommodation likely to be available for any persons who may be displaced from houses as a result of any action proposed by the local authority in pursuance of that subsection.

(3) Every local authority shall from time to time cause to be made such a survey or inspection of their district as may be necessary for the performance of the duty imposed on them by subsection (1) or for the purpose of ascertaining the availability of alternative housing accommodation.

86 - (1) Subject to subsection (2), a house meets the tolerable standard for the purposes of this Act if the house:-

- (a) is structurally stable;
- (b) is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp;
- (c) has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating;
- (d) has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house;
- (e) has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house;
- (f) has a water closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house;
- (g) has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water
- (h) has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house;
- (i) has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings;

and any reference to a house not meeting the tolerable standard or being brought up to the tolerable standard shall be construed accordingly.

OVERCROWDING - The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 Part VII Sections 135 - 137

Based on :

- **Room Standard**

Contravened where “two persons of opposite sexes who are not...husband/wife must sleep in same room” **BUT**

- a) children under 10 left out of account
- b) a room is a bedroom or a living room

- **Space Standard**

Contravened where the number of persons sleeping in a house exceeds the permitted number and floor area of “sleeping rooms” **BUT**

- a) no account of a child under 1; and child 1-10 = ½ unit
- b) room is a bedroom or living room

Table 1

Number of Rooms	Number of Persons
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7½
5 or more	2 for each room

Table 2

Floor Area of Room	Number of Persons
110 sq ft. or >	2
90sq ft. & < 110 sq ft.	1½
70 sq ft. & < 90 sq ft.	1
50 sq ft. & < 70 sq ft.	½
Less than 50 sq ft.	Does not count as a habitable room

A certificate from the Local Authority stating the number and floor area of rooms in a house is evidence for this purpose.

Note - no noted changes in 2001 Act.

APPENDIX 3 : SUSPENSION POLICY

In accordance with the provisions of the Housing Scotland Act (2001) the Association will only suspend applications for housing in certain circumstances as follows :

- where an applicant has rent arrears or other tenancy related debts (current or former tenancies) of the equivalent of one or more month's rent and has not made an arrangement to repay which has been kept to for a period of three months or more
- where there is a current Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) against the tenant or a member of their household
- where an applicant has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances in order to gain points or priority for rehousing eg. where they have had a secure tenancy which they gave up voluntarily **without good reason** (domestic violence; repeated harassment; or targeted anti-social behaviour would be good reasons)
- where an applicant has wilfully given false or misleading information on their application for housing
- where an applicant has been legally evicted from previous accommodation
- where an applicant is an asylum seeker or illegal immigrant who is awaiting a decision from the Home Office on their right to remain in the UK
- where an applicant has identified support needs which they have refused
- where an applicant or a member of their household has a tenancy related conviction eg. drug dealing, prostitution, fire-raising
- where an applicant or member of their household has a proven history of anti-social behaviour, harassment of neighbours or others in the community; violence to staff members; or damage to property
- where a tenant takes in an unauthorised lodger
- where a tenant has applied to buy their home

Applications should only be suspended for limited periods of time. A decision to suspend must be notified to the applicant with a timescale and any conditions for lifting it. **This timescale should be reasonable in the circumstances.**

Suspensions for asylum seekers should reflect the timescale for assessment of their applications to remain in the UK. Suspensions for rent arrears or tenancy related debts should be lifted whenever the initial criteria for suspension no longer applies or after the debt is five years old; otherwise, most other suspended applications should be for a **maximum** of one year unless the behaviour which led to the suspension has continued.

Where the period of initial suspension notified to the applicant has been reached, they should be contacted and advised of whether it has now been lifted, or if not, the reasons for this and a further timescale for it to be considered again.

Suspended applicants have the right to appeal the suspension through the Association's Appeals procedures

APPENDIX 4 : POSITIVE ACTION INITIATIVES

Positive action is lawful and, indeed, is encouraged both by law and good practice guidance. Positive action involves initiatives that aim to redress discrimination that has affected particular groups in society, for example, disabled people or people from black and minority ethnic groups.

This section outlines the particular positive action initiatives that we have established and/or are considering.

Examples

- Open days for applicants from disadvantaged groups at the allocation policy review stage
- Open days for equality groups
- Crystal marking. The Crystal Mark is awarded by the Plain English Campaign to signify that documentation is written clearly and in plain language;
- Publication of policy in different formats and languages, at least in summary leaflets;
- Establishing interpreting service links and procedures.

APPENDIX 5 : House Condition

ELEMENT OF THE SHQS * TO ACTIVATE CONDITION	CONFIRMATION
<p><i>Free from serious disrepair</i></p> <p>House fails if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> one of the primary elements (wall structures, foundations etc.) requires repair or replacement of more than 20%; or<input type="checkbox"/> two or more of the secondary elements (external wall finishes, windows, doors, damp proof course etc.) requires repair or replacement of more than 20%	<p>A survey by a qualified surveyor would be required confirming that serious disrepair exists before a points award is activated.</p>

* **Scottish Housing Quality Standard**

Appendix 6: MANAGEMENT GROUNDS

SPECIAL CASES

The Management Committee may award urgent housing priority in cases where circumstances are unique or so severe as to merit urgent special attention.

Where such a case has been identified, the Housing Manager will prepare a factual in-depth report, stating clearly the grounds for urgent housing priority. The applicant will not be named in the report.

Where the Management Committee decides that urgent rehousing priority is merited, the application may be placed in the Priority Group Category or near the top of the most appropriate Local Needs Category, subject to any conditions appropriate to the case being stipulated.

Only one offer of accommodation will be made to recipients of Special Case status.

DISCRETION TO DEPART FROM THE NORMAL ALLOCATIONS POLICY

The following circumstances may result in a departure from the normal operation of the allocations policy:-

In order to achieve effective management of the housing stock, the Housing Manager may exercise discretion in the following circumstances. Any policy amendments will be recommended as necessary. Reasons for allocations will be reported on a bi-monthly basis.

BEST USE OF STOCK

The Housing Manager may exercise discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to transfer a customer outwith the principles of this code in order to achieve a vacant dwelling. Some examples would be (these are not exhaustive) :

- where an underoccupying tenant occupies a high demand house but the target lets for this group has already been reached; or where there are others in the group with more points but whose houses are less in demand.
- where a tenant is occupying a house which is needed for a household in the priority rehousing group eg. because they have high accessibility needs
- where an application has been granted priority and the higher level of accessibility points; or the lower level of accessibility points, but it is clear that the prescribed house type is unlikely to become available. A house which better suits the applicant's needs than the present accommodation may be considered.

- where the applicant is currently occupying a 3 apartment property or smaller and needs a 5 apt. property or larger, and this is unlikely to become available, they may be offered a 4 apartment in order to reduce the levels of overcrowding.

PROPERTIES WHERE 3 OR MORE OFFERS HAVE BEEN REFUSED

Where a house has been offered to 3 eligible applicants and all 3 have either refused the offer or failed to respond to it, the Housing Manager may authorise offering the property to any customer with a valid application who is interested.

This will generally only be considered in cases where a property is of lower demand, and where continuing to make offers based on the existing queues, is judged unlikely to quickly result in a successful outcome.

In these circumstances, the property may be offered to customers who have noted an interest in specific properties on their housing application and/or to applicants gathered from further down the queue.

Where there is more than one such applicant, offers will reflect each applicant's comparative points and priorities. All other parts of the allocation policy will be adhered to strictly in this process.

LOCAL LETTINGS INITIATIVES

The Association may depart from the allocations policy where a formally documented local lettings initiative has been established.

Appendix 7: APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

This section summarises our procedures for appeals and complaints. Appeals and complaints differ in nature as is now explained.

7.1 Appeals

Hillhead tenants and service users may appeal any decision relating to this policy; this covers admission to the list; the award of points; and actual house letting. Appeals may be raised, for example, if an applicant for housing believes that he or she has received insufficient points as determined by allocation policy principles.

There is a three stage appeals procedure.

7.1.2 Review by the Housing Manager

Following the receipt of an allocation decision, an applicant may appeal against our decision and ask for it to be reviewed. The review request must be in writing from the applicant or a third party acting on their behalf.

The appeal should be submitted **within twenty one days** of notification of our original decision. This time scale is based on the statutory time scale that applies in the case of homelessness appeals.

On request, we can assist the applicant to lodge their request. For example, a member of staff not involved with the case can compile basic case details and reasons for the appeal. Alternatively, a voluntary organisation such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) could submit an appeal on the applicants behalf.

This is then referred to the Housing Manager.

The Housing Manager will investigate the circumstances of the appeal **within ten working days** of its receipt and will write to the applicant with the outcome of their findings. If the applicant is still not entirely satisfied, then the appeal will progress to the Director.

7.1.3 Review by the Director

The Director will carry out an investigation and respond within a further ten working days.

If this still fails to resolve the situation to the satisfaction of the applicant, the case will proceed to a hearing by the Management Committee.

7.1.3 Appeal Hearing

An appeal hearing date will be set between **two to six** weeks from the date of notification by the applicant that they wish to have an appeal hearing. This timescale is variable according to the timing of the next or subsequent Management Committee meeting.

If the appellant advises that more time is needed for preparation, then the hearing can be postponed to the next scheduled meeting of the Management Committee. This is normally **one** month later.

The appellant can be accompanied at the hearing by a friend, advisor or representative. If English is not the appellant's first language then we will arrange, in liaison with the appellant, for an appropriate interpreter to be present.

Within **five** working days following the hearing, the appellant will be informed in writing of:

- the outcome of the hearing
- that the internal review procedure is now exhausted
- appropriate external options such as the Public Services Ombudsman

7.2 Complaints

Appeals need to be distinguished from complaints for which we operate a separate procedure. For instance, complaints might arise if applicants do not receive offers to which they are entitled, or our services don't meet our agreed standards.

The complaints procedure allows service users to complain or make comment about the quality of service. Information on how to complain is provided to all tenants and housing list applicants. Copies of the complaints procedure are available at the Association's office.

If applicants are dissatisfied with our response, we provide them with information concerning how to make complaints to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman; the Ombudsman deals with complaints involving maladministration.

Appendix 8 : GENERAL RULES FOR THE ALLOCATION OF HOUSES

1. The Association will generally seek to maximise occupation of its larger properties (three and four bedrooms). This will be achieved by looking at the number of bedspaces along with the number of bedrooms.

Where two households on the Housing List have similar points but one would more fully occupy the property, it will be offered to the larger household.

2. Where two or more applicants have the same points total and are being considered in accordance with the Lettings Plan, the first offer will generally be made to the applicant with the oldest date of application.

For existing tenants, the date of application will be deemed to be the date of the start of the tenancy.

3. Where a single person or couple are expecting a baby, they may apply for a one or two bedroomed property but will not be awarded any points for overcrowding until the baby is born.

4. Single persons and couples may apply for a one or two bedroomed property but preference will be given to households, in similar housing need, who would make best use of it.

5. The above rules may be suspended for tenants whose properties have been approved for clearance prior to demolition.

Appendix 9 - POINTS READY RECKONER

Group	Ref	Sub Group	Points	Ordered by
	1	Special cases & Management Transfers	—	Priority Date
Priority	2	Homeless - Traditional	—	“
	3	Homeless- Modernised	—	“
	4	Overcrowding - Legal	100	Total Points
	5	High Access & Support Needs	100	“
	6	Property below tolerable standard with demolition order	60 +75	“
Local	7	Social– subject to discrimination/ harassment or ASB	0	Date of Application
	8	Young People - Throughcare/ Canal Project	90	Total Points
	9	Community Care with Package	90	“
	10	Under occupation – Council & HA stock (for two or more rooms underoccupied)	15 +20 per room	“
	11	Insecure Tenure	40	“
	12	Medium Access & Support Needs	30	“
	13	Bedsit/ HMO	10	“
	14	Housing Support - Young People	30	“
	15	Community Care – package pending	30	“
	16	Particular learning support/ educational needs	20	“
	17	Overcrowding	10 for each extra bedroom req'd	“
	18	Families with children in upstairs flats	3 -18	“
	19	Sharing – bath/shower, kitchen, toilet	5	“
	20	Children, no garden	10	“
	21	House condition	40	“
	22	Housing support relative/ carer	—	“
	23	Under occupation of owner occupied or private rented (for two or more rooms underoccupied)	15	“
	24	Waiting & Transfer Applicants – ED residents	—	Date of Application

Other	25	Caravan Dwellers within ED	40	Total Points
	26	Outwith ED Needs	—	Total Points
	27	Outwith ED No Needs	—	Date of Application

Appendix 10 : LETTINGS PLAN

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Lettings Plan is to set out the Association's intentions regarding the letting of its vacant properties for the following year.

In drawing up the plan, the Association seeks to ensure that a wide range of housing and community needs are met by identifying different applicant groups and giving them specific targets for lets.

2. THE HOUSING LIST

Applications to the Housing List at end December 2005 by Housing Group and Needs Factors were analysed as follows :

Key : Housing Group 1 - Current Redevelopment Transfer

Housing Group 2 - Future Redevelopment Transfer

Housing Group 3 - Transfers retained Stock

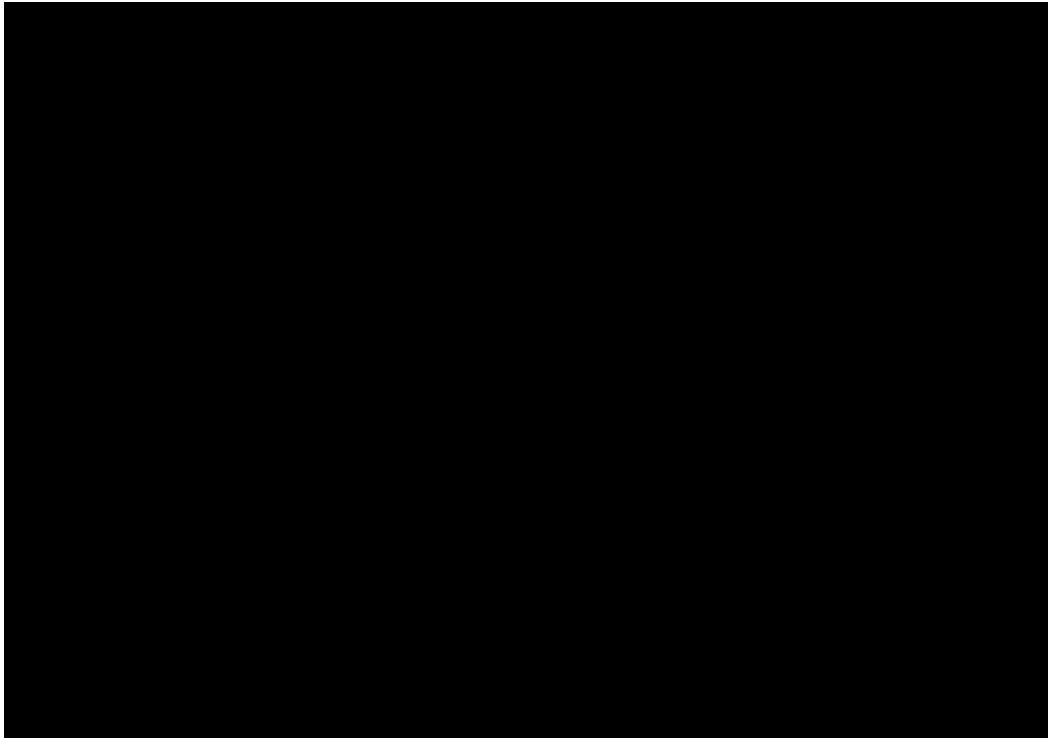
Housing Group 4 - Housing List from within Hillhead

Housing Group 5 - Housing List from other areas in Kirkintilloch

Housing Group 6 - Housing List from other areas in East Dunbartonshire

Housing Group 7 - Housing List from areas outwith East Dunbartonshire

Housing Group/Need Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Overcrowded - 1 Bed	3	2	16	34	27	7	20	109
Overcrowded - 2 Bed	2	1	0	8	9	1	5	26
Overcrowded - 3 Bed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overcrowded - 4 Bed	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	4
Underoccupied - 1 Bed	2	10	11	7	5	3	7	45
Underoccupied - 2 Bed	1	3	1	2	1	0	2	10
Homeless	0	0	0	17	14	8	12	51
Insecure	0	0	0	75	42	18	39	174
Sharing	0	0	0	62	32	15	28	137
Lacking	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3
Poor Condition	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medical - High	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	7
Medical - Medium	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Medical - Low	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Additional Medical	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	4
Children at Height	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Total Needs Factors	9	16	32	209	132	55	122	575
Applicants with Housing Needs	9	16	29	106	76	31	71	338
Applicants with no Housing Need	26	20	43	48	38	21	53	249
Total Applicants	35	36	72	154	114	52	124	587
Needs per Applicant for All Apps.	0.26	0.44	0.44	1.36	1.16	1.06	0.98	0.98
Needs per App. with Housing Needs	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.97	1.74	1.77	1.72	1.70
Group % of Total Applicants	5.96	6.13	12.27	26.24	19.42	8.86	21.12	100.00
Group % of Tot. Apps. with Hsg. Needs	2.66	4.73	8.58	31.36	22.49	9.17	21.01	100.00



From the table and the pie-chart, it is clear that current Hillhead residents (Transfers and the Housing List) form more than 50% of all applicants for housing with the Association. The largest single group of applicants are those on the Housing List from within Hillhead (ie. those who are not currently tenants of the Association).

Applications from other areas within Kirkintilloch and from areas outwith East Dunbartonshire form the next largest groups.

Of those on the Housing List, the highest levels of housing need are those from within Hillhead with an average of almost 2 housing needs factors per applicant. This compares with other areas where the housing needs average around 1.7 per applicant.

This analysis therefore may be used to justify letting a higher proportion of properties becoming vacant, to those who are already living in Hillhead.

Some caution should however, be exercised. There will be a number of applicants who have connections within Hillhead but who are currently unable to live in the area. Such applicants may live in other areas of Kirkintilloch, in other areas of East Dunbartonshire or indeed outwith the East Dunbartonshire area.

Therefore to make a case only to rehouse those who currently live in Hillhead would not only contravene legislation but could also prevent those with connections within Hillhead from returning to the area.

Based on the assumption that there will be approximately 100 houses in current stock, available for letting during 2006/07, the following lettings targets are proposed

- Key : Housing Group 1 - Current Redevelopment Transfer
- Housing Group 2 - Future Redevelopment Transfer
- Housing Group 3 - Transfers retained Stock
- Housing Group 4 - Housing List from within Hillhead
- Housing Group 5 - Housing List from other areas in Kirkintilloch
- Housing Group 6 - Housing List from other areas in East Dunbartonshire
- Housing Group 7 - Housing List from areas outwith East Dunbartonshire

Housing Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Priority Needs Group :			4	15	6	5	5	35
Below Tolerable Standard								
Unsuitable Housing								
Legal overcrowding								
Homeless and Threatened								
Local Needs Group :	19	6	15	17	3	3	2	65
Insecurity of Tenure								
Overcrowding								
Underoccupation								
Sharing Amenities								
Unsatisfactory Housing								
Family and Social Preference								
Management and Economic Preference								
Other Housing Needs Group:								0
Outwith Needs Preference								
Total Lets for 2006/07	19	6	19	32	9	8	7	100

3. Household Types

In analysing the Housing List, it is also useful to look at Household Types. This is particularly relevant to the decision making process regarding the development programme as it highlights demand for different sizes of stock.

The following table shows a breakdown of Household Types by Housing Group.

- Key : Housing Group 1 - Current Redevelopment Transfer
- Housing Group 2 - Future Redevelopment Transfer
- Housing Group 3 - Transfers retained Stock
- Housing Group 4 - Housing List from within Hillhead
- Housing Group 5 - Housing List from other areas in Kirkintilloch
- Housing Group 6 - Housing List from other areas in East Dunbartonshire
- Housing Group 7 - Housing List from areas outwith East Dunbartonshire

Housing Group/Household Type	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Single Person Household	5	20	14	61	46	22	56	224
Two Adult Household	2	0	4	17	8	4	5	40
Three Adult Household	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Single Parent with one Child	13	6	11	37	20	9	21	117
Single Parent with two Children	4	3	13	14	19	7	13	73
Single Parent with three Children	4	0	3	11	4	5	6	33
Single Parent with four Children	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Couple with one child	1	2	4	3	9	0	0	19
Couple with two Children	1	2	11	5	1	2	7	29
Couple with three Children	2	2	5	5	3	1	7	25
Couple with four Children	3	0	3	0	3	1	7	17
Couple with five Children	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3
Couple with six Children	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Couple with seven Children	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total Applicants	35	36	72	154	114	52	124	587