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I INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY
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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of Lister Housing Co-operative is to provide good quality rented housing for people in need. Lister owns 184 tenement flats in the centre of Edinburgh around Lauriston Place. Most of the flats are for 'general needs' ranging in size from bedsits to six bedrooms. There are 2 wheelchair flats and 13 amenity flats for the ambulant disabled. There are 5 large flats for single people to share. There is no sheltered, supported or shared ownership housing. Lister tenants do not have the 'right to buy' as we are a fully mutual housing co-operative.

Lister is a member of the EdIndex common housing register in Edinburgh. This means we use the common housing application form and computer database provided through EdIndex. Our allocations are still made on the basis of policy decided by Lister. In writing this policy Lister has taken account of guidance issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and any relevant legislation.

Lister's allocations policy and procedure aim to comply with the following legislation: Housing (Scotland) Act 2001; Sex Discrimination Act 1975; Race Relations Act 1976; Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981; Disability Discrimination Acts; Data Protection Acts.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

This allocations policy is designed to meet the following objectives:

- a. To be fair, efficient and accountable in allocating tenancies. To be accessible to all by being part of the EdIndex common housing register in Edinburgh. To meet our legal requirements and the recommendations set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations in their Performance Standards and other guidance.
- b. To ensure the housing is as suitable as possible for the applicant's housing needs, including medical and personal/social factors.
- c. To work with the City of Edinburgh Council to assist the homeless and others in high need through our nomination agreement.
- d. To create and maintain a stable and balanced community.
- e. To assist mobility through recognised mobility and exchange schemes.
- f. To make the best use of our limited housing stock.

3. A STABLE AND BALANCED COMMUNITY

Lister aims to contribute to community stability and to develop and maintain a balanced community by:

- a. Addressing a range of needs rather than producing over concentrations of households with high degrees of vulnerability and/or support needs.
- b. Catering for a wide range of household requirements, and seeking to ensure that the Lister community is diverse, and that we do not have over-concentrations of particular household types and ages nor those wholly dependent upon benefits.
- c. Aiming to provide a degree of choice and to help meet the aspirations of those applying for housing.
- d. Providing, through the transfer quota arrangement, the opportunity for those tenants with changing needs and circumstances, to continue to be housed by Lister, in more suitable accommodation within the same community.
- e. Aiming to sustain and where possible enhance social, community and family networks.
- f. Assisting in the provision of aids and adaptations to our stock to enable those with special needs / disability to be rehoused, or to continue to live at Lister.

4. *EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES*

Lister has an equal opportunities policy and will not discriminate in the allocation of housing on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, sexual preference, age, religion, appearance, mental or physical disability, HIV infection or HIV related illnesses. Applicants are asked to provide various details so we can check (through monitoring statistics) that people are being treated fairly and equally. All our housing lists are open for applications.

Lister will circulate information on this allocations policy to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups in Edinburgh. Lister identifies Gypsy Travellers as a BME group. We aim to ensure that the percentage of new tenants from BME groups at least matches the overall percentage of BME groups in Edinburgh's population. Lister sets a target each year for BME allocations and we aim to achieve this or better it. Due to the small number of vacancies each year, we will monitor the results over a 3 and 5 year period as well as annually.

General information leaflets on housing associations and co-operatives in the Lothians and Borders are available in Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and Chinese. Information about Lister is available (in English) on tape for those who may have difficulty reading. Lister will provide interpretation services free of charge, though this will need to be arranged by appointment. Lister staff will assist those with difficulty reading, writing or who are visually impaired to complete relevant forms or paperwork. Lister can arrange for forms to be translated where possible.

II ACCESS TO HOUSING AT LISTER

5. *WHO CAN APPLY FOR HOUSING*

Applications will be considered from any person aged 16 or older and currently living in the United Kingdom. Help can be provided for anyone who has problems with making an application. If English is not the applicant's first language an interpreter can be arranged usually but we would need time to arrange this.

Lister restricts the size of housing for which applicants will be considered. See Section 2 of the Points scheme (Underoccupation/Overcrowding/Large Family) at the end of this document for more details.

6. *TYPES OF HOUSING AT LISTER*

Lister uses the EdIndex application form for all allocations apart from Lister tenant-only transfers, mutual exchanges and shared housing for single people (Lister's Multis). All our housing stock is in the "Tollcross/Fountainbridge" area as set out in the EdIndex form. The main types of housing we have are as follows:

- a. General needs housing - (for bedsit, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6 bedroomed self-contained flats).
- b. Amenity housing for the elderly or ambulant disabled - (bedsit, 1, 2 or 3 bedroomed self-contained flats at basement, ground or first floor levels). In addition there are some 'mainstream' flats which have been adapted (usually changing a bathroom into a shower-room) which will be allocated to the elderly or disabled.
- c. Wheelchair housing - only 2 flats, both 3 bedroom ground floor.
- d. Shared flats for single people (called Multis by Lister) - 22 places provided in 5 flats for people who *must* want to live in shared housing (as it is not a short cut to getting a self-contained flat). There are 4 flats housing 4 single people and 1 housing 6 people.

NB Lister's Transfer list is for Lister tenants who wish to move to another Lister flat - any of the four types of housing above.

7. *MAKING AN APPLICATION (EXCLUDING TRANSFER, EXCHANGES AND SHARED SINGLE PERSON HOUSING)*

a. *The application form*

Applications must be made on the EdIndex application form. The Co-operative will not accept forms where the applicant has not signed the declaration. Applications are processed by the EdIndex Central Admin Unit and applicants informed when they have been placed on housing lists. Applicants are advised to keep note of their reference number. The Co-operative reserves the right to carry out checks to verify an applicant's previous housing history or medical or other needs relevant to their wish for rehousing.

b. *Changes in applicant's circumstances*

All applicants are required to keep EdIndex informed fully of changes of address or circumstances. Failure to reply to correspondence within a reasonable period of time will result in the cancellation of an application. If an applicant deliberately worsens their circumstances to gain more points then these extra points may be withdrawn by Lister. If an applicant deliberately gives up housing they could otherwise still continue to occupy then points may be withheld or reduced by Lister.

c. *Review of housing lists*

The housing lists will be reviewed regularly by EdIndex. Applications will be reassessed and repointed if there are any changes in circumstances. Applicants who do not reply to the review letter within the stated deadline will have their application cancelled.

d. False or misleading information or withholding of relevant information

In the event of an applicant having knowingly submitted false or misleading information or having with-held information relevant to the assessment of his/her housing need the Co-operative reserves the right to suspend the application, to withdraw any offer of a tenancy, or take action to recover possession of any property for which a tenancy has been granted.

8. APPLYING TO THE SHARED HOUSING LIST (LISTER'S MULTI LIST)

Applicants can apply to Lister's Multi list (for shared housing for single people) at any time, direct to the Lister office. There is a separate information sheet about Multis which is supplied with the Multi application form. Applicants must want to live in shared housing as it is not a short cut to getting a self-contained flat at Lister.

The front and back pages of the Multi application form may be shown to existing multi flat tenants (of a flat where there is/will be a vacancy) to assist in their considering applicants. The inside pages of a Multi application form will remain confidential to the Co-operative.

9. TRANSFERS

Lister tenants may apply for a transfer to another Lister property at any time. Tenants must complete a Lister application form. A separate transfer points scheme is used. A quota system operates and on average up to 30 % of all lets in any one year may go to transfers. As the quota is set at a general maximum of 'up to 30%' rather than a target that 'must' be achieved, it is aimed that over several years, on average 25 % of lets will go to transfers, thus fitting in with the proportions in Lister's Group Plus Points allocations scheme.

The conditions attaching to a transfer and the details of the transfer points scheme are available separately. The transfer quota system is monitored closely.

10. MOBILITY AND EXCHANGES

At present there is no national mobility scheme organised by the Scottish or UK Government. There are a number of private companies offering a service through their websites which tenants could sign up for individually.

Exchanges: Lister will consider applications for exchanges between its tenants and those of other eligible landlords. Further information and conditions for exchange are available separately. Applicants who have a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) have a right to exchange in law, and Landlords can only refuse such an exchange on reasonable grounds.

11. WORKING WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND OTHER AGENCIES

Lister has a formal agreement with the City of Edinburgh Council that we will invite nominations for half of our vacancies in the self-contained housing stock from the Council. The nominees will be assessed in relation to Lister's definitions of need in its points scheme.

Lister reserves the right to invite nominations from other agencies such as Social Work departments or specialist housing providers or advisers in order to make the best use of certain house types, such as amenity or wheelchair housing.

Should a formal agreement between Lister and another agency be necessary to allocate a specific property then the approval of our Management Committee will be required.

12. COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF (AND FORMER MEMBERS / STAFF)

Current and former staff, and current and former Lister Management Committee members, and their relatives may apply for housing, however a tenancy or transfer will only be granted if the allocation complies with this Policy, the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator and has been agreed by the Management Committee. Staff and Committee Members must declare an interest if a close relation applies for housing. Any allocations to someone in these categories shall be recorded in Lister's official register of such matters.

13. ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

Lister staff will provide advice and assistance to applicants, where possible, about their opportunities for rehousing with Lister and through EdIndex. We will also endeavour to give applicants advice about improving their current housing circumstances, so as to help them make informed choices about their options. Applicants should be aware that restricting the area of preferred rehousing and the type and nature of housing sought could impact upon the applicant's chances of obtaining rehousing. Applicants are encouraged to bid regularly for Council housing through the Council's 'Key to Choice' lettings scheme. Lister will ensure that copies of the Council's 'Key to Choice' news-sheet will be available at the Lister office.

There is no restriction on the number of offers able to be made by Lister to an applicant, however the applicant needs to recognise that our low vacancy rate and the ever changing EdIndex list means further offers in the future cannot be guaranteed.

III ASSESSING APPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING

14. ASSESSING HOUSING NEEDS

a. Vacancy rates

Lister is unlikely to develop new property for the foreseeable future. Our housing stock is therefore fixed at 184 properties with very few vacancies each year. On average we have between 3 to 10 self-contained flats available for reletting each year and 4 to 10 places in the shared flats. Therefore we can only help a very small number of people each year.

b. Nominations from the Local Authority (City of Edinburgh Council Housing Department)

Lister offers 50% of its vacancies (excluding transfers, exchanges and shared flats) to applicants nominated from the local authority. Of these nominations, usually half at least will be homeless households nominated using the powers contained in Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. In common with other Registered Social Landlords (housing associations and co-operatives) Lister works with the local authority to tackle housing need.

c. The Points scheme

Lister uses a Points scheme to assess the relative housing needs of applicants. This is generally understood as a fair method of dealing with large numbers of applications for very few vacancies. The Points scheme takes account of a variety of factors and tries to address the differing circumstances applicants may be in. Details of the Points scheme are at the end of this leaflet.

d. *Lister's 'Group Plus Points' allocations scheme*

At Lister we aim to create balanced, stable communities. To assist us achieve this aim, we use a 'Group Plus Points' allocations scheme. This means that every applicant is placed into one Group according to their primary need. Lister then decides which Group to consider when planning the allocation of an empty flat. The people with the highest points within that Group will be shortlisted. Thus over time the people housed by Lister will be from a range of circumstances, reflecting the different Groups identified.

The Groups that Lister places people into are as follows: Homeless; Harassment; Health; Support; Overcrowded/Under-occupied; Below Tolerable Standard; General. Applicants who are homeless are typically housed through the nomination procedure, described in 14 (b) above.

e. *Wheelchair, amenity, ground floor and adapted housing.*

Lister's stock of housing suitable for the needs of those who are elderly or with disabilities is very small. It is essential that vacant specially designed or adapted flats together with vacant ground floor flats are allocated to those who need them most for a physical medical reason, where a move would improve the applicant's medical circumstances. Therefore Lister will let these properties to those whose housing and physical medical need is for a specific type of property even if their overall housing need may not be comparable to the general needs applicants. In shortlisting applicants with physical medical need, those with the highest medical points will be considered above those with lower medical points but higher overall points.

15. *LISTER'S GROUPS AND DECIDING INTO WHICH GROUP APPLICANTS ARE PLACED*

All applicants will be placed onto one group. The groups are as follows:

HOMELESS	Applicants will be considered from this group through the route of nominations from the Council.
HEALTH	Where there is a strong medical need for a move.
HARASSMENT	Where the applicant experiences significant on-going harassment at present.
SUPPORT	Where the applicant wishes to move to receive or provide support;.
OVERCROWDED/UNDER-OCCUPIED	Where there is overcrowding; or a larger property is underoccupied and the applicant wishes a smaller property.
BELOW TOLERABLE STANDARD	Where the property is Below the Tolerable Standard / A Statutory Notice has been served / amenities are lacking / poor condition.
GENERAL	Anyone who is not placed in any of the above six groups, including anyone in employment/studying who wishes to move to be closer to their work/training/study; Anyone who lives with their parents/relatives who is in employment and wish to establish a home of their own; anyone with social needs e.g. to be close to existing schools/hospitals.

All applicants will be placed into one group based upon their primary need, i.e. where they attract a high points total under that category. If the applicant does not have any high points and is not allocated to one of the above groups, then they shall be placed in the 'General' group

16. THE PROPORTION OF VACANCIES ALLOCATED BY LISTER TO GROUPS

The vacant flats that arise at Lister shall be allocated using the following broad proportions:

Ground floor/amenity/wheelchair/adapted flats: 100% to applicants with relevant medical need

<i>Other general needs flats:</i>	50 %	Council nominations <i>includes</i>	homeless (Section 5) and general nominations
	25 %	Housing list (EdIndex) <i>subdivided into:</i>	2.5 % Harassment 7.5 % Medical 2.5 % Support 6.5 % Overcrowded 1.0 % Below Tolerable Strd 5.0 % General
	25 %	Transfer list (Lister tenants only)	

Shared housing for single people 100% to applicants on Lister's Multi list.

Due to the low number of lets, the results will be compared to these target percentages for 3 and 5 year periods, as it would be difficult to achieve exact targets in any one year.

17. THE POINTS SCHEME

Lister is a partner in the EdIndex harmonised assessment of need points system. This points scheme is described at the end of this policy and is reviewed regularly.

The housing need of each applicant is assessed under 7 categories detailed in the points scheme according to the circumstances described on the application form.

The categories for which points may be awarded are as follows

- (1) Security of present accommodation.
- (2) Overcrowding or under-occupying of present accommodation.
- (3) Condition of property/lack of amenities.
- (4) Statutory homelessness.
- (5) Medical needs.
- (6) Special circumstances - harassment, social or support needs.
- (7) Economic reasons - wish to move/be closer to work for employment/training/study; wish to set up own tenancy when living with parents/relatives and working. This points award does not apply to multi applicants.

There are no points awards for local connection nor waiting time on list.

18. *REPORTS AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION*

All applicants sign, in their EdIndex application form, giving participating EdIndex partners permission to seek reports to confirm applicants circumstances. Lister shall, where possible, check with current and/or previous landlord(s) of the applicant that their tenancy has been conducted satisfactorily and that the current circumstances of the applicant are as stated on the application form. Issues taken into consideration include rent arrears and anti-social behaviour and any other breaches of tenancy.

Where there are concerns over an applicant's history then more stringent monitoring and the seeking of reports may be made by staff, as Lister's Management Committee are keen to ensure a viable and balanced community, and minimise rent arrears and anti-social behaviour in our stock.

Applicants also give permission to confirm medical or other special needs circumstances and reports on these topics may be sought by Lister.

19. *SUSPENSIONS FROM BEING HOUSED AND EXCLUSIONS FROM THE HOUSING LIST*

Lister aims to comply with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 in relation to suspending an applicant from being housed and excluding them from the housing lists. Lister aims to not exclude anyone from access to its housing lists (via EdIndex, transfer or exchange lists) who is 16 years or older, is a UK or EU citizen and lives in the UK. In certain circumstances applications will be cancelled: at the request of the applicant; failure to reply to correspondence; failure to return a review form; knowingly submitting false or misleading information or with-holding relevant information; death of the applicant. All applicants will be notified of any cancellation at their last known address.

Lister shall take no account of the following in assessing an application:

- a. Length of time that an applicant has been resident in the local area.
- b. The age of applicant, provided they are 16 years or older.
- c. The income of the applicant and his/her family.
- d. Whether the applicant or any of his/her family owns or has owned property.

Lister shall not require any requirement (before the applicant is eligible for housing) that:

- e. The application must have been in place for any minimum period of time.
- f. That a divorce or judicial separation be obtained.
- g. That the applicant no longer lives with or in the same house as some other person.

All suspensions must be on the basis of a written report on the applicant's individual circumstances by Lister staff and countersigned by another Lister staff member before taking effect. If an applicant is suspended by Lister from the housing lists then the applicant will be notified in writing. The applicant will be notified of the reason for suspension; the timescale of suspension; and action the applicant can take to end the suspension. The applicant has a right of appeal against any such suspension. Suspensions will be reviewed on a six-monthly basis. Any suspension will only be in relation to rehousing by Lister and will not affect the applicant's application held on the EdIndex system or other EdIndex partners.

20. *SUSPENSIONS DUE TO RENT ARREARS*

Lister may suspend an applicant who has rent arrears or other debt relating to a tenancy, but we will not suspend someone:

- a. Where previous rent arrears have been cleared.
- b. Where rent outstanding is equal to or less than one-twelfth of the annual rent.
- c. Where there is an agreement to pay rent arrears and the applicant has stuck to their agreement for three months and is continuing to keep to it.
- d. Where the debt was not the responsibility of the applicant (i.e. they were not the tenant).

Lister will suspend applicants where: there is a current Notice seeking possession or other legal action related to debt recovery which has been served on the applicant; or where the applicant has been evicted in the last 5 years for rent arrears or debts (and none of the above conditions (a) - (d) apply).

21. *SUSPENSIONS DUE TO ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR / TENANCY BREACHES*

Lister would like to prevent any problems arising through anti-social behaviour (as defined in the Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)) or serious breaches of tenancy conditions. Lister will suspend applicants where we have obtained a report that states that:

- a. The applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the last 3 years or the applicant is a former Lister tenant who has been evicted by us or a member of a former Lister tenant's household and his/her actions or behaviour contributed to the decision to evict.
- b. The applicant has had an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or interim ASBO granted against them in the last 3 years.
- c. Where the applicant has been guilty of violence, aggression or harassment against a tenant, neighbour, member of staff, Committee member or contractor used by Lister.
- d. Where the applicant has caused significant and serious nuisance directly related to the standard of their tenancy: e.g. garden, common areas, control over pets, rubbish, vandalism, drug dealing.
- e. Where reports from the Police or other statutory body confirms that anti-social behaviour has taken place and is directly related to the applicant's tenancy, including anti-social behaviour by any members of the applicant's household or visitors.

Where an applicant has been evicted in the last 3 years for anti-social behaviour or a member of his/her household has an ASBO/Interim ASBO made against them, Lister may offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) after a period of review of their suspension, provided: there is evidence of a sustained improvement in behaviour; or there is a commitment to change and a funded support package has been put in place. A SSST will be converted to a SST after a period of 12 months if Lister has not raised proceedings for possession. See Lister's policy on Short SSTs for more information.

22. OTHER REASONS FOR BEING SUSPENDED

- a. *Support Needs.* If an applicant has an unmet support need, an assessment of needs will be made by contacting support agencies, with the applicant's permission. In the situation where an applicant does not recognise that they have support needs or refused the offer of support then Lister can suspend their application. Each case will be considered on its merits and any suspension will only be for the period of time in which it takes to secure a support package.
- b. *Sex Offenders.* If verified information arises, either from the applicant or elsewhere, that the applicant is a sex offender then a risk assessment shall be carried out by the appropriate authority and the Council's Liaison officer notified. In general Lister considers that it is usually inappropriate to rehouse sex offenders in its stock due to the existing high number of families with children housed here; the compact geographic location of our stock which means families are close by; the communal back greens which are used frequently by children and accessible to all tenants; and the very close proximity of our housing to two schools and a nursery.
- c. *False Information.* If an applicant supplies false information then Lister may suspend their application pending investigation and confirmation of the true circumstances.
- d. *No permission to take up reports.* If an applicant does not grant EdIndex/Lister the right to take up reports, then the application may be suspended by Lister.
- e. *Criminal convictions.* We do not ask applicants about previous convictions but if information is brought to our attention then Lister reserves the right to verify such information and assess the appropriateness of any future allocation. This will only be done if the nature of the offence is likely to lead to problems with a tenancy.
- f. *Risk Assessment.* Lister may suspend an applicant on the basis of a risk assessment carried out by Lister staff and checked by a senior staff member. The assessment can include an assessment of the applicant's ability to sustain a tenancy; the financial risk to Lister; the risks to other tenants / neighbours / staff / Committee members / contractors if the applicant has more intensive needs and/or challenging behaviours.

IV THE LETTINGS PROCESS

23. ALLOCATION OF SELF CONTAINED TENANCIES

- a. *The source of applications to consider and shortlist*

When a vacancy occurs staff will decide whether: (a) to invite nominations from the local authority or another agency (b) to let using the EdIndex lists or (c) to let using the transfer list. In selecting which route to choose, staff will give consideration to: the current proportion of lets in relation to the Group Plus Points scheme and Transfer quota scheme; the composition of each list; the size and type of the vacancy; and other relevant factors, e.g. reason for the vacancy arising.

Where a vacant property is suitable for someone who is elderly or disabled or with medical needs (typically wheelchair / amenity / ground floor flats / flats already specially adapted) then Lister will only shortlist (from any source) applicants who have a medical need that will be alleviated by the proposed move to the vacancy. For example usually applicants being considered for a ground floor flat require to have a physical medical need for such a property. Applicants without such an appropriate need, no matter what their points level, will not be considered or shortlisted. In shortlisting applicants with physical medical need, those with the highest medical points will be considered above those with lower medical points but higher overall points.

b. The disregarding of points

It is the policy of Lister to disregard any points that the applicant is eligible for, if the proposed move (to the property for which they are being considered), does not improve or ameliorate the condition (for which the applicant was awarded the points). For example if an applicant is in a first floor flat and has points under medical need to move to a ground floor property, then if he/she is being considered at Lister for a first floor flat then those medical points shall not be counted.

In addition, where an applicant has support points then these will be disregarded if the proposed move to a Lister vacancy does not improve the possibility of support being provided or being received (e.g. the Lister vacancy is not significantly nearer the support source).

This disregarding of points will not lead to their EdIndex application being altered, however all such disregarding must be recorded in writing when shortlisting for any vacancy at Lister. Such disregards will be confirmed by another Lister staff member, through the signing of the shortlisting paperwork.

c. Achieving a stable and balanced community

In some cases, allocations may not be made to someone with the highest points. This could arise in several specific circumstances, which are outlined below:

- i. Where the previous tenant of the vacant flat was evicted for reasons including anti-social behaviour and there may be a risk that the applicant due to be housed could cause similar problems.
- ii. Where there are too many vulnerable people in the locality or stair and allocating the vacancy to the applicant would increase the number of vulnerable people, or would make it more likely that the applicant's tenancy could not be sustained successfully.

This process is not to 'screen out' particular types of applicant, but is to avoid concentrating those with high dependency needs where their vulnerability will be increased. Any bypassing such as this will be written down and confirmed by the signature of another Lister staff member.

d. The next steps

The staff will arrange home visits and/or interviews as necessary in accordance with the Co-operative's allocations procedure. Points awards may be revised following a visit or interview.

The applicant demonstrating the greatest need for rehousing under the terms of this policy, provided they meet the household specification for the vacancy, will be offered the tenancy of the vacant flat.

Where two (or more) applicants have the highest and equal points then the deciding factor shall be the length of time the applicant is known to have been in the highest housing need. This is not related to the length of time an application has been held on a housing list.

An applicant being offered a tenancy will be invited to view the property and will have up to 4 days from the day of first being notified of the offer (by telephone or letter) to view and to decide whether to accept the offer. An applicant is expected to start their tenancy within 5 working days of the offer being accepted and the membership procedure having been completed, unless an alternative entry date is agreed by Lister.

There is no restriction on the number of offers able to be made by Lister to an applicant, however the applicant needs to recognise that our low vacancy rate and the ever changing EdIndex list means further offers in the future cannot be guaranteed.

e. Home owners

Home owners may apply to us and be assessed in the same way as other applicants. However if they are about to be allocated a Lister vacancy, they must sign a declaration agreeing to sell their property within an agreed timescale and agreeing to occupy the Lister flat as their only home.

24. ALLOCATION OF TENANCIES IN SHARED SINGLE PERSON FLATS (MULTIS)

When a vacancy in a shared flat occurs, the remaining flat members will consider applicants from Lister's shared housing list in consultation with staff. The flat members will usually meet shortlisted applicant(s) and then make a nomination to the staff for the vacancy. The same interview procedure by staff as for other lettings is then followed.

25. MEMBERSHIP OF THE CO-OPERATIVE

As Lister is a fully mutual housing co-operative all applicants about to be offered a tenancy must apply to become members of the Co-operative at a cost of £1. They must fill in a membership application form and attend a brief informal membership interview with members of the Allocations and Membership Sub Committee. They must be approved for membership by this Sub Committee Interview Panel and take up membership before they sign a tenancy agreement. All people wishing to be on the tenancy agreement must complete successfully this membership process.

If an applicant fails to attend an agreed membership interview or fails to be approved for membership or declines to take up the offer of membership then the allocations process stops and the offer is withdrawn. There is an appeal process within the membership procedure if the applicant wishes to appeal any membership decision.

V ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

26. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

The Co-operative has a complaints and appeals policy which gives clear guidelines on how we deal with any complaints. An applicant may appeal against any decision concerning their application for housing. If the applicant is still not satisfied the matter can be considered by the Management Committee. The Co-operative participates in the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman scheme. Please ask if you wish more information about it. Those who have exhausted the appeals procedure can refer their complaint to the Ombudsman.

The EdIndex system also has a complaints procedure which may be used where appropriate. EdIndex also has service delivery targets which it aims to achieve.

27. ACCESS TO INFORMATION & CONFIDENTIALITY

The staff will respect the confidentiality of personal information about applicants or tenants obtained through applications, interviews or other contact with them. The Co-operative has a policy on access to personal and computer files which also covers the requirements of the Data Protection Acts.

However if Lister staff consider that a person's safety or well-being is at risk, or where we are obliged to give information by law, or as part of a legal process (when the alternative may be to face a charge of contempt of court), then information may be passed to a relevant person/organisation. This will only be done after careful consideration.

28. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy shall be monitored and reviewed regularly by the Management Committee to ensure it is meeting Lister's objectives. Tenants shall be consulted in advance on any proposed major changes to this policy. Annual statistical reports shall be made to the Management Committee. Selected results from the monitoring shall be made available in Lister's Annual Report and upon request to Lister.

29. ALLOCATION PROCEDURES

Detailed procedures and guidance on the operation of this policy by the staff have been approved by the Management Committee. Staff are responsible for the allocations process and for allocating properties within this policy and procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE IN OUR LEAFLETS ON THE FOLLOWING:

- No. 1: Application for Housing (Housing List). (Also available on tape.)
- No. 2: Shared Housing for Single People (Multi List)
- No. 3: Mutual Exchanges and Mobility Schemes
- No. 4: Transfers and Exchanges within Lister
- No. 5: Membership
- No. 7: A list of other Housing Associations and Co-operatives in Edinburgh
- No. 8: Access to Personal Files
- No. 9: Allocation of Multi flats to partners of tenants
- No.10: Data Protection Act

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LISTER HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE-EDINDEX HOUSING LIST APPLICANTS: POINTS SHEET

Applicants must ensure that all relevant information is declared on their application form, and information is not with-held or falsified. Evidence to confirm any details may be sought by Lister.

1. SECURITY OF TENURE (Only one award to be given under this heading)

Category 1:	points
a. Demolition / extraordinary circumstances (approved by the Council)	8
b. Non-statutorily homeless (For statutorily homeless see Section 4)	6
c. Hostel; Bed and Breakfast; Council or Women's Aid Refuge or temporary hostel for homeless people (these points apply only if applicant has not been accepted as homeless and in priority need by the Council); Prison	6
d. Sleeping rough	6

Category 2:

a. Asked to leave current accommodation within next 3 months	4
b. Tied housing ending in less than 6 months	4

2. OVERCROWDING / UNDER OCCUPATION (maximum of 4 overcrowding awards)

Lister's policy states that we allocate our property on the following basis:

Single person	Bedsit or 1 bedroom or room in shared flat
Couple	1 Bedroom
Lone parent or couple with 1 child	2 Bedrooms
Lone parent or couple with 2 children of same sex	2 Bedrooms
Lone parent or couple with 2 children of the opposite sex	3 Bedrooms
Lone parent or couple with 3 - 4 children	3 Bedrooms
Lone parent or couple with 4 or more children	4+Bedrooms

Notes: Children of the opposite sex will be considered for separate bedrooms only. No account is taken of pregnancy in assessing overcrowding although an applicant may refuse an offer of rehousing without penalty. Applicants must have majority custody of children to gain overcrowding points. Overcrowding points may be awarded if an applicant requires a 24 hour carer (not a relative or friend) in order to live in his/her own home. A couple may be considered for two bedrooms where there is an acute medical problem requiring them to sleep separately.

Points on the EdIndex Harmonised system will be awarded as follows. Two children of opposite gender can share as long as both are below the age of 6. Two children of the same gender are expected to share if both are under 14 and the age difference between them is less than 6 years. Lister will adjust the automatically-awarded harmonised points to match our policy (top paragraph).

a. Each bedroom short of needs (max 4 awards)	4
b. Each bedroom more than needs (max of 3 awards)	2

3. LACK OF AMENITIES / CONDITION OF PROPERTY

a. Statutory Notice for disrepair	6
b. Below Tolerable Standard - Environmental health notice	6
c. No inside toilet	4
d. No bath or shower	4
e. No cooking facilities	4
f. Lacking full central heating	4
g. Dampness (significant)	2
h. Disrepair (significant)	2

4. STATUTORILY HOMELESS (For those statutorily homeless this award applies and no points shall be awarded under sections 1 - 3, and 5)

a. Priority need statutorily homeless	100
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5.	<i>MEDICAL NEEDS (One award can be given in total)</i>	
a.	In hospital and cannot return home (no points awarded under Sections 1-4 above)	100
b.	Council urgent medical award (may have a restriction on type of property req'd)	100
c.	Council medical 'Gold' award (may have a restriction on type of property required)	8
d.	Applicant / household member - housebound in home	8
e.	Applicant / household member - severely restricted in home	6
f.	Applicant / household member - restricted in home	4
g.	Needs help bathing / with bath / need to move for health and mobility reasons	4
h.	Blackouts/fits and need to move for health reasons	4

6. *SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES (Only 1 award per category can be given in categories 1 & 2)*

Category 1: Harassment/Vulnerability

a.	Violence or domestic abuse, within current home	8
b.	General harassment within current home	6
c.	Abuse or violence from neighbours	6
d.	General harassment from neighbour or persons unknown	4
e.	Violence/harassment/abuse from persons unknown	4
f.	Anti-social behaviour / break-ins occurs often	4
g.	Anti-social behaviour / break-ins occurs occasionally	2

Category 2: Support (a move to the location of Lister must assist in meeting support needs)

a.	In Residential car / Supported accommodation - need to move	6
b.	Has daily care needs and needs a lot of help	6
d.	Must move to get daily support	4
c.	Have mental health problems and evidence confirms that a move would help a lot	2

Category 3: Social (Only one award may be given)

a.	Unable to access local amenities	4
b.	Has no or infrequent social contact where lives	4
c.	Only has some social contact where lives	2

7. *ECONOMIC (Only 1 award can be given)*

a.	Travelling over 10 miles each way for work/training/study and wish to move closer	2
a.	Travelling over 20 miles each way for work/training/study and wish to move closer	4

This is page 16 of the Lister Allocations Policy - it is blank (apart from this writing)