



ALLOCATIONS POLICY

*The Dunedin Canmore group supports equal opportunities for all:
[Equality and Diversity Policy](#)*

MONITORING FORM	
Department	<i>Allocations</i>
Department Director	<i>Graeme Russell</i>
This policy is applicable to	
Policy name	<i>Allocations Policy</i>
Policy number	
Original version approved by	<i>DCHA Board – 15th December 2011</i>
Author/Reviewer	<i>Elaine Inglis</i>
Authorised /Approved by	<i>Graeme Russell – Housing Services Director</i>
Date of last review	<i>15th December 2011</i>
Version number	<i>No. 1</i>
Date of minor modification	
Date of next review	<i>December 2014</i>
Internal /external consultees (if required).	
Equality Impact Assessment	<i>Complete</i>

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Allocations Policy sets out the principles which Dunedin Canmore Housing Association Ltd follows in order to allocate our housing stock, and is one of the key documents of the organisation.

1.2 Aims

The Association's main aim is to:

- Provide affordable and secure rented accommodation to those demonstrating housing need
- Assist in the creation of stable and sustainable communities in the areas in which it operates.
- Comply with legislative and good practice requirements in regard to the assessment and allocation of housing
- Establish tenancies which are successful and encourage tenants to maintain their tenancies
- To participate positively in Common Housing Registers (CHRs) and in particular Choice Based Letting initiatives in all areas within which the association operates
- Work in partnership with Local Authorities and other agencies in developing and pursuing the development and management of supportive and balanced communities

2.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GOOD PRACTICE

2.1 Legal Framework

The Allocation Policy takes into account the following legislation;

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and (amended) Act 2001
- Equality Act 2010.
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

2.2 Performance Standards/Social Housing Charter

The Association will comply with all legislative requirements. We take account of performance standards and guidance set out by Scottish Government, including “Homes Fit for the 21st Century” the Housing Older People Strategy, as well as other relevant good practice and published guidance from organisations including Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

This policy has been developed and due regard given the Scottish Government Practice Guide ‘Social Housing Allocations’ www.scotland.gov.uk/allocations (July 2011)

The Association will act in accordance with the current Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions framework set out by Scottish Housing Regulator, SFHA and COSLA, which determine that;

- **Access to Housing:** we ensure that people have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process. We work with others to maximise and simplify access routes into housing.
- **Lettings:** we let houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in housing need, making best use of stock maximises choice and helps sustain communities.

http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/webpages/SHR_PERFORMANCESTANDARDS.hcsp

The Dunedin Canmore Group’s Corporate Service Standards (*insert hyperlink to website*) outline our commitment to our Housing Allocation service and related outcomes.

2.3 Role of Board

The Board is responsible for setting and reviewing the Allocations Policy and to monitor progress against policy aims.

Operational staff are responsible for assessments and decisions about individual allocations

3.0 TENANT CONSULTATION

The Association will consult with stakeholders when reviewing this policy, including tenants, Registered Tenants Organisations (RTO’s), applicants, partners and other relevant parties. Other stakeholders may be identified for consultation as part of the Equality Impact Assessment.

4.0 ACCESS TO HOUSING

As the Association operates within a number of local authority areas, there are a variety of allocations processes in place which take account of local housing needs and opportunities for partnership.

Details of variations to the allocations processes within our different areas of operation are attached as appendices to this policy.

The Association also has access to other affordable housing tenures – namely Shared Ownership, Shared Equity and Mid-Market Rent Housing. These alternate tenures are publicised and made available to those who meet their specific needs criteria.

4.1 Admission to Allocation List

Applicants age 16 years or over have the right to apply and be placed on the Association's housing list.

In accordance with Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by Section 9 of the 2001 Act), the Association will not exclude any applicants from applying for housing.

Application forms are available from our office or by telephoning, email, letter or by download from the Association's website. Where the Association participates in a Common Housing Register, application forms will be widely available from partner organisations.

The Association will strive to process, and initially respond or acknowledge new applications within 5 working days of receipt.

A summary booklet will be made available to applicants who will summarise how an applicant can apply for housing with the Association. This booklet will also make clear how to contact Allocations staff for further advice.

4.2 Eligibility

Type	Eligibility Criteria
General Needs Housing	Mainstream housing suitable for applicants age 16 years or over
Amenity Housing	Suitable for applicants age 50 or over, or applicants of any age who require amenity housing which has been adapted to meet medical/health needs.
Adapted Housing	Suitable for applicants of any age who require adapted housing, e.g. wheelchair accessible.
Sheltered Housing	Suitable for applicants age 60 years or over. An assessment of housing and support needs will be carried out If joint

	applicants then at least one should have reached age 60 years.
Housing with Flexible Support	Housing designed to adapt to the tenants' long term support needs and promote independent living. Age criteria may be variable depending on scheme.
Sheltered Housing with Care	Suitable for applicants age 60 years or over who require extra support, for example provision of meals.

4.3 Equal Opportunities

The Association is committed to providing equal opportunities for everyone who wishes to apply to us, and will allocate its properties following the principles of the Equalities Act 2010 and the Dunedin Canmore Group's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

Housing information can be provided in different languages and formats. The Association can provide translation and interpretation services on request, but will proactively provide translations where deemed appropriate

Staff are available to assist applicants with the completion of housing application forms.

The Association has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of this Allocation Policy in order to review and address any equality issues relating to the Allocation Policy. This EIA is available to view on the Association's website, and paper copies can be provided on request.

The Association also recognises and complies with the rights of individuals set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.

Good practice research into promoting equality and diversity will be applied and incorporated into practice where appropriate. i.e. 'Recognising and Addressing Homophobic and Trans - phobic Harassment' (Stonewall Scotland and the Scottish Housing Regulator).

4.4 Housing Advice

The Association will provide advice and information to assist applicants in making realistic choices to resolve their housing situation.

Other housing options will be promoted to applicants where appropriate in order to assist applicants in finding other solutions to their housing needs and aspirations, for example shared ownership, mid-market rent, mutual exchange.

The Association will seek to identify tenants who are vulnerable and occupying inappropriate accommodation and provide advice and assistance to these tenants. It will proactively identify solutions to address their needs and take

appropriate action to help tenants sustain their tenancies or provide other housing options.

The Association sets out what it means by 'vulnerable' tenants in its Tenancy Sustainment Strategy. This includes tenants with support needs, people leaving care and households suffering from racial or non-racial harassment.

Information relating to the profile of the Association's housing stock and the regular availability of housing is made available to applicants and is available on the Association's website.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

5.1 Quotas and Targets

The Association will review and establish annually, allocation quotas and targets which seek to achieve a balance of lets over a range of housing needs, including its statutory obligations. These quotas will include management transfers, nomination arrangements with support agencies and any other statutory obligations.

The Association will continuously monitor and review the outcomes of its allocation policy and on an annual basis provide to the Board a summary of outcomes and recommendations for future year lets

5.2 Reasonable Preference

The Association will take account of and give reasonable preference to the following groups in accordance with Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;

(i) "occupying houses which do not meet tolerable standard"

The Association will comply with the legal definition set out in Section 86 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

(ii) "occupying overcrowded houses"

The Association recognises the legal definition of overcrowding as described in Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. However the Association seeks to apply a more generous definition of overcrowding.

(iii) "have large families"

The Association considers that a household which requires a property with 4 bedrooms or more, can be described as a 'large family'. Such households will be assessed for overcrowding points or priority in accordance with the Association's Allocation Policy. The Association may

consider such households for properties out with the usual house size eligibility, due to the shortage of large properties.

(iv) “living under unsatisfactory housing conditions”

This includes households who require rehousing due to a medical requirement or disability and other households who have a housing need not met by their current property.

(v) “homeless or threatened with homelessness”

As defined by Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987

Reasonable preference is taken into account by awarding additional priority (Gold or Silver) through the Edindex system – Edinburgh Common Housing Register. For applications in the Association’s other areas, appropriate weighting of points levels is applied.

The Association will consistently comply with ‘reasonable preference’ requirements as set out by the Scottish Government and will respond to future changes to the reasonable preference categories as required.

5.3 Factors Which Will Not Be Taken Account Of In The Allocation of Housing

In accordance with Section 20 (2) of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, the Association do not take account of the following factors in determining the allocation of social housing;

(i) Residency

The Association will not have regard to an applicant’s length of residence in an area when it is assessing housing applications.

(ii) Age

The Association will consider any applicant who is 16 years or over, and will not take account of an applicant’s age in the allocation of housing. The exceptions to this will be:

- Property which has been designed or substantially adapted for occupation by persons of a particular age group.
- Housing for persons who are in receipt of housing support services for a particular age group.

(iii) Outstanding Liabilities / Debts

In accordance with Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the Association will not take account of outstanding liabilities where;

- the debt is not housing related.
- where the debt is more than 3 years old.
- tenancy debt which is no longer outstanding.
- where the outstanding amount is no more than one month's charges.
- where the applicant has come to a reasonable arrangement for paying arrears, has kept to the arrangement for at least 3 months and is continuing to make the payments.

(iv) Income

The Association will not take the applicants source of income into account in the allocation of housing.

(v) Ownership of Property

The Association will not take into account whether an applicant owns or has owned their own property.

(vi) Other Factors

The Association also recognises other factors as set out by the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, Section 20 (2) (b) which should not be taken into account in the allocation of its housing, including an applicant who gets a divorce or judicial review; that the applicant no longer lives in the same house or with another person; and that the application must have stayed in force for a minimum period.

5.4 Making Best Use of Housing Stock

The Association recognises the importance of making best use of its stock, as set out in the Performance Standards (Section 2.2) The Association will maximise the opportunities available to release for letting housing stock which can be used to meet applicants' needs from the reasonable preference groups or other urgent housing needs categories.

The Association will accomplish this in a variety of means including:

- award a level of priority / points for under-occupancy
- consider and implement incentives to encourage tenants to downsize, transferring to properties of a size more likely to meet their specific or future needs.
- offering housing options and advice to tenants who are under-occupying

These practices are reflected in the Scottish Government paper '[Fresh Thinking, New Ideas](#)' which acknowledges that better use of existing stock is necessary to meet housing need and address the mismatch in supply and demand.

5.5 Adapted Housing

In those instances where a property has been specifically adapted to meet the needs of a disabled or vulnerable person, the association will – working with the Local Authority or other Statutory / Voluntary Agencies - seek to ensure that the maximum continuing benefit is achieved from subsequent applications and lettings and that those applicants allocated such properties benefit from the adapted nature of the home.

5.6 Low Demand Areas

The Association reserves the right to depart from its normal Allocation Policy where situations of low demand occur. Low demand stock is characterised by those circumstances where there are small waiting lists, frequent refusals, high void rates and high turnover.

The Association would apply low demand processes where there are no suitable applicants on the Association's Allocation List and where the Local Authority is unable to nominate suitable candidates.

Low demand properties will be allocated by marketing the vacancy and offering to the first suitable applicant who applies, regardless of housing need. Where there is more than one interested applicant, the allocation will be made to the qualifying applicant who has the most priority in accordance with this allocation policy.

The Association's Board will be advised of low demand areas and must provide approval for the normal Allocations Policy to be waived in specific circumstances. The Local Authority within whose area the low demand area exists will be informed of the lettings initiative and advised of the outcome.

5.7 Refugees

The Association supports the rights of refugees and asylum seekers in access to housing, and makes reference to and complies with the guidance and good practice set out in the Scottish Refugee Council's '[A Practitioners Guide to Housing Refugees](#)', the aim of which is to reduce homelessness and improve tenancy sustainment amongst refugees.

The Association will participate in initiatives and develop partnerships with other organisations to ensure that joint working is strengthened to improve the housing options available to refugees.

5.8 Ex-Service Personnel

In accordance with the Scottish Government's 'Social Housing Allocations Practice Guide', the Association recognises the challenges faced by personnel leaving or being discharged from the armed forces, and will conform to the said guide.

When assessing applications from ex-service personnel, the Association will;

- Award the same level of priority to ex-service personnel as those with a similar level of housing need
- Give consideration to injured ex-service personnel who require adapted housing as a result of their injury/disability through our medical assessment process in conjunction with the armed forces medical and rehabilitation services
- Will not impose residency or local connection criteria which may disadvantage ex-service personnel from fair and equal access to housing
- Will be mindful of and supportive to the needs of ex-service personnel and their widows/widowers/civil partners and conform to Scottish Government Social Housing Practice Guide Part 5.3(b) in relation to individuals whose spouse/civil partner is killed in action or dies before discharge date.

The Association will take recognisance of and will conform to current guidance with regard to housing for people leaving the armed forces and liaise with other bodies where appropriate e.g. Ministry of Defence or Service related charities.

5.9 House Size Eligibility

The Association aims to consider applicants for a property which meets their households' needs, whilst also making best use of stock.

Couples, including same sex couples will be entitled to one double bedroom; other adults in the household should have their own bedroom; children should have their own bedroom unless they are same sex and under 14 years old or mixed sex and under 7 years old.

Applicants will be considered for an extra bedroom where:

- there is residential access to children at least 3 nights a week or equivalent
- an overnight carer is required

- there is another medical reason (for example couples who require separate bedrooms for health reasons; require extra room for storage of medical equipment; children who normally would be expected to share but require their own bedroom for a medical reason)
- they are a registered foster carer who requires an extra bedroom/s to accommodate foster children

Supporting evidence/verification will be sought in the cases noted above.

5.10 Suspending Applications from Offers

A summary of the suspension criteria is attached to this policy as an appendix.

Applicants who are placed on the Suspended List will not be considered for any offer of accommodation whilst their application is suspended. The Association will notify applicants of the reason for their suspension and will have the right of appeal.

The Association will monitor and report regularly to the Board, the number of suspended applications, frequency of reviews, number of appeals and outcomes.

The Association will not apply the suspension criteria to Section 5 Referrals under the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, or alternatively where statutory homeless households are identified via priority awards via choice based lettings.

Where the housing need of the applicant outweighs the sanction of the suspension, the Association may consider applications out with the suspensions criteria.

Suspended applications will be reviewed and monitored every 6 months, or at any other time at the request of the applicant.

5.11 Reviewing the Housing List

Applicants holding positions on the housing list will be reviewed on an annual basis to establish whether the applicant wishes to remain on the Housing List, and to allow the opportunity to review any changes of circumstances.

Applicants will be offered the opportunity to review their application, update their situation and requirements, and discuss their housing options at this review process.

5.12 Cancelling Applications From The Housing List

The Association reserves the right to cancel applications, effectively removing the applicant from the Housing List, under the following circumstances:

- Failure to respond to continuous communication without good reason
- At the request of the applicant

The applicant will be advised of the reasons for this decision in writing and will retain the right of appeal.

A register of cancelled housing applications will be maintained and audited by a manager of the Association, in order to ensure compliance with this policy.

Where a tenancy is given and evidence subsequently becomes available that the applicant sought to deliberately provide misleading information, the Association can exercise its right to end the tenancy and recover the property.

5.13 Allocations Requiring Board Approval

Board approval will be sought for allocations to Board or staff members and their families. Such applications will be assessed and treated in line with other applications, in an open and fair way.

The Association reserves the right to allocate tenancies to employees employed by the Association or its parent body, Malcolm Homes Limited, as sheltered housing wardens and who are required as part of their employment contract to live in tied accommodation.

5.14 Appeals

Applicants have the right of appeal if they do not agree with any aspect of the way in which their application has been handled or prioritised. Appeals should be directed to the Housing Manager.

6.0 WORKING WITH OTHERS

6.1 Common Housing Registers/Choice Based Lettings

The Association works with local authorities and other registered social landlords in its geographical areas to operate common housing registers and choice based lettings. Where such arrangements do not already exist, the Association will work in partnership with other providers in the development of these arrangements, where the opportunity exists and is manifestly beneficial to meeting the needs and aspirations of applicants.

6.2 Nominations and Section 5 Referrals

The Association will comply with the requirements of Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, in assisting local authorities with requests to house homeless households.

The Association will develop and maintain nomination agreements with all the local authorities within our areas of operation where required. The agreements will normally allow councils to make nominations for 50% of net lets (gross lets less management transfers, exchanges, decants and supported housing referrals) although local variations to these arrangements may be permitted where a specific strategy objective is required. Nominated applicants will be prioritised in accordance with the Association's Allocations Policy.

6.3 Supported Housing Referrals

The Association reserves the right to make special allocation or nomination arrangements with voluntary and statutory organisations, including Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, to provide supported accommodation and therefore meet care and support requirements of the Local Authorities within whose areas we operate.

Agreements are currently in place with a range of support agencies. These are reviewed annually and take account of the Association's [Supported Housing Policy](#) and the local authorities' supported housing strategies.

The Association reserves the right to provide follow on accommodation to individuals moving on from supported training flats or transitory flats, in order to provide permanent accommodation and promote tenancy sustainment.

6.4 Exchange Schemes

The Association acknowledges the importance of exchange schemes, particularly in partnership with other housing providers, as a mechanism to allow tenants to move to another social rented tenancy either with the Association or with another registered social landlord.

The Association will facilitate and provide assistance to tenants who wish to exchange homes to resolve their housing needs or meet their aspirations.

7.0 SUSTAINING TENANCIES

The Association is fully committed to sustaining tenants' occupancy of their homes. The prevention of homelessness and tenancy sustainment is and will remain one of the key and strategic operational priorities of the Association.

The Association will do this through proactive tenancy support and partnership working, recognising that it is not enough just to provide homes, but to support and encourage tenants to stay in their homes and maintain their tenancies in a satisfactory manner.

The Association's Tenancy Sustainment Strategy sets out how it aims to do this. *Link to tenancy sustainment strategy.*

7.1 Local Lettings Initiatives

The Association reserves the right in specific circumstances to develop local lettings initiatives (or lettings plans) which will deviate from the main allocation policy in order to meet specific localised aims.

Local Lettings Initiatives will be developed where one or more of the following applies:

- there is an over-concentration of similar types of household which in turn contributes to or results in problematic neighbourhood issues
- particular estate management problems which may be resolved by altering the community profile
- high density of housing which requires intervention and specialist management practice in order to attain a sustainable community
- the nature and characteristics of a new build development would benefit from a local lettings initiative
- any other issue which would benefit from a local lettings initiative

Lettings plan will be restricted to a specifically agreed geographical area or neighbourhood, have clear local aims, and will be developed in accordance with relevant legislation. However the prevailing aim of lettings initiatives will be to establish and promote sustainable and settled communities.

Lettings plans will be developed in consultation with local authority and local residents groups and must be approved by the Association's Board prior to implementation. Lettings plans will operate for a defined period and include, detail intended outcomes and incorporate a specified review process.

Copies of current letting plans will be publicised and included as an appendix to the Association's Allocations Policy.

7.2 Suitable, Sustainable and Sensitive Lettings

The Association recognises that there may be occasions when it is necessary to depart from routine allocation practice in order to ensure that an individual allocation is suitable and likely to be sustainable. The Association will base its decision on the knowledge it has about the applicant and the knowledge it has about the property and local community. Sensitive Lettings may occur only where any or all of the undernoted circumstances occur:

- Applicants are vulnerable and/or have social problems, and the allocation of a property in a particular location would not be suitable for their needs or the long term potential for the tenancy to succeed.

- There have occurred in the recent past issues within the immediate community which would potentially compromise the long term future of the tenancy or ability of an applicant to integrate into that community.
- A risk assessment under the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements recommends that specific types of housing may be required.

A detailed procedure and audit mechanism has been established – which details in a transparent manner the rationale and justification of any sensitive letting arrangement. Sensitive lets are only permitted following the review and agreement of an Association Director.

The Association will keep a clear audit record of any applicant who has been bypassed due to a sensitive allocation.

The Association has developed a clear process for staff to follow when considering potential sensitive lets.

7.3 Management Transfers

In exceptional circumstances, where no other immediate or practical housing solution is possible, the Association may consider a Management Transfer to another of its own properties. Examples of when a Management Transfer is applicable include situations of:

- Severe harassment, including racial and sexual harassment
- Severe violence including domestic violence
- Urgent medical reasons; for example, tenants who are in hospital and cannot return to their tenancy, resulting in ‘bed blocking’ or increasingly vulnerable and isolated tenants who are at risk of becoming unable to remain in mainstream housing if they are not rehoused.
- Major repair work
- Abuse/harassment as a result of relationship breakdown
- Instances of Hate Crime – either corroborated or uncorroborated.

The aim of a Management Transfer will be to move the household to a place of safety out-with existing locale. If the request is accepted only one suitable offer will be made reflecting the urgency of the housing need.

The offer of accommodation will normally be met from the Association’s own stock or from a reciprocal arrangement with another RSL or Local Authority.

Where a Management Transfer is not a suitable option, tenants should apply for rehousing with the Association and other housing providers in the normal way.

Management Transfers will only occur following the review and approval of an Association Director and records maintained and audited to ensure compliance with this policy.

7.4 Tenants who Become Homeless

Homelessness amongst existing tenants may occur for a variety of reasons including domestic abuse, harassment or relationship breakdown.

In extreme circumstances, the immediate assistance of the local authority may be required to provide emergency accommodation in a crisis where a tenant cannot return to their tenancy for their own safety. A homeless assessment will be carried out by the local authority to establish that the tenant is statutory homeless.

In partnership with City of Edinburgh Council, the Association has established a referral protocol whereby tenants can be referred to the local authority for immediate assistance with emergency accommodation.

The Association will seek to establish similar positive protocols with the other local authorities where it operates.

7.5 Implications and Challenges of Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform Bill proposes major changes to the welfare benefit system including reduction in Housing Benefit for tenants who are under-occupying their homes, increases in non-dependent deductions, the introduction of Universal Credit and household benefit caps for out of work working age households.

The welfare reforms are likely to affect some new allocations and existing tenants.

The Association will take necessary steps to address the challenges for both new and existing tenants.

Where the Association has adopted a deliberate under-occupancy criteria, or where tenancies become under-occupied through changes to their household circumstances, which then has implications for their welfare benefit entitlements, the Association will take a sympathetic and proactive view. Tenants may be entitled to assistance through a tenant relocation package to assist a move to more suitable accommodation.

8.0 PUBLICISING/AVAILABILITY OF THE POLICY

- A copy of the Allocation Policy can be downloaded from the Dunedin Canmore Housing Association website.

- A summary of the Policy can be made available in a number of other languages, in large print and on CD if required.
- Copies of this Policy are available from our office or staffed sites.
- A guide for applicants summarising the Policy and explaining how to complete the application form will be made available.
- A detailed breakdown of the level of housing needs points awarded can be made available
- Details of other Registered Social Landlords in the area will be made available on request
- A copy will be provided to the local authorities in which we operate and to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

9.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Reference should be made to other relevant Policies and Procedures, in a list format with the reference number if applicable. These should be hyperlinked.

10.0 COMPLAINTS AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

We aim to get things right first time. However, despite our best intentions and efforts, we acknowledge that from time to time people may be unhappy with the service provided.

Anyone can raise a concern with any member of staff, who will try to resolve the issue straight away.

If for any reason the issue cannot be dealt with straight away, we will make sure that the matter is fully investigated by a member of our service improvement team and a satisfactory solution achieved as quickly as possible.

Details of our complaints policy can be obtained from the office or from our website.

ALLOCATIONS IN EDINBURGH

Access to Housing in Edinburgh

The Association works in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council and 20 partner registered social landlords via Edindex, a common housing register.

This allows applicants to complete a single form application form and be considered for housing with all partner landlords. Applicants may nevertheless choose which landlord/s they wish to be housed by. Participating landlords may let their properties through Key to Choice or through a common allocations policy.

Registration

Applicants who wish to be considered for housing with the Association must first register with Edindex. Application forms are available from local council offices or any of the Edindex partners, including this Association's offices. Applications are also available online. Applicants may start bidding for properties once they are registered and have received notification of their reference number.

Assessment of Applications

Applicants will be categorised as either a Starter or a Mover. Starters are generally applicants who do not have their own home. Movers are existing Dunedin Canmore tenants or tenants from other RSLs (Registered Social landlords) or City of Edinburgh Council who have their own home, but need to move.

Starters are prioritised by the length of time since registration and movers are prioritised by length of time tenancy held or length of time in current home. Ex-service personnel who apply within 3 years of leaving the armed forces will have their period of service taken into account and added to the time they have been registered on Edindex.

Additional priority may be awarded to applicants who need to move for urgent circumstances i.e. homeless, harassment, medical reasons or overcrowding. Priority will be awarded where applicants meet the Council's current assessment criteria as follows:

Gold Priority – Awarded following an **assessment by Advice and Assessment Team** for medical or health issues. Urgent Gold Priority may also be awarded in **exceptional** circumstances e.g. to enable a hospital discharge.

Silver Priority – Awarded for the following reasons:

- Homeless and in priority need
- Demolition/regeneration tenants
- Overcrowding/Under-occupancy
- Exceptional housing need (e.g. living in a home below tolerable standard)

Any changes to the assessment of applications will be made by Edindex in consultation with the partners.

Quotas

Not all properties will be advertised. Properties not advertised will include properties under management agreements with support agencies, properties required for decants, Management Transfers, agency referrals and any other statutory obligations.

When allocating available properties, the Association will adhere to the following quotas:

- Starters 40% of available properties
- Movers 25% of available properties
- Starters/Movers 25% of available properties
- DCHA Movers 10% of available properties

The Association will monitor the categories of housing need of successful applicants to demonstrate that it is meeting its statutory responsibilities.

The association reserves the right to review and amend these letting categories as required, and will notify Edindex of any changes.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to deviate from the normal quota / allocation pattern if the property is not suitable for the next designated quota group, for example a particularly small flat may not be suitable to be allocated to the “Mover” category.

Advertising and Bidding

The Association will advertise its available vacancies as widely as possible and will include the City of Edinburgh Council website, Evening News, Key to Choice free supplement, window display and Dunedin Canmore website.

Applicants should bid through Key to Choice and bids must be received no later than the advertised closing date. Bids received later than this date, for whatever reason will not be considered.

Bids will be input by the City of Edinburgh Council Choice Team.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to withdraw a property from allocation after it has been advertised. This may be because the sitting tenant has decided not to move or the property is extensively damaged and requires repair.

Arrangements to assist vulnerable groups to bid for properties are in place.

Ranking and Selection

Once the Association has been informed that all bids have been input, it will carry out the process of selecting the successful applicant. The ranking of applicants will be

carried out in line with Edindex's current ranking priority ([City of Edinburgh Council Lettings Policy](#)).

The Association will take up references and carry out an interview prior to an offer being made. Unsatisfactory tenancy references or insufficient support may result in an offer not being made – in line with the Association's Allocation Policy.

Suspensions/Bypassing

Due to the operation of a common housing register in Edinburgh, the Association will not suspend applicants for housing in Edinburgh, as this will have implications for applicants being considered by other partners.

Where the applicant meets one of the suspensions criteria as set out in Appendix 3, the Association will bypass the applicant, providing the appropriate audit trail and checks, and advise the applicant in writing. Should the applicant appear on another shortlist at a later date, the reasons for the original bypass will be reviewed and considered at that time.

ALLOCATIONS OUTWITH EDINBURGH

Where possible the Association seeks to advertise its properties through choice based lettings. In areas where these arrangements are not yet in place, the Association will operate the following assessment process.

THE POINTS SYSTEM

The Association operates a points system within groups system. There are six Needs groups which are designed to reflect a range of needs within the community. An applicant is firstly awarded a set number of points based on their housing needs and current circumstances and this dictates their position with the appropriate group.

The range of points awarded is as follows:

Homeless

Awarded for only one of the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| • No fixed abode | 37 points |
| • Living with friends/relatives but without own bedroom | 37 points |
| • Living in a Mobile home/caravan/hostel/B&B | 37 points |
| • The applicant has been issued with one month's notice to quit their present home | 37 points |
| • The applicant is statutory homeless | 37 points |

OR

Lack of Security

Awarded for only one of the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Fixed term tenancy/renting without written agreement or lease | 20 points |
| • Living temporarily with friends/relatives but with own bedroom | 25 points |
| • Owner Occupiers with repossession notices or forced sale | 30 points |
| • Prison/other institution with no home to go to on release | 30 points |
| • Tied accommodation with job due to finish in 6 months | 30 points |
| • Tied accommodation with no leaving date | 10 points |
| • Property which is uninhabitable for example below tolerable standard | 30 points |

Overcrowding

Acceptable standards are: Couples will share a bedroom; other adults should have their own bedroom; children should have their own bedroom unless they are the same sex and both under 14 years or mixed sex and both under 7 years. Five overcrowding points will be awarded for each bedroom that the household applying for a move is short of according to the above definition e.g. a couple with two children

over 14 in a 2-bedroom property will be awarded five points for overcrowding.
 15 points
 (and 5 points per bedroom short)

Poor Housing/Lack of Basic Amenities

- No heating 8 points
- No hot running water 6 points
- No bath or shower 7 points
- No cooking facilities 6 points
- Major electrical, gas or structural repairs required 10 points
- Some disrepair/rising damp/wet rot 5 points

Points may be awarded for more than one issue. Proof of condition will be sought.

Sharing Basic Amenities

For each household where at least one member shares the following with members of another separate household:

- Washing/bathing facilities 3 points
- Cooking facilities 3 points
- Living room 2 points
- In a hostel of 5 people or more 10 points

Points may be awarded for more than one. Confirmation will be sought.

Medical

- A** Where a severe or enduring medical condition or illness makes it **impossible** to remain in the current home 45 points

OR

- B** Medical condition or illness makes it **difficult** to remain in their current home. 25 points

Social

- A** To escape violent partner/ex-partner, racial harassment, actual assault by a neighbour. 35 points

- B** To escape other forms of harassment/threats of violence. *(Proof may be sought)* 25 points

- C** Where applicant feels generally intimidated by local people. E.g.: drug dealers/gangs *(proof may be sought)* 15 points

Applicants may only be awarded one of the above. *Proof will be required in the cases of category B & C.*

Support

- A** Where re housing is considered **essential** would allow the applicant to give or receive support in cases of long term illness, disability, frailty or where the applicant is young and vulnerable. 15 points
- B** Where re housing would make it **easier** for the applicant to give or receive support, or where applicant is isolated due to location of current accommodation, in cases of long-term illness, disability and frailty, or where young and vulnerable. 10 points
- C** Where lower levels of general support is required. (e.g.: leaving care or supported accommodation). 5 points

(Applicants may only be awarded one of the above)

Under-occupation

2 points per bedroom surplus to requirements.

Where applicant is moving to a smaller property (at least one bedroom less), and are a current tenant with a council or housing association, award 15 points in addition to 2 points per each surplus bedroom.

15 points
(and 2 points per extra bedroom)

Independence/Economic

Those who require to be re-housed for employment or training reasons or are in employment but living with parents or guardians and have never had their own home. 15 points

NEEDS GROUPS

After the application has been prioritised, the applicant will be placed in a 'needs' group which best describes their principal reason for requiring housing.

The groups are as follows:

- **Homeless** (anyone who is awarded the 37 "homeless" points)
- **Medical** (anyone who is awarded a medical priority)
- **Social/Support** (anyone who is categorised as Social A or B)

- **Independence/Economic** (anyone in employment, or requiring to move home to take up an offer of employment)
- **Transfers** (current tenants in need of re-housing)
- **General** (anyone who does not fall into any of these categories).

Supported Housing Referrals will not be placed in the 'Needs Groups'. Instead, an agreed number will be accepted from each organisation annually.

Local Authority Nominees will be placed into 'Needs Groups'.

TARGETS FOR NEEDS GROUPS

The current group targets (after decants, Management Transfers and agency nominations) are as follows:

Homeless	20%	Independent/Economic	20%
Medical	20%	Transfers	10%
Social/Support	20%	General	10%

Reports setting out actual performance against each of the targets will be presented at least annually to The Association's Board of Management. Reviews of the targets will be based on these outcomes and Edindex's performance during the same period.

CRITERIA FOR SUSPENSIONS

Reason for Suspension	Length of Suspension
Rent arrears which are equivalent to more than one month's rent, where there is no arrangement in place, or it has not been kept to for at least 3 consecutive months	-Until arrears are cleared or reduced to less than one month's rent, or -Until arrangement has been kept to for 3 consecutive months, or -Until the debt becomes more than 3 years old
Unsatisfactory tenancy reference where tenant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years /ASBO granted in the last 3 years/ reference from a reliable source e.g. police, local authority which confirms ASB has taken place which relates to a tenancy	The application will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis. Evidence will be considered (e.g. from a support worker or social worker) which supports the applicant's change in conduct and ability to manage a tenancy. If the applicant has a current tenancy then a satisfactory tenancy reference may support the lifting of the suspension. <i>In some cases the Association may consider granting the applicant with a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy with support to help the applicant sustain the tenancy</i>
Poor conduct of tenancy e.g. poor condition of property or garden, failure to control pets or other tenancy breach	Application will be reviewed on 6 monthly basis and new tenancy reference sought. Suspension will be lifted if tenancy reference is satisfactory.
Discovery of deliberately misleading information	Time limited – 6 months suspension
Abusive or violent behaviour towards members of staff	Time limited – 6 months suspension
The Association has made an assessment that the applicant would not be able to sustain a tenancy without support, and no support package is in place	Suspension would only be in place for the period of time it takes to secure a support package, and the applicant is willing to engage in the support.

Letting Plan in Respect of:

YEAMAN PLACE AND MURDOCH TERRACE

Nature of Allocation / Estate Management Difficulties	A lettings plan was initially set up in 2006 to address the above average turnover and high number of allocations to young, transitory and vulnerable client group. A review of the lettings plan has indicated that there has been an improvement in tenancy sustainment and a reduction in number of neighbour nuisance complaints. However the area continues to suffer from poor perception and reputation and there is a high density of people with complex issues including drug and alcohol issues which is resulting in existing tenants expressing a desire to move away.
Objectives of Letting plan	It is the objective of the Association to adopt a proactive approach to allocation and estate management issues, to stabilise the community and encourage a sense of community and permanence amongst tenants. This will be achieved by making suitable allocations which support this objective.
Addresses of Properties to be included in Letting Plan Area	149 tenemental and modern flatted properties at: - 1-16 Yeaman Place, and - 2-19 Murdoch Terrace
Nature of Letting Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No allocations to applicants with drug or alcohol issues or recovering from drug/alcohol issues. - Supported housing referrals will be dealt with sensitively. No supported tenant will be allocated a property in these localities if it is the view of the Association and their support provider that their tenancy could be compromised. - It may be necessary, in some cases, to deviate from the normal quota pattern as some of the flats are small and will require to be allocated to 'Starters' rather than 'Movers'.
Duration of Letting Plan:	<p>Commencement Date: 1 January 2012</p> <p>Duration: 2 years</p> <p>Completion Date: 1 January 2014</p> <p>Review: 1 January 2013</p>
Monitoring Mechanism	<p>The Housing Manager will regularly review the allocation of properties and report to the Housing Services Director.</p> <p>The Association will monitor the number and nature of neighbour nuisance complaints and tenancy terminations.</p> <p>An annual report will be provided to the Board of the Association.</p>

Letting Plan in Respect of:**CALEDONIAN CRESCENT, ROAD AND PLACE**

Nature of Allocation / Estate Management Difficulties	<p>High proportion of young adult males with drug and/or alcohol issues being housed in the neighbourhood and high number of dogs in the street.</p> <p>Long standing tenants are no longer wishing to live there due to the resulting anti-social behaviour, dog fouling and breaches of tenancy.</p>
Objectives of Letting plan	<p>To reduce the over concentration of tenants who are vulnerable due to drug and alcohol issues and to prevent future allocations to vulnerable applicants which may be detrimental to their wellbeing by being housed in the area.</p> <p>To address the problem of dog fouling by limiting future allocations to tenants with dogs. However, guide dogs will be permitted.</p> <p>A pilot lettings plan has been in operation since July 2010 and a review of this pilot has demonstrated that it is starting to have a positive effect on the neighbourhood.</p>
Addresses of Properties to be included in Letting Plan Area	<p>312 tenemental flatted properties at</p> <p>1 – 40 Caledonian Crescent</p> <p>4 – 24 Caledonian Road</p> <p>3 – 26 Caledonian Place</p>
Nature of Letting Plan	<p>No allocations to applicants with drug or alcohol issues or recovering from drug/alcohol issues</p> <p>Permission will not be given for dogs and where properties are advertised through Key to Choice the advert will specify 'no dogs except guide dogs'.</p> <p>Supported housing referrals will be dealt with sensitively. No supported tenant will be allocated a property in this locality if it is the view of the Association and the support provider that the tenancy would be compromised.</p> <p>It may be necessary, in some cases, to deviate from the normal quota pattern as some of the flats are more suited to 'Starters, than 'Movers'.</p>
Duration of Letting Plan:	<p>Commencement Date: 1 January 2012</p> <p>Duration: 2 years</p> <p>Completion Date: 1 January 2014</p> <p>Review: 1 January 2013</p>
Monitoring Mechanism	<p>The Housing Manager will regularly review and the allocation of properties and report to the Housing Services Director.</p> <p>The Association will monitor the number and nature of neighbour nuisance complaints and tenancy terminations.</p> <p>An annual report will be provided to the Board of the Association.</p>