

Allocation and Letting Policy

AS WITH ALL OF THE ASSOCIATION'S POLICIES and PROCEDURES, THIS GUIDE, IN FULL AND IN PART, CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN SUMMARY, ON TAPE, IN BRAILLE, AND IN TRANSLATION INTO MOST OTHER LANGUAGES –

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

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1. GENERAL AIMS & OBJECTIVES

1.1 Mission Statement

Whiteinch & Scotstoun Housing Association Limited is a provider of quality housing and related services. Working in conjunction with other agencies, the Association is intent on making a contribution to the continual physical and economic regeneration of the community it serves. Through the provision and maintenance of accommodation at an affordable cost, and the ready availability of housing and benefits advice, the Association will support the community and individuals within it in seeking to achieve wellbeing and independence.

1.2 Legislation

The policy takes account of the under noted legislation as it relates to the allocation of housing:

- (a) Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- (b) Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- (c) Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003
- (d) Race Relations Act 1976
- (e) Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- (f) Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- (g) Human Rights Act 1998
- (h) Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- (i) Data Protection Act 1998

1.3 Good Practice Guidance and Performance Standards

The policy also seeks to comply with published good practice, such as Chapter 1 of Raising Standards in Housing and Sections' AS1.1 and 1.2 of Performance Standards for Social Landlords.

1.4 Housing Strategy

We will endeavour to meet our objectives by following a strategy which attempts to remove areas of decay and dereliction and to encourage a mix in terms of age of population, family size and type of housing and tenure. To help ensure that this objective is achieved, the Association will:

- Concentrate on the provision of housing for let at **affordable** rents and an element of low cost home ownership

- Provide accommodation suitable for both families and single people
- Provide specialist accommodation for elderly persons and persons with a disability
- Develop and maintain “Care in the Community” projects

The Association will endeavour to provide accommodation through its development programme.

1.5 Allocations Policy Principles

The Association maintains an open housing list and undertakes to ensure that allocations are carried out in an objective and impartial way. The system is accountable in the sense that it is subject to regular reporting and review.

The vast majority of houses are let to those in the greatest housing need who will, accordingly, generally be awarded the highest points under the Allocations Policy. However, when assessing Housing List and Transfer applicants the Association will also, through the award of social points, give consideration to a range of circumstances which do not strictly relate to the size and/or amenity of the applicants current accommodation, such as employment and social reasons (see also 6.14).

Where two or more applicants have the same level of points and where there are no other factors which would make it appropriate to consider one application rather than another, the date of application will be the determining factor in deciding who will be made the offer of accommodation.

The Allocations Policy will be subject to review at least every three years and will be updated in line with the introduction of new legislative requirements and/or any new good practice guidelines issued. In reviewing the Allocations Policy, the Association will also take into account whether the existing policy is continuing to meet a broad range of housing needs and helping to provide and maintain mixed and sustainable communities. The Association will review its Lettings Targets annually (see also 3.1).

1.6 Equal Opportunities

The Association operates an **Equal Opportunities Policy** under which it is committed not to discriminate against any group or individual on ground of gender, marital status, age, ethnic origin, nationality colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability or health, In line with this commitment, the Association will maintain record keeping and monitoring systems and report on the results on an annual basis.

On a day-to-day basis, the Association will help to achieve its commitment to equal opportunities by providing copies of its policies, including a summary version in an alternative format as required; and a sign or language interpreter who can be made available to assist with any enquiry an applicant or tenant may have.

1.7 Harassment, Relationship Breakdown and Domestic Violence

The Association believes that everyone has a right to peaceful enjoyment of their home, free from violence and fear of violence from both external and internal sources. Through its Allocations Policy, it gives recognition to severe targeted harassment from external sources and to relationship breakdown and domestic violence from within the home.

It recognises, however, that indiscriminate violence and general anti-social behaviour is an increasing feature of today's society and will work with the Police, tenants and the legal system to tackle this. It will not always be able to re-house those affected unless there is clear evidence that such behaviour is being targeted at a specific household.

1.8 Choice

The Association recognises that giving an element of choice to applicants can contribute to community stability and will, therefore, seek to clearly establish through the housing application form and, thereafter, at the pre-allocation visit, their specific housing requirements prior to an offer of accommodation being made.

There will be no specific limit on the number of offers of accommodation made, however, upon the third refusal the applicant will be invited to make an appointment to discuss their housing requirements in more detail. If, following discussions with the applicant, a further offer which is in accordance with their requirements is refused, and if there have been no changes in circumstance which have given rise to a change in needs, they will not be considered for further offers of housing for a period of six months. In effect, the application will be suspended.

After six months, the applicant will again be invited to make an appointment to discuss their housing requirements and will, thereafter, be considered for a further offer of accommodation in accordance with this. Again, if this offer is refused, their application will be suspended for a further period of six months.

An applicant who has refused offers in accordance with the above and does not take the opportunity to have an appointment to discuss their housing requirements will have their application cancelled. In such cases, they will not be considered for re-housing by the Association unless they submit a new application.

Refer to Sections 2.3 and 2.4 for further information on the Association's policy on the suspension and cancellation of applications.

1.9 Data Protection and Access to Information

The Association will seek to comply at all times with the provisions of legislation relating to Data Protection and the Right of Access to Information.

2. ELIGIBILITY AND OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

2.1 Who is eligible to apply

The Association will accept applications for housing from anyone aged 16 years or over whether or not they live, work or have any past or present links to the Whiteinch or Scotstoun areas.

However, specific age criteria will operate in respect of:

- Applicants for sheltered housing for elderly persons at Primrose Court, who will require to be 60 years of age or over.
- Applicants for amenity housing at Methil Street, who will require to be 55 years of age or over.

Applicants for sheltered housing will also be subject to a housing support assessment by Bield Housing Association, the housing support provider at Primrose Court.

Everyone submitting an application has a legal right to have their application assessed in accordance with the Association's published points system and to be admitted to the Housing List. This does not imply, however, a right to be re-housed as there is a high demand for properties. The Association is, therefore, unable to offer an applicant any guarantee that an offer of accommodation will be made.

All applicants will be provided with an explanation of how their points have been calculated and will have the opportunity to make an appointment to discuss their application in detail with a member of the Housing Management Department.

At this interview, the applicant will be advised in general terms about their prospects of housing and where these do not appear favourable or the need for housing is urgent, will be advised of alternative housing options and/or other housing providers.

Where an applicant has rent or mortgage arrears, this shall not in itself debar an allocation being made to him/her. However, the Association reserves the right to establish if the applicant has made an arrangement to clear the arrears (see also Section 2.3(i)).

2.2 Application Process

All applicants to the Housing List are required to fill in a form. This is obtained by writing, telephoning, e-mailing, calling in to the office or downloading an application form from the Association's Web Site. Applicants who require assistance to complete an application form will be assisted in this by a member of the Housing Management Department, if available, or given an early appointment.

Applicants who are housebound may request an appointment for a home visit subject to this being within reasonable travelling time from the Association's offices. Where this is outwith reasonable travelling time, the Association will discuss application arrangements with the applicant and agree the best way to proceed. This may include offering assistance by telephone or enlisting assistance from another agency where this is available.

The Association's Housing Management staff will deal with general enquiries regarding applications on a day-to-day basis but applicants wishing a more in-depth interview to discuss their re-housing options will be invited to make an appointment.

Generally, before an offer of accommodation is made, a house visit will be carried out to where the applicant is currently living, in order to verify information contained in the application form. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all information required by the Association. In cases where the information cannot be verified the points total will be amended accordingly and this may result in an offer not being made.

Where an applicant has no fixed abode, a visit will be carried out to the accommodation in which the applicant spends the most time. If this does not apply, for example, where the applicant is roofless, no visit can be carried out. In this case proof will usually be sought e.g. benefit book or similar. Where a benefit book shows an address, the Association will try to establish why the applicant is no longer able to reside there and if it is satisfied that there are valid reasons for this, will make an award of points in accordance with the level of award to roofless persons.

Applicants residing in a hostel, hotel, hospital, supported accommodation, institution or similar, will not normally be visited, but proof of residence will be required.

2.3 Suspension of Applications and Repossession of Tenancy

(i) Suspension of Applications and Repossession of Tenancy

The Association reminds all applicants of the importance of providing true and accurate information. If it is found that false information has been provided, the Association may take steps to suspend the application from the Housing list for a period of six months or, where a let has already been made, to seek repossession via a Court Decree.

Threatening, violent or abusive behaviour towards staff could result in the suspension of the applicant's name from the Housing List. The length of the suspension will depend on the seriousness of the behaviour and its impact on the staff member(s) involved. It will also be dependent on the implementation of any support mechanisms, medication or other means of ensuring, as far as is possible, that the behaviour is not likely to re-occur or will be better controlled.

Applicants who have current or former tenancy arrears will require to demonstrate that they have an agreed arrangement with their current or previous landlord to clear these and have kept to this arrangement for a period of not less than three months up to and including the point of an offer being made.

Applicants or their household members who have been the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or have been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the previous three years will be permitted to register an application for housing but, in the event of them having sufficient points for housing, will not generally be considered for a full Scottish Secure Tenancy but will instead be offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (See also Section 2.12).

Applicants may also be suspended for refusing offers of accommodation which are considered to have been consistent with the choices recorded in respect of their application for housing. The specific circumstances under which an application would be suspended for refusal of offers are fully explained in Section 1.8.

(ii) Suspension of Entitlement to Points

Applicants who have held a tenancy with a Registered Social Landlord within the past year, and who have left this voluntarily, thereby worsening their housing circumstances, will be admitted to the Housing List but may have any points relating to their worsened housing circumstances (e.g. overcrowding/sharing/insecurity of tenure points), suspended from their application until one year from the end of the tenancy.

Where circumstances existed which would have made it unreasonable for the applicant to remain in the former tenancy, for example, where there has been a relationship breakdown, no suspension of points relating to their worsened housing circumstances will apply.

In some cases, however, the Association may wish to investigate further the reasons for leaving the previous tenancy and may seek evidence, confirmation or additional information from the previous landlord, police, social work, solicitors or other agencies as appropriate.

All suspended applications must be initially approved and, thereafter, reviewed by the Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Chief Executive within a timescale consistent with the period of suspension. The purpose of the review will be to establish, based on the information available, whether the suspension should be lifted or continued (See also Association's Suspensions Procedure).

Committee will receive a bi-monthly report providing an update on suspended applications, including the number of suspended applications and the reason(s) for suspension.

2.4 Cancellation of Applications

Applications may be cancelled for the following reasons:

- applicants have advised the Association that they no longer wish to be considered for an offer of accommodation;
- applicants have died;
- applicants have not responded to a letter confirming arrangements for a Housing List visit;

- applicants have failed to respond to a request for information necessary to assess their application;
- applicants who have been made an offer of accommodation and have failed to contact the Association or who have failed to take the opportunity of an appointment to discuss their application;
- applicants have failed to respond in respect of the annual review of their application (see also Section 2.5):

This list of reasons for cancellation is not exhaustive. However, an application should not be cancelled for any other reason unless this course of action is approved by the Housing Manager or, in his absence, the Chief Executive.

In all cases, other than when correspondence is returned 'Addressee gone away', the applicant will be advised in writing that the application has been removed from the list.

2.5 Review of Applications

The Association will undertake an annual review of existing applications.

Applicants will receive a letter asking them to indicate whether they wish to remain on the Housing List and allowing them 10 working days to respond. The letter will advise that if they fail to respond within this timescale, their application will be removed from the Housing list.

If no response is received after 10 working days, a further letter will be sent advising that the application has been removed from the list. In this case, the application will be held for a further 5 working days before being deleted from computer records and dead filed. If a response is received within the 5 working days, the application will remain live.

2.6 Applications From Homeless People and Homeless Referrals

The Association recognises the various forms of homelessness through the Points System and awards points to reflect applicant's circumstances.

The Association also has a legal obligation, in terms of Section 5 Referrals of the Housing Scotland Act 2001, to assist the Council in alleviating homelessness by not unreasonably refusing a request from the Council to re-house a homeless applicant.

The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations has, on behalf of Registered Social Landlords operating in the Glasgow City Council area, negotiated a "Homelessness Duty Protocol" and the Association will act in accordance with this good practice document at all times. In order to deal effectively with direct applications from those who are homeless, about to be homeless or of no fixed abode, the Association encourages these applicants to apply to Glasgow City Council's Homeless Persons Service, West Community Casework Team or to other designated homeless reception centres. Such applicants may be referred to the Association as Section 5 referrals through the Homelessness Duty Protocol operating with Glasgow City Council. (see also 3.4)

The Association also accepts applications directly to its Housing list from those who are homeless, about to be homeless or with no fixed abode and will endeavour to provide appropriate advice and assistance to homeless people who call into the office. However, as indicated in the preceding paragraph, in view of the relatively limited levels and turnover of its stock, the Association is unlikely to be able to respond to an immediate need for housing in such cases.

2.7 Applications from Refugees/Asylum Seekers

In the interests of promoting multi-cultural communities and assisting with the re-housing needs of displaced persons from other countries, the Association wishes to play a role in the re-housing of refugees and asylum seekers and will offer access to the Housing List to all potential applicants.

2.8 Applications From Association Committee or Staff or Their Close Relatives

Members of the Association's Committee or Staff, or their close relatives may apply to join the Association's Housing List and have their application assessed in accordance with the Association's published points system.

The Association must, however, be made aware of such a connection timeously in order that any decision to allocate a property is made in line with procedures. Such an allocation will be ratified by the Committee of Management, entered in the minutes of the meeting, and recorded in a special Register maintained for this purpose.

This procedure will be followed in order to demonstrate that the Association conducts its activities in an open and publicly accountable manner and is in line with the requirements of Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

2.9 Relationship Breakdown

In cases of relationship breakdown, the Association will view sympathetically any requests for re-housing or transfer from the parties concerned. Ideally, prior to dealing with such a request the Association will require the applicant to supply satisfactory evidence that:

- a. a partnership/relationship did exist;
- b. where a partnership/relationship did exist, that it has irretrievably broken down.

However, in practical terms it may be difficult for the applicant to provide clear evidence, or for the Association to otherwise establish, that a partnership/relationship did exist and/or that it has irretrievably broken down. Where this is the case, any discretionary decision as to whether the application be assessed and pointed on the basis of relationship breakdown will require the authority of the Housing Manager or, in his absence, the Chief Executive.



In cases involving Association tenants, where there are dependent children involved it is generally preferable that the partner who has custody or majority custody, remains in the family home while the other partner is re-housed, usually in a smaller property. This ensures that best use is made of the Association's housing stock.

There will be occasions, however, where this would cause considerable difficulty, hardship or danger, for example, where one partner is violent, abusive or simply refuses to move. In such cases, the Association will take a sympathetic view if the partner with custody wishes to move.

Where there are no children involved, the Association will consider re-housing whichever partner wishes to move from the home. In cases where it is an Association tenant involved and it is the sole tenant who wishes to move, they will be asked to give up the home in favour of their ex-partner.

In cases of relationship breakdown, whilst the Association will, based on the criteria outlined above, be willing to accept an application for housing it must be recognised that due to the relatively limited levels and turnover of its stock, the Association may often be unable to respond to an immediate need for housing, for example, in cases of domestic abuse. Accordingly, the Association will encourage these applicants to apply to Glasgow City Council's Homeless Persons Service, West Community Casework Team or to other designated homeless reception centres (see also section 2.6) or to an appropriate support agency such as Womens Aid.

2.10 Access/Custody Arrangements

The Association receives requests for larger accommodation from tenants and applicants on the Housing List who have access arrangements to a child or children. In general, due to the overall shortage of larger accommodation, the Association will only allocate flats of three apartments or more (specific number of apartments allocated based on number/ages of children) where custody and responsibility rests in the majority with the applicant or is shared at least equally between the applicant and their former partner.

In all such cases, the Association will, prior to making the allocation, require to have the access/custody arrangement confirmed by a Solicitor and/or the applicant's former partner.

In cases of more limited access/custody, the Association will allocate on the basis of a single person.

2.11 Pregnancy

Applicants with a household member who is pregnant and as a result will require an additional bedroom when the child is born will be given the benefit of the additional overcrowding points based on the Association being provided with proof of pregnancy.

Prior to an offer of accommodation being made staff will verify that the pregnancy has continued.

2.12 Short Scottish Secure Tenancies

Under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the Association may, in very limited circumstances, decide to offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) to a tenant/applicant . These are as follows:

- (i) where the applicant has previously been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the last three years;
- (ii) if the applicant/tenant or a member of their household has been the subject of an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) within the past three years;
- (iii) temporary accommodation for people taking up employment in the area;
- (iv) temporary accommodation for a tenant who has had to move because of work being carried out on their house;
- (v) a house let to a homeless person on a temporary basis for more than six months;
- (vi) accommodation let on a temporary basis to someone in receipt of housing support services; and
- (vii) properties leased from another body by the landlord.

Where a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy has been granted because of a history of anti-social behaviour, the Association is required by statute to put in place a mechanism which is aimed at supporting the tenant to improve their behaviour with a view to achieving the objective of the tenancy being changed into a full Scottish Secure Tenancy within a period of one year. Such mechanisms may include the involvement of Social Work or other support agencies or of additional input from the Association's own resources.

2.13 Decision Taking

Decisions on cases which fall within the Policy guidelines laid down in this document, will routinely be taken by Association Staff. Cases outwith these guidelines must be brought firstly to the attention of the Housing Manager, or in his/her absence the Chief Executive, who will determine whether the case should be presented as a Special Case to the Committee Of Management for a decision (see also 3.2).

The presentation of any case to Committee will avoid disclosure of the identity of the applicant.

Special Cases should occur only exceptionally.



2.14 Appeals Procedure

The Association has an Appeals Procedure, which is open to all applicants. This Procedure should be used when the applicant feels that their application has been wrongly assessed.

Where the applicant is dissatisfied with the level of service received, the Complaints Procedure should be used rather than the Appeals Procedure.

Where an applicant wishes to use the Appeals Procedure, this should be brought to the attention, in the first instance, of the member of staff responsible for the assessment of their application to determine whether an error may have been made.

If the applicant continues to dispute the assessment, the matter should be raised with the Housing Manager and if he/she is not available at that time, an appointment should be made.

If there is still a failure to agree the assessment the applicant may move on to stage two of the Appeals Procedure, which provides for a review by the Chief Executive.

If this still fails to resolve the issue to the applicant's satisfaction, they have the right to have their case heard by the Association's Committee of Management.

To allow for the preparation of reports for the Committee, an appeal must be received at least two weeks before the meeting at which it will be heard. An applicant submitting an appeal will be advised of the date of the meeting. They may choose to attend the meeting in person either alone, or with another person; or to submit a written explanation of the reasons for the appeal; or to have someone else attend in their place. Where an applicant has language difficulties, the Association can provide a sign or language interpreter.

If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Committee they may submit their complaint to the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman.

3. EXPLANATION OF ALLOCATION SYSTEM & TARGETS PROCESS

3.1 Lettings Targets

Houses are allocated according to a system which awards points according to the Association's judgement of degree of housing need but also seeks to achieve a representation of certain target groups in the interest of maintaining a balanced and stable community (The Points System is detailed in Section 6). First priority is given to those Association tenants still living in unimproved properties within a Housing Renewal Area. Once houses have been allocated to these tenants, the Association seeks to allocate the remaining houses in accordance with targets, set annually (see below), in relation to other categories of applicants.

The table in Appendix 1 sets out the targets for each category of applicant. A fuller definition of each category and their qualifying conditions follows later in this section and also, in respect of transfers, Section 4.

The Letting Categories and the target in relation to each category will be reviewed annually by Committee, as outlined in 3.2 below.

Staff will aim on an ongoing basis throughout the year to let flats in sequence as per the target categories outlined above. However, it must be recognised that it may not always be possible to let in strict sequence, for instance, where within the category due for an allocation there is not a suitable applicant for the flat available for let. In such cases, staff will allocate to the most suitable applicant from another category but note the shortfall in lets to the category by-passed with the aim of redressing the balance in respect of target as soon as practicable thereafter. Staff will monitor lets throughout the year in order to ensure that, as far as possible, flats are allocated to each category of applicant as per the annual targets.

3.2 Reporting to Committee

In order to enable Committee to monitor the Association's performance in relation to allocations, the Housing Manager will submit a bi-monthly report that provides the following information:

- a breakdown of allocations per category of applicant against target for the year to date;
- a breakdown of the categories of applicants on the housing list;
- the number of properties let by property type and area;
- the number of and reasons for refusal of offers by property type and area;
- a satisfaction survey of new tenants views in respect of the allocations process

Lettings Targets will be monitored and reviewed annually by the Association's Committee of Management with the aim of assessing the effectiveness of the Allocations and Lettings Policy in meeting its objectives.

The assessment will be based on a year end summary of the above information and also any other relevant factors which have influenced how the Association has made allocations in the preceding year and/or which may have a bearing on how it sets its targets for the year to come.

3.3 Special Cases

Applicants whose circumstances are highly exceptional and causing undue hardship and who have insufficient points to be considered for a suitable property which would alleviate the situation, will be referred to the Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Chief Executive to determine whether the case should be presented to the Committee of Management.

3.4 Nominations From Special Needs Groups/Support Agencies

The Association works with various Special Needs Groups and Support Agencies which, throughout the year, nominate individuals to be re-housed within the Association's area.

Some agencies have been given Committee approval for a set number of nominations each year. Applications approved under this criteria will be awarded points in accordance with 6.4 below

Properties will generally be let direct to the tenant on the basis of a full Scottish Secure Tenancy but may, where the support needs are complex, be leased direct to the Special Needs Agency.

One-off referrals outwith approved agencies will be dealt with under the Points System (see Section 6.4) subject to the overall maximum of referrals from Special Needs Groups and Support Agencies set by Committee when agreeing Annual Lettings Targets (see 3.2).

3.5 Homeless Referrals

Under Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2001, the Association has a statutory obligation to assist Glasgow City Council to alleviate homelessness. The Association does this by letting a proportion of its accommodation to Section 5 Referrals received from the Council. In so doing, the Association seeks to comply in full with its statutory obligations and also to act in accordance with the Homelessness Duty Protocol drawn up jointly by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Glasgow City Council (see also 2.7).

3.6 Association's Housing List

Applicants to the Housing List will be awarded points according to the Association's published Points System. Allocations will generally be made to those applicants with the highest number of points, however, in the interests of minimising void periods, allocations may be made in some instances to people with housing needs who do not have the highest points levels, for example:

1. Applicants with the highest points do not desire the property.
2. Applicants with the highest points have medical conditions and the flat available is unsuitable.
3. Properties which are Low Demand may be offered to applicants with lower points (see also 3.7).

3.7 Low Demand Properties

The Association has a number of properties which are regarded as Low Demand. This could be for a number of reasons, examples of which are size (1apt), design and layout or location.

The Association may consider adopting different strategies for letting Low Demand properties. For example, we may advertise in the local press or write to a number of applicants in order to assess interest in these properties before making a formal offer. However, prior to adopting different strategies the Association must also consider sensitive allocations criteria as outlined in section 3.8.

All decisions to adopt a different strategy for letting a property(ies) must be sanctioned by the Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Chief Executive and a full record kept of the factors leading to the decision. All such decisions will also be reported to Committee in the bi-monthly Allocations Report referred to section 3.2.

3.8 Sensitive Allocations

Sensitive Allocations relates to instances when an applicant would qualify for a particular property based strictly on criteria of housing need but that there are other factors as a result of which it is considered inappropriate to make the allocation. The aim of exercising discretion under the heading of Sensitive Allocations is to maximise current and future tenants enjoyment of their home and will involve taking account of a number of factors including potential lifestyle clashes in respect of family sizes, ages of children, sound insulation of particular properties and also medical factors pertaining to the applicant.

All decisions to bypass an applicant on the basis of Sensitive Allocations criteria must be sanctioned by the Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Chief Executive and a full record kept of the factors leading to the decision.



3.9 Owner Occupiers

In the situation where the Association offers a property to an owner-occupier, it will ask the owner to provide a signed affidavit that they are taking steps to sell their property.

4. DETAILED CONDITIONS GOVERNING TRANSFERS

4.1 Transfer Policy

This policy will apply where existing tenants of the Association wish to be considered for another house within the Association's housing stock. The Association will maintain a list of transfer applicants whose applications will be pointed in accordance with the Points System. Tenants applying to transfer will generally require to have maintained a clear rent account (with the exception of any housing benefit due but unpaid) or, alternatively, to have entered into an acceptable arrangement with the Association to clear existing arrears and to have maintained the arrangement for at least three months and have had no complaints made against them for anti-social behaviour or breaches of tenancy conditions for a period of six months previously. The Association will consider waiving these conditions if there are circumstances in which this would cause undue hardship. Any waiver of these conditions would require the authority of the Association's Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Chief Executive.

Where two or more tenants have the same level of points and where there are no other factors which would make it appropriate to consider one application rather than another, the date of application for a transfer will be the determining factor in deciding who will be made the offer of accommodation (see also section 1.5).

4.2 Medical Factors

Tenants whose present accommodation is unsuitable due to medical reasons will require to complete the Association's self-assessment medical form. (See also 6.13)

5. MUTUAL EXCHANGE POLICY

Tenants of the Association may apply to mutually exchange with another WSHA tenant or a tenant of another RSL or a local authority. In order to be considered for a mutual exchange an application form must be submitted by both tenants' concerned. Consent, which will not be unreasonably withheld, must be obtained from both the Association and, where appropriate, the other landlord involved. Consent will be subject to the following conditions:

- (i) Overcrowding and under occupation guidelines being met (see Points System).
- (ii) Satisfactory house visits as determined by a member each from the Repairs and Housing Management Departments' who will carry out the visits.
- (iii) Both tenants have a clear rent account or, where rent arrears exist, have maintained a satisfactory repayment arrangement for a period of at least three consecutive months.
- (iv) Satisfactory tenancy reports being obtained from tenant's landlord. Tenants who have a history of anti-social behaviour may not be allowed to exchange.
- (v) No legal action pending in respect of the tenants' conduct (e.g. a notice served or a decree for eviction obtained in relation to anti-social behaviour).
- (vi) The tenants being suitable in terms of their specific needs (especially so in the case of amenity flats and flats specially designed for the disabled).
- (vii) The property being accepted as seen by the incoming tenant and there being no obligation on the Housing Association to remove alterations carried out by the previous resident.
- (viii) Due to the lack of very large properties, where an applicant is currently living in a three apartment or smaller property and requires a five apartment or larger property, the Association will permit two children of the same sex over 16, to share a bedroom.

6. POINTS SYSTEM

The letting of Association properties to housing list applicants and transfers is governed by our Points System. In general, allocations will be made to the applicant with the highest points. Categories of point awards are given below.

6.1 Whiteinch and Scotstoun Housing Association Tenants in unimproved properties within a declared Housing Renewal Area 300 points

6.2 Special Cases approved by the Committee of Management 200 points

6.3 Relationship Breakdown

Applicants who have suffered a relationship breakdown will be entitled to a point award of: **40 points**

Applicants may also qualify for medical and social points which would have been awarded if the relationship had not broken down. They will not be awarded points for insecurity of tenure, overcrowding or sharing amenities.

6.4 Referrals from Special Needs Groups/Support Agencies approved by the Association's Committee (see Section 3.4) 100 points

6.5 Overcrowding

Overcrowding points will be calculated on the lack of bed spaces or rooms in the present accommodation compared with rooms required, as calculated according to those required below :

- * one living room
- * one kitchen
- * one bathroom/shower room
- * one bedroom for tenant (and partner)
- * one bedroom for up to 2 children of different sex under 10 years
- * one bedroom for up to 2 children of the same sex up to 16 years
- * one bedroom for each child of the opposite sex over 10 years
- * one bedroom for any remaining member of the household over 16 years.

Points based on the above will be awarded as follows:

- * one bed space short **5 points**
- * each bedroom short **10 points**

Please note that a maximum of 30 points will be awarded for overcrowding

The general rules for the size of house that an applicant can apply for are:

No. of Apts Required	2	3	4	5	6
No. of Apts that can be applied for	1 or 2	3	4	4 or 5	4, 5 or 6

* * *

*Allocation will only be approved where current overcrowding is improved.

Due to the lack of very large properties, where an applicant is currently living in a three apartment or smaller property and requires a five apartment or larger property, the Association will permit two children of the same sex over 16 to share a bedroom.

It is recognised that in some cases an additional bedroom may be required for medical reasons. Prior to making an allocation on this basis the Association would require to be in receipt of written medical evidence from the applicants GP, hospital or other medical adviser. The evidence will be considered by a Community Occupational Therapist of Glasgow City Council Social Work Services and the applicant advised of the outcome.

The Association has a small number of one apartment properties which are suitable only for single people.

6.6 Under-occupation

To make best use of Association housing stock, under-occupation points will only be awarded to WSHA tenants.

Under-occupation points are calculated on the basis of the number of rooms in the present house surplus to the applicant's requirements. For each room surplus to requirements an award will be made of **10 points**

6.7 Lacking Amenities

Lacking amenity points are awarded to applicants whose accommodation lacks any of the following basic amenities.

Inside Toilet	40 points
Separate Kitchen Area*	30 points
Bath/Shower	20 points
Piped Hot Water	10 points
Separate bedroom/living room	15 points

These points apply only to self-contained properties and not to those sharing multiple occupancy properties e.g. hospitals, hostels, supported accommodation, prisons etc.

* **n.b. This applies to bedsit accommodation and not an 'open plan' kitchen**

6.8 Sharing Amenities

Sharing amenity points are awarded to:

- applicants who do not have their own home and lodge in someone else's home-this includes sons/daughters residing with parents and those living with family or friends;
- applicants who are tenants' in multiple occupancy accommodation.

All applicants meeting the above criteria will be awarded **10 points**

6.9 Hostels/Hotels/Prisons/Institutions/Supported Accommodation/Temporary Furnished Accommodation

All applicants will be entitled to a general award of **40 points**

Applicants may also qualify for medical or social points but not those which relate to property e.g. Overcrowding, sharing or lacking amenities, insecurity of tenure.

6.10 Tied Workers

Those living in accommodation which is tied to the job of a member of the household where there is no date to leave, will be entitled to an award of **20 points**

or/

Where there is proof of requiring to leave their accommodation due to retirement or end of contract, applicants will be entitled to an award of **40 points**

Applicants may also qualify for medical or social points and for overcrowding, sharing or lacking amenities but not for insecurity of tenure.

6.11 No fixed abode

Applicants with no fixed abode will require to provide a correspondence address and produce proof of where DSS benefits etc. are being claimed from, if applicable. Their circumstances will be investigated and if confirmed, will be awarded **40 points**

Applicants may also qualify for medical or social points but not those which relate to property e.g. overcrowding, sharing or lacking amenities; nor for insecurity of tenure.

6.12 Insecurity of Tenure

Applicants living with friends or relatives, living in caravans, mobile homes or other non-standard accommodation and tenants of private landlords will be entitled to an award of **20 points**

Applicants may also qualify for medical or social points and all property related points, for example, over-crowding, sharing or lacking amenities.

6.13 Medical Points

There are three categories of medical priority depending on the severity of the condition and whether the applicant's quality of life will be eased by re-housing.

The Association will issue a self-assessment medical form which must be completed by the applicant. This form will be assessed by a Community Occupational Therapist of Glasgow City Council Social Work Department and the applicant advised of the outcome.

The Association reserves the right to contact the applicant's GP, hospital or other medical adviser for further information or clarification.

If the applicant is unhappy about the outcome of the assessment they may submit written medical evidence from a doctor, hospital or other medical adviser.

If, after this the applicant is still unhappy with the outcome, they may follow the Association's Appeals Procedure.

The three categories of medical points are:

Medical A **50 points**

This will apply to applicants who have very severe mobility problems exacerbated by present accommodation

Medical B **35 points**

This will apply where the applicant has considerable difficulty with mobility or any other severe medical problem exacerbated by present accommodation.

Medical C **20 points**

This will apply where the applicant has a disability or condition which causes difficulty in the present accommodation.

For another member of the household included in the application an additional award on medical grounds can be made of:

Medical A **15 points**

Medical B **10 points**

Medical C **5 points**

Medical priority points will not be awarded if the applicant does not wish to be considered for the type of accommodation recommended by the Community Occupational Therapist.

6.14 Social Points

Social points will be awarded in a wide variety of circumstances, some examples of which are outlined below.

The award of Social Points will be made either by the Housing Manager or, in his/her absence, the Association's Chief Executive or the Community Occupational Therapist from Glasgow City Council Social Work Services. In most cases, documentary evidence will be required e.g. medical certificate, social work report, police report, letter from support agency, etc.

(i) Support

There are many situations in which support points may be awarded, for example:

- a. an elderly or vulnerable person who needs daily help from friends/relatives to maintain them in their home
- b. parents who work and need friends or family to collect children from school
- c. in relation to housekeeping support for a young person setting up their first home who would benefit from the support of family or friends, particularly in the early days of their first tenancy
- d. a family with a child with special educational needs catered for by a local school or school within reasonable proximity
- e. a person providing support to someone living within the area.

These examples are not exhaustive but indicative of the wide range of situations for which social points may be awarded.

The person, agency or institution providing the support or for whom the support is being provided need not necessarily be located within the Whiteinch and Scotstoun area. The criteria for an award will be that the ability to access or provide support will be substantially improved by the allocation of a house in the area. Therefore, a family with a child who requires extended periods of hospitalisation in the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Yorkhill, and who presently live in Easterhouse, would have their situation substantially improved by a move to the Whiteinch and Scotstoun area.

All applicants will be entitled to an award of

20 points

(ii) Travel to Work

This award can be made where an applicant requires to travel on public transport, for an hour or more; or who works unsocial hours and does not have access to personal transport and where an allocation of a house in Whiteinch or Scotstoun would be a substantial improvement.



The applicant will require to exhibit proof of employment or a firm job offer before an award of points will be considered under this category.

In cases where satisfactory proof has been provided, the applicant will be entitled to an award of **20 points**

(iii) Severe Targeted Harassment (including Racial Harassment)

General harassment such as vandalism, anti-social and loutish behaviour is, unfortunately, a feature of many areas. Due to the number of people likely to be affected by this, the Association is unable to make an award of points in these circumstances.

Where an individual household is the target of a campaign of harassment, this will generally be supported by evidence from the police, Social Work Services or other support agency and/or the landlord although, particularly in the case of racial harassment, it is recognised that this may not always be available. However, in cases where there is a lack of firm evidence, and in particular in relation to a transfer request from one of the Association's own tenants, knowledge of the neighbourhood, other tenants etc. will assist in deciding whether, on the balance of probabilities and with the information to hand, harassment is likely to have taken place.

If the applicant is the tenant of another Registered Social Landlord (RSL), the Association would not consider the application unless satisfied that the other landlord had taken all reasonable steps to rehouse their tenant from their own stock, where appropriate, or by nomination to other RSLs'.

In cases where the Association is satisfied that the household has been subjected to severe, targeted harassment, the applicant will be subject to an award of **60 points**