

Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire)
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PART 1 – GENERAL

1. Statement of objectives

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) aims to create stable and sustainable communities, and to ensure that we treat everyone who applies to us for housing in a fair, consistent and professional manner.

It is intended to be clear, comprehensive, non-discriminatory and to provide equal access for all. The rules contained within this policy apply to all of our houses in South Lanarkshire and this policy sets out how we will allocate our vacant houses.

Our objectives include:

- providing a customer-focused allocations service that is transparent, consistent, accountable and fair;
- utilising allocations processes that are efficient, effective and economic to administer;
- ensuring that there is open access to our housing list and that our housing can be accessed by all those aged 16 years and over who need it, regardless of their race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, faith, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, responsibility of dependents, HIV status, mental or physical health or disability;
- providing appropriate advice and assistance to customers on their housing prospects so that they can make informed choices in relation to requesting specific allocation areas, house types, etc;
- allocating our houses principally on the basis of need, giving those in greatest need the highest priority for housing;
- making the best use of our housing stock, including seeking to match applicants with particular needs to vacant houses that are designed or have been adapted and specifically meet their needs;
- minimising the time taken to allocate empty properties and thereby minimising void rent loss; and
- monitoring and reviewing housing needs data, including developing appropriate strategies for tackling proactively any concentrations of emerging low demand or unsustainable housing stock.

Access to information

Any information that we hold regarding an individual must be treated lawfully and correctly in line with the safeguards outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 which requires data to be;

- lawfully, fairly and transparently
- processed for limited purposes
- adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which it is processed
- accurate and kept up to date
- kept no longer than the period necessary and
- kept securely against unauthorised or unlawful processing and protected against accidental loss, destruction or damage.

The processing shall be carried out in a way that ensures compliance with the rights of data subjects, including;

- the right to be informed
- the right of access
- the right to rectification
- the right to erasure (so far as applicable)
- the right to restrict processing
- the right to data portability
- the right to object to processing
- the right not to be subject to fully automated decision making including profiling.

2. Compliance with regulatory standards

In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified a number of key indicators relevant to access to housing and support by which it will measure landlord performance, including the following.

Housing options – social landlords work together to ensure that people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them; social landlords work together to ensure that tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options; and social landlords ensure that people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

Access to social housing – social landlords ensure that people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.

Tenancy sustainment – social landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

Homeless people – local councils perform their duties on homelessness so that homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

3. Expected outcomes

Through our Corporate Plan, we seek to make a significant contribution to meeting housing need; create sustainable and thriving communities; serve diverse/mixed communities; and ensure satisfied and engaged customers.

- Through partnership working with local authorities and others we will actively seek to encourage the development of stable and sustainable communities. To assist in this we will:
- collect and monitor the number of vacant houses, the turnover, the number of refusals, the reasons for the refusals, the reasons for terminating tenancies, the household type being allocated houses and the cost of re-letting houses;
- collect and monitor letting outcomes on a wide range of equalities groups, e.g. by age, gender, disability, ethnicity etc and to participate in SCORE. (SCORE is the

Scottish Continuous Recording system which collects data from RSLs on allocations and provides benchmarking information to the Scottish Housing Regulator and all participating RSLs);

- collect and monitor information on the number of transfer list applicants we have rehoused;
- collect and monitor information on the number of waiting list applicants we have housed;
- collect and monitor information on the number of homeless applicants we have housed;
- use this information to:
- feed directly into the Local Housing Strategy which will help with informing priorities for regeneration, remodelling and other initiatives;
- identify and justify courses of action, such as local lettings initiatives, intensive estate management and prioritising work within our investment programme to deal with issues that are identified;
- help provide a better understanding of the problems within a community and by doing so initiate support and assistance from the wider community and other agencies in taking a joint approach to alleviating the situation and making the area a better place to live; and
- measure our performance in achieving and maintaining stable and sustainable communities by setting targets for the recovery of an area, e.g. we will set targets to reduce the property turnover, improvement in customer satisfaction, etc.

4. Informing and involving stakeholders

As a member of the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register, we work together in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and other social landlords to ensure that applicants can make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them and ensure that people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

We will promote our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) through our newsletter, website and tenancy handbook. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult tenants through our Customer Panel in line with our Customer Engagement Strategy.

5. Legislation and corporate fit

5.1 Legislation

We will comply with all relevant legislation, standards and targets set down by the Scottish Housing Regulator in terms of allocations.

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) complies with legislation, guidance and good practice including:

The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987;
The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001;
The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010;
The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003;
The Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981;
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
The Civil Partnerships Act 2005;
The Data Protection Act 2018;
The Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003;
The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (the “**GDPR**”);
The Access to Personal Information (Housing) (Scotland) Regulations 1993;
The Human Rights Act 1998; and
Management of Offenders etc (Scotland) Act 2005 (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements – MAPPA);
The Equality Act 2010
Housing Scotland Act (2014)

Specifically the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 lay down the legal requirements that Clyde Valley Housing Association and all other Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) must comply with in:

- setting out policy for admission onto the housing list;
- priority of allocation of social rented houses;
- transfer of tenants to other landlords;
- mutual exchange of houses; and
- assistance to homeless persons.

We let houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need, makes best use of available stock, maximises choice and helps sustain communities.

Throughout the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) we have used certain words and unless stated otherwise, the definition given is applicable throughout the policy. To

avoid any doubt, the Interpretation Act 1978 applies to this policy. This means, for example, that any reference to a male also includes reference to a female and any reference to the singular also includes any reference to the plural.

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) complies with the Association's Equality Policy. Clyde Valley Housing Association is committed to the elimination of all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination and to promoting equality in all our functions. The Association is committed to equality for all people irrespective of their gender, marital status, family circumstances, disability, race, ethnic or national origins, age, religion or belief, political or sexual orientation. However we may look at individual cases where it may be prudent to exercise positive action to ensure that certain groups are allocated appropriate accommodation (e.g. applicants with appropriate medical needs). To enable us to fulfil our commitment to equality, we will record and monitor the ethnicity, gender and disability of all applicants and review our performance and policy accordingly.

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) is consistent with our:

Corporate Strategy;
Business Plan;
Tenancy Sustainment Policy;
Void Management Policy;
Decant Policy;
Payment and Benefits Policy;
Complaints Policy;
Health and Safety Policy;
Risk Management Strategy; and
Standing Orders and Delegated Authority Policy.

5.2 Equalities

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) complies with CVHA's Equality Policy. We will consider all applications, regardless of sex, faith or religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical health, disability or marital status.

5.3 Confidentiality

We recognise that confidentiality is important to applicants and will treat information that we receive in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with our Openness and Confidentiality Statement.

We will not pass on or discuss with any third party any information provided by any applicant without the applicant's written permission, except for the purposes of processing the application through the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register or as may be required by law. If there is personal information about someone other than the applicant on the application, we will not release that information unless we receive written permission from that other person.

To ensure an applicant's own confidentiality within their household, we can if instructed, contact the applicant at an alternative address, provided that we receive full details and the instruction in writing with the application, or at a later date.

All applicants who would like to check the details that we hold on their application can contact us at any time. Except as may otherwise be required by law, we will allow only the applicant access to their file, unless we have a signed mandate from the applicant

authorising us to allow another named person access to the file and we are able to satisfy ourselves as to the identity of that other named person.

5.4 Business Plan and risk management

Our Business Plan depends significantly upon generating revenue from the properties that we rent. We therefore seek to mitigate against business risk through minimising our void rent loss. Allocating properties in an efficient, effective and economic manner should minimise our void rent loss.

5.5 The Board

The Board will monitor the implementation of this policy to ensure that it is properly operated, that there is appropriate officer involvement in the allocations system and that there is effective scrutiny of the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire).

The Customer Services Director has responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and the Housing Manager is responsible for key aspects of the day to day service delivery with delegation of specific tasks to appropriate staff.

The Board will ensure that the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) is meeting its intended objectives and that monitoring and reporting of activities takes place in accordance with the Performance Standards and monitoring as detailed at Part 7 below.

The Board will also carry out annual reviews of the points scheme and letting quotas set out in the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) to ensure that they remain appropriate in relation to changing housing needs or statutory requirements.

In implementing the Association's Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) certain functions are the responsibility of the Board or nominated committee, although staff have delegated authority to undertake many tasks. Examples of key functions / tasks are summarised below.

Function / task	Responsibility
Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) – review, amendment and approval (including establishment of local letting initiatives)	Board
Assessment of applications	Operations staff (and Common Housing Register partners).
Authorisation of allocation of available property	Customer Services Director and Housing Manager or Senior Housing Officer (except Payments and Benefits Policy cases which require Board approval).
Monitoring of lets and housing lists	Customer Services Director and Housing Manager or Senior Housing Officer reporting to the Board.
Appeals relating to assessment of applications or offers of accommodation	Clyde Valley Housing Association's Complaints, Policy.
Periods of suspension in relation to ASBOs	Customer Services Director recommendation to Board to determine reasonable period of suspension (on a case by case basis).
Special circumstances	Customer Services Director recommendation to Board regarding clarification on a point of policy.

There may be special circumstances where the provisions of our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) do not adequately reflect an individual's unique housing situation. In such circumstances we may seek clarification on a point of policy. If the Customer Services Director recommends that this should happen, this will require to be considered by the Board. If this occurs, we will not tell members your name to protect your confidentiality.

6. Notification

We will write to applicants to notify them of their acceptance onto the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register. At that time we will advise the applicant of any points entitlement and their application number.

If we have suspended an application, we will write to the applicant and advise them of our decision and give the reasons for our decision. We will offer our help and support so that the applicant may make informed choices about having their housing options.

7. Decision making

We will make sure that our decision-making is transparent and will:

- make applicants aware of our reasons for any decision on their application;
- base all of our decisions on objective criteria which applicants are aware of;
- make our policy readily available;
- have a clear appeals procedure in place; and
- continually monitor the allocation process.

PART 2 – ACCESS TO HOUSING

Applying for housing?

Anyone can apply for housing with us if they are aged 16 years and over.

We will welcome applications from all regardless of colour, gender or sexual orientation, faith or religion, race, ethnic or national origin, mental or physical health, disability, marital status, language or social origin.

An applicant may be, but does not have to be:

- one of our tenants;
- the tenant of another housing association or co-operative;
- the tenant of a local authority;
- the tenant of a private landlord;
- an owner occupier; or
- someone who does not have a permanent home of their own (e.g. a person who lives with relatives or friends, in a caravan, in residential accommodation, etc.)

We work with South Lanarkshire Council and other housing associations to maximise choice and simplify access to housing. By filling in a single application form, an applicant's information can be held on a 'Common Housing Register' and applicants can be considered for housing through a range of providers.

Applicants must provide us with all of the information and any supporting evidence that we need to assess their housing application. It is also critical that applicants provide accurate information and advise us of all changes of circumstances that may affect their housing application.

We will carry out a rolling review of our housing list so that applicants have their circumstances checked and updated routinely. Every 12 months we will issue a review letter to applicants, requesting confirmation of circumstances. If the applicant does not respond by the set date, a reminder letter will be issued. If we fail to receive a response to this reminder letter we will remove the application from the housing list. If an applicant who has been removed from the list and contacts us at a future date, they can reapply to join our housing list.

Types of application

Within the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register there are different categories of applicants. Part 3 of the Housing Allocation Policy provides further information.

All of our housing applications are held on a Common Housing Register that we administer in conjunction with South Lanarkshire Council and other partner landlord organisations.

Letting quotas

In order to achieve stable and sustainable communities we seek to use a quota system to maintain a balance when we are allocating properties. Appendix 1 summarises our current South Lanarkshire Letting Quotas.

We will make selections throughout the year by rotation, seeking to ensure that target quota percentages are broadly achieved on an ongoing basis. However quotas achieved may vary depending upon a variety of circumstances such as turnover, availability of Council referrals /nominations, local letting initiatives, low demand, etc.

There may be new developments or regeneration schemes where different quotas are agreed for first lets, such as where existing tenants require to be rehoused as part of the development programme.

From time to time the Council, as strategic housing authority, may analyse patterns of housing demand and supply and propose local letting plans that will seek to specify variable quotas for local letting areas. To ensure flexibility in meeting the changing needs of our local housing markets, we aim to review local letting quotas annually in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and report to Board.

Quotas can be adjusted to meet the changing needs of local housing markets and in certain circumstance local letting initiatives will be applied. Appendix 2 sets out details of current South Lanarkshire Local Letting Initiatives.

Joint applications

We will consider an application from more than one person, where the applicants wish to live together as joint tenants. We will consult all applicants, who have requested a joint application, on the number of people who apply to be housed together as joint tenants. When doing so we will take into account all relevant legislation at that time. We will grant joint applications unless we have reasonable grounds to refuse the request.

When we make an offer of housing to joint applicants, we will generally create a joint tenancy in respect of each of the applicants.

Assessing applications

In assessing applications and allocating properties we will take no account of:

- the age of an applicant, other than to verify that the applicant is aged 16 years and over;
- the length of time the applicant has lived in the area;
- any money due for a house that the applicant was not the tenant of;
- rent arrears or housing debt, such as rechargeable repairs, which have been paid off or amount to less than 1/12th of the annual rent;
- rent arrears or housing debt, such as rechargeable repairs, which amount to more than 1/12th of the annual rent where the applicant has an agreed repayment arrangement and has maintained the arrangement for at least three continuous months;
- any debts which do not relate to the tenancy of a house;
- any Council Tax arrears;
- the applicant's own income or the income of the household; and
- whether the applicant or any member of the household now own or have ever owned a house.

We will seek to assess all housing applications within 10 working days from date of receipt. We will provide applicants with a unique application reference number and advise of any points awarded.

Applications which may be removed or suspended

We aim to operate a housing list that is open and can be accessed by people in a variety of housing circumstances. However although we may accept an application, there are circumstances where we may remove or suspend an application and therefore not make an offer of housing.

We will remove an application from our housing list if:

- the applicant has died;
- the applicant has asked in writing to be removed from the list; or
- the applicant has failed to respond to a periodic review of the housing list.

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate to suspend an application for housing for a period of time. Where your application has been suspended you will not be considered for or receive an offer of housing during the period of the suspension. A suspension will not affect your points level.

The table below sets out the reasons and circumstances that will result in an application for housing being suspended and provides details of the timescale for which the suspension is likely to apply.

	Reasons for suspension	Rules and timescales
1	<p>Anti-social behaviour by an applicant or a member of their household</p> <p>The list below provides examples of the types of behaviour that we consider to be anti-social (this list is not exhaustive):</p> <p>annoyance, harassment, violent or intimidating behaviour towards staff members or neighbours;</p> <p>criminal convictions related to a tenancy (e.g. drug dealing, prostitution, fire raising, etc.);</p> <p>extensive damage caused to a landlord's property;</p> <p>Anti-Social Behaviour Order granted;</p> <p>eviction decree granted;</p> <p>established and sustained pattern of conduct considered anti-social; or</p> <p>any other behaviour that we consider to be anti-social</p>	<p>Where the applicant has an existing application for housing, the application will be suspended pending the outcome of investigations.</p> <p>Where an offer of housing has been made to the applicant, the offer will be held pending the outcome of the investigation.</p> <p>Where anti-social behaviour has been established, the application will be suspended and the offer of housing withdrawn (where relevant).</p> <p>Suspension period is up to 36 months.</p> <p>The case will be reviewed by the Housing Manager to determine whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the applicant can demonstrate their ability to behave in such a way as not to cause harassment, nuisance or annoyance to others; and - the household will be able to maintain a future tenancy in an acceptable manner. <p>Thereafter the application will either be reinstated or the suspension extended for a further 3 months (depending upon the outcome of the review).</p>

	Reasons for suspension	Rules and timescales
2	<p>Tenancy related debt attributed to the applicant as a tenant within the previous five years</p> <p>Suspension will be applied where the applicant has rent arrears or any other tenancy related debt (e.g. rechargeable repairs, service charges, etc). Exceptions to this would be where:</p> <p>the debt as been paid off in full;</p> <p>the level of debt is equivalent to or less than a month's rent;</p> <p>an agreement has been made to pay the debt off and this has been maintained for at least three months and is continuing to be maintained; and</p> <p>the debt is not the responsibility of the applicant as a tenant.</p>	<p>Suspension period is 3 months.</p> <p>The suspension will be lifted in the following circumstances: immediately following full payment of the debt; or where an arrangement to pay off the debt has been maintained for 3 months; or where the debt has been reduced to less than a months rent.</p>
3	<p>Breach of tenancy condition/s</p> <p>Suspension will be applied where the applicant is a current tenant of a Social Landlord and has breached their tenancy conditions. For example:</p> <p>unsatisfactory condition of property, garden, common areas, disposal of rubbish, wilful damage, vandalism, control of pets, etc; and</p> <p>where alterations or improvements have been carried out on a property without the approval of the landlord.</p>	<p>Suspension period is 3 months.</p> <p>Suspension should be lifted as soon as the Social Landlord is satisfied that the condition of the property has improved to a satisfactory level.</p> <p>However where there has been a persistent breach of tenancy, the case will be reviewed by the Housing Manager after 3 months and the application either reinstated or suspended for a further 3 months (depending upon the outcome of the review).</p>

	Reasons for suspension	Rules and timescales
4	<p>Refusal of a second offer of housing</p> <p>Suspension will be applied where the applicant has refused a second reasonable offer of housing within the last 3 years (made in accordance with the applicant's preferences).</p>	Suspension period is 6 months.
5	<p>Fraud, false or misleading information</p> <p>Suspension will be applied where the applicant has deliberately misrepresented information in order to gain advantage over other applicants in housing need.</p>	Suspension period is 6 months.

Where a decision has been taken to suspend your application for housing, we will provide you with the following information:

- the reasons for the suspension;
- the implications of the suspension;
- the period of the suspension;
- the process by which you can appeal against the suspension (see Part 5 for details of how to appeal);
- the steps that you need to take in order to have the suspension lifted; and
- the information, advice and support that we can provide to assist you to have the suspension lifted.

The suspension timescales outlined above may be extended if we consider that you have not taken the necessary steps required for the suspension to be lifted. Suspensions will only be extended at the discretion of the Housing Manager and will be based upon the individual circumstances of the case.

Tenancy references

We will seek references from the appropriate landlord/s for any applicant who has been a tenant of:

- any local authority;
- any Registered Social Landlord; or
- any other landlord.

We must be satisfied that the information provided in the tenancy reference confirms that the applicant satisfies our eligibility criteria detailed in Part 2 before we will consider an application for an offer of housing.

We will suspend all applications until we have received the tenancy references. We will ask all applicants, and anyone applying to be housed with them as a joint tenant, who has held a tenancy to sign a mandate confirming that they are happy for us to write to any current and all previous landlord/s within a 3-year period prior to the date of the application for a tenancy reference. Without this authorisation we cannot contact landlord/s for a reference and we cannot process an application.

We will not make an offer of housing if we are not satisfied with any of the tenancy references that we receive. We will suspend the application and monitor the case for improvement, e.g. in terms of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, tenancy breaches, etc. However if the tenancy reference is unacceptable because of rent arrears, which the applicant accrued as tenant of a house, it is the applicant's responsibility to advise us when the account is clear or that the applicant has kept to an agreed repayment plan in respect of the arrears for a continuous period of 3 months. If the tenancy reference is unacceptable because the applicant or a member of the applicant's household is subject to an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) under relevant legislation, we may consider making an offer of housing with a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST).

Where we suspend an application because we are not satisfied with a tenancy reference the applicant can request to see the reference. We will deal with the request under the Data Protection Act 2018.

Nominations and referrals

We allocate a quota of our vacant properties to homeless lets identified through the Common Housing Register. Typically where we are reletting vacant properties or involved in a new development, the local authority may be offered up to 50% nominations. However there may be new developments or regeneration schemes where different quotas are agreed for first lets, such as where existing tenants require to be rehoused as part of the development programme.

Through the Common Housing Register, applicants can ask to be considered for housing with Clyde Valley Housing Association or another landlord who may have accommodation within the applicant's area of choice.

Changes of tenancy

Successions

If a tenant dies and a member of the household applies for the tenancy we will consider them for the tenancy under the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

And Housing Scotland Act 2014

From 1 November 2019 there will be new notification and residency requirements that have to be met for someone to inherit your tenancy and these are set out for the various levels below.

Level One

your spouse, civil partner or co-habitee if the house was their only or principal home on your death; OR

a joint tenant, if the house was his or her only or principal home on your death.

In the case of a co-habitee, he or she must also have occupied the house as his/her only or principal home for at least 6 months immediately before your death.

From 1 November 2019 a co-habitee must also have occupied the house as his/her only or principal home for at least 12 months immediately before your death.

The 12 month period cannot begin unless we have been told that the individual is living in the property as their only or principal home. We must have been told that by you, a joint tenant, or the person who wishes to succeed to the tenancy. The length of time they have been living in the property starts from the date we are notified that the person is living in the property as their only or principal home. You can give us notice of someone living with you before 1 November 2019 and that time will count towards the length of time they have been living at the property.

If more than one person qualifies for the tenancy under Level One, they must decide among themselves who should get the tenancy. If they cannot agree, we will decide.

Level Two

If no-one qualifies at Level One, or a qualified person does not want the tenancy, it may be inherited by a member of your family as long as:

- he or she is aged at least 16 at the date of death;
- the house was his or her only or principal home at the date of death.

The law is very clear on who is eligible to be a 'qualified person' and can therefore succeed to a tenancy. It also specifies the order in which each category is given priority.

Where there is a joint tenancy, the tenancy automatically remains with the other joint tenant/s. In all other circumstances the order is:

- (a) the tenant's spouse or partner, providing that the house has been their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death;
- (b) if (a) does not apply, then the tenancy may be offered to a member of the tenant's family, providing that it was their only or principal home at the time of the tenant's death;
- (c) if neither (a) nor (b) applies then the tenancy may be offered to the carer, providing that the carer gave up their only or principal home in order to move in with the tenant before their death.

The type of tenancy given after succession is a full Scottish Secure Tenancy.

However where a house has been designed or substantially adapted for the use of someone with special needs, the law clearly states that only spouses, partners, joint tenants or persons with similar special needs can succeed the tenancy. Others who would otherwise be eligible to succeed to the tenancy would therefore be offered reasonable alternative accommodation.

Assignations

If a tenant moves out of their home or is no longer able to live in their home permanently due to their health, we will consider assigning the tenancy to a member of the household under the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

We will normally do this if the person is the tenant's son or daughter or the person has lived in the house as a member of the household or the person has been a full time carer to the tenant. The applicant (the assignee) must have had our permission to reside in the property and lived in the house as their only or principal home for at least 12 months prior to the date of the application seeking our consent to the assignation.

The applicant must apply to us in writing and meet all of the following conditions:

- the applicant will be homeless if we do not transfer the tenancy to them;
- the applicant has lived continuously with the tenant throughout the tenancy for at least 12 months prior to the date of the application;
- the applicant has given up a tenancy or sold their home to become the full time carer of the tenant;
- we are satisfied that the applicant will be a suitable tenant; and
- transferring the tenancy to the applicant makes best use of the house.

The Housing Manager will consider applications to assign tenancies and will advise the applicant in writing of their decision. If the Housing Manager decides that a tenancy should not be assigned, the Housing Manager may consider the applicant for a different property that is more suited to the applicant's needs.

The assigned tenancy will be on the basis of a full Scottish Secure Tenancy.

Subletting

Tenants may sublet their property providing that our prior written permission has been granted (we will not unreasonably withhold our consent). A property can be sublet for a period of up to one year where the tenant is going to be absent on a temporary basis (e.g. working / training / studying away, prison, extended holiday, etc).

From 1 November 2019 if you want to sublet all or part of the house the house must have been your only or principal home for at least 12 months immediately before the date of your written request to sublet the house to someone else. If you were not the tenant throughout that period, the house must have been your only or principal home during those 12 months and the tenant must have told us that you were living there.

The length of time the person who wants to sublet all or part of the house has been living in the property starts from the date we are notified that the person is living in the property as their only or principal home. You can give us notice of someone living with you before 1 November 2019 and that time will count towards the length of time they have been living at the property.

However at all times a sublet property will remain in the name of the tenant and the person subletting the property cannot succeed to the tenancy. The tenant will continue to be legally responsible for ensuring adherence to the conditions of tenancy, including payment of rent, not causing nuisance, etc. If there are any breaches of tenancy we will take legal advice and may take steps to remove the person subletting the property.

Lodgers

Tenants may take in lodgers providing that our prior written permission has been granted.

We will not unreasonably withhold our consent, however we will not permit lodgers to move in if:

- overcrowding results;
- the proposed lodger has an outstanding ASBO;
- they owe the Association in relation to rent arrears and / or rechargeable repairs; or
- they have been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the past 3 years.

Lodgers have no rights of succession nor can the tenant assign the tenancy to a lodger.

False or misleading information

We will take all reasonable steps to investigate any information we receive which affects an application.

It is important that applications are completed carefully and with as much detail and information as required. Information provided must be accurate and up to date. Applicants must notify us of any changes to the information as soon as the change is known.

Applicants must co-operate fully with any reasonable investigations needed to confirm the details of an application that we carry out or which is carried out on our behalf and must allow our staff access to their home to inspect it.

If we find out that any applicant has provided false, misleading or out of date information to apply for housing with us we may suspend the application. If we suspend the application we will not make an offer of housing. However, we will advise the applicant in writing of our decision and the reason/s for our decision.

If we find that we have created a tenancy that has been the result of an applicant providing false or misleading information we may take appropriate legal action. This may result in us removing the tenant and anyone who lives with the tenant from the house. It may also result in us placing the tenant on a SSST. We will advise the tenant in writing of the action we intend to take, although the results of all investigations will remain confidential.

The Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire), and this section in particular, applies to joint applicants jointly and severally. This means that even if only one applicant is in breach of any of the sections of this policy we can hold all applicants to be in breach of the policy.

Tenancy conditions

Applicants should note that, if they accept any house offered to them, they will sign a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) agreement or a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST) agreement, which is a legally binding contract between them, and Clyde Valley Housing Association.

The agreement sets out the rights and responsibilities of the tenant as occupier of the house, and of Clyde Valley Housing Association as landlord.

When we make an offer of housing to joint applicants, we will generally create a joint tenancy in respect of each of the applicants. This will help protect the rights of each joint tenant, while making them jointly and severally responsible for maintaining their conditions of tenancy.

We will make all reasonable efforts to fulfil our part of the contract and we will expect the applicant to do the same. We may take action against any tenant who breaches any part of the tenancy agreement.

How to apply for housing

Through the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register, applicants can ask to be considered for housing with Clyde Valley Housing Association or another landlord who may

have accommodation within the applicant's area of choice within South Lanarkshire. Application forms are available by contacting our office, South Lanarkshire Council or other partner organisations involved in the Common Housing Register.

We can only consider people for housing with us if they complete an application form fully and provide all of the information that we need.

Our staff will be pleased to help any applicant to fill in the application form, and to answer any questions that they may have on allocation areas, house sizes and types available, and indicative waiting times. We can also assist applicants with completing the application form, and will provide the application form and this Policy in different formats such as Braille and in other languages if requested.

When we receive completed application forms we will send a letter to the applicant confirming that we have received it. The letter will also advise the applicant of their personal application number which should be quoted when making any enquiries about their application.

Allocation areas

Clyde Valley Housing Association owns a variety of properties in a number of areas, which means that the Association has a broad mix of house types and sizes available for let across South Lanarkshire Council.

Details of stock numbers, locations and an indication of turnover are available to all applicants and this information is updated routinely.

Many of our areas and house types are in high demand, which means that turnover can be very limited. However some areas and house types have a greater turnover. We are happy to discuss with an applicant the areas that they wish to be considered for and advise on turnover. We can also advise on any local lettings initiatives. This will allow applicants to make informed and realistic decisions when choosing allocation areas that best meet their needs and expectations.

The housing application form allows applicants to choose as many or as few allocation areas as they want. If applicants wish to change their allocation areas, they can do this at any time by notifying us in writing.

Through the Common Housing Register, applicants can ask to be considered for housing with another landlord who may have accommodation within an applicant's area of choice.

Mutual exchanges

We will encourage mutual exchanges between tenants where both households would benefit from the exchange and be housed in appropriately sized accommodation.

Any of our tenants may request a mutual exchange with another Clyde Valley Housing Association tenant or with a tenant of another social landlord. Tenants must request the mutual exchange in writing and a form is available for this.

We will not normally permit mutual exchanges during the first year of a tenancy. However there may be exceptional circumstances, such as medical cases or to make best use of the housing stock, where there may be justification for approving a mutual exchange within this timescale. Any such exceptions will require to be authorised by the Customer Services Director who will report the number of exceptions granted annually to the Board.

To qualify for a mutual exchange tenants must:

- obtain our written consent and the written consent of any other landlord involved in the exchange;
- have a clear rent account, or have a repayment arrangement for rent arrears which they are keeping to;
- have a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST);
- have an acceptable tenancy reference, which will include the condition of the house and garden;
- not have a current Anti-Social Behaviour Order against them or a member of their household; and
- agree to reinstate any unauthorised alterations made to their property, prior to the exchange being approved.

When considering which house the tenant would like to mutually exchange to, the tenant must make sure that they will not overcrowd the house. Similarly they must make sure that they will not under occupy the house by more than one bedroom. If the move will cause overcrowding or under occupation as above, we will not approve it.

If someone seeking a mutual exchange is on our housing list and in receipt of medical points, the proposed exchange will not be approved if the outcome would conflict with any recommendations made by our independent medical advisor (e.g. for ground floor accommodation only). If we are concerned that a property may be unsuitable on medical grounds, we will refer this to the medical advisor for clarification.

Any tenant who wishes to exchange with a tenant from another social landlord must advise the other tenant that they must also fill out an application form and must comply with all of the above criteria.

We will make our decision on the application within 28 days of the date from which we receive the application. If we do not receive all of the information required to allow us to make a decision within the 28 days, we will refuse the application. However both applicants can re-apply.

If we decide that a mutual exchange application should be refused, we will advise both applicants in writing and will encourage both applicants to complete applications for the Common Housing Register.

If we approve the application, both applicants will require to sign new tenancy agreements for their new homes, regardless of who the landlord may be.

When we approve a mutual exchange and it takes place, we will cancel any previous application for rehousing as the mutual exchange will have met the applicant's housing needs.

Local lettings initiatives

In specific areas, such as where we have new build or low demand properties, we may introduce local letting initiatives to achieve best use of housing stock, balanced communities and sustainable tenancies.

Clyde Valley Housing Association's Board will authorise all local letting initiatives. When making their decision the Board will take account of the following:

- justification for the initiative;
- identification of the area to which the initiative will apply;
- confirmation of the time period during which the initiative will apply; and
- confirmation of arrangements for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating outcomes.

Our Board will monitor and review the implementation of local letting initiatives, making recommendations as appropriate in relation to any suggested policy changes.

Local letting initiatives are consistent with Scottish Social Housing Charter objectives in relation flexibility in allocations to reflect local housing market objectives and promoting tenancy sustainment.

Appendix 2 sets out details of current South Lanarkshire Local Letting Initiatives. To ensure flexibility in meeting the changing needs of our local housing markets, we aim to review local letting initiatives annually and report to Board. New initiatives can be added and existing initiatives can be extended, amended or withdrawn.

In particular we are keen to develop our use of local letting plans in discussion with South Lanarkshire Council for our new build properties and consider how we can optimise transfers and subsequent relets, especially in the case of tenants wishing to downsize as a result of welfare reform.

Granting of tenancies to relatives of staff and Board members

To ensure that we comply with the statutory requirements regarding granting of benefits to Clyde Valley Housing Association Board members and staff, or to their close relatives, we will ask all applicants to state whether or not to their knowledge, they are related to a Board or staff member.

The offer of a tenancy or lease in one of our or any of our subsidiaries' properties to one of our people or to someone closely connected to them is permitted as long as

- it is in accordance with our published allocations policy **and**
- Neither the applicant or anyone connected to the applicant is involved in any way or in any part of the allocation process **and**
- The offer is approved by the Governing Body in advance **and**
- The tenancy is recorded as an interest in the appropriate register within five days of the tenancy commencing

When the allocation is concerning a Board member or a close relative of a Board member, the Board member must declare an interest and leave the meeting when the issue is being discussed.

Our Payments and Benefits Policy sets out how such applications may be dealt with. Any member of staff will be able to provide a copy of the guidance.

The Board will formally approve any allocation of a house to a staff or Board member or their close relative. The formal approval of the Board must be recorded in the minute of the Board meeting with the details of the allocation entered into the appropriate Register of Interest. When the allocation is concerning a Board member or a close relative of a Board member, the Board member must declare an interest and leave the meeting when the issue is being discussed.

What happens after an application is made?

If interested parties are aged 16 years and over they can apply to us for housing and be accepted onto the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register. However we will not make any offers of housing until we have carried out certain checks, including checking any previous tenancies that applicants may have had, and we are satisfied with the application.

When we receive applications we will send a letter to the applicant confirming that we have received it. It is important that the applicant keeps this safe, as it will show the application number, which is helpful for future enquiries.

When we have processed the application, we will write to the applicant, confirming the house size, house types and locations chosen and the number of points that we have awarded, if any, under our points scheme.

When a house of the chosen size, house type and heating type becomes available in a requested allocation area, we will offer it to the applicant with the highest number of points, provided that their circumstances have not changed. If there are two or more applicants with the same number of points who qualify for the same house, we will use the date of application to decide who will get the offer. This means that we will offer the house to the applicant with the earliest application date.

We will treat an application from two people or from multiple applicants, as a joint application. We also accept applications from people living in the same house who want to apply for separate housing (e.g. due to relationship breakdown). This includes any of our existing tenants.

If any of the circumstances detailed on an application change and any member of the household on an application no longer wishes to be housed with the applicant, we must be advised. The application will remain on our housing list and we will accept a new application from the person concerned or we will remove their name from our housing list, if they wish. If we remove or add anyone to an application this may affect their points entitlement, which may increase or decrease.

Applicants have the right of access to personal information held by us and the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act. Applicants who require access to personal information will need to submit their request in writing and provide proof of identity to allow access.

Homeless persons

If someone presents themselves to their local authority as homeless, the Council will assess their needs using homelessness assessment procedures. If the local authority determines

that a homeless applicant is unintentionally homeless and in priority need, they will issue a determination letter.

Clyde Valley Housing Association will consider offering housing to statutory homeless households when a suitable property becomes available for let. In these circumstances, the allocation would be made through the Common Housing Register.

We are committed to playing our part in helping to address the housing needs of homeless persons through working in partnership with the local authority and have a protocol in place with South Lanarkshire Council that set out roles and responsibilities. Section 5 of the 2001 Act places emphasis on such joint working and places a duty on all RSLs to house homeless applicants referred to them by the local authority, unless it has good reason not to.

Annually the Association will agree a target with South Lanarkshire Council for the quota of lets for statutory homeless, with such referrals forming part of the overall nominations quota agreed with the Council.

Victims of domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can affect women, children and men, regardless of their age, race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin, faith, religion, gender, sexual orientation or marital status. Adults, with or without children, can experience domestic abuse.

The Home Office definition of Domestic Abuse is ... "any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse which takes place within the context of a close relationship. In most cases, the relationship will be between partners (married, co-habiting or otherwise) or ex-partners."

We recognise that safety is paramount, confidentiality is crucial and believing the victim is important.

If any applicant advises us that they are suffering domestic abuse, we will complete an application form with them. We can also refer the applicant to the local authority, if they wish, who will deal with the case under homelessness legislation.

Relationship breakdown

If anyone has a breakdown in their marriage or in their relationship with their partner, they may qualify for housing (or rehousing) with us.

We will accept an application for housing even if the applicant has to stay on temporarily in the same house as their former spouse or partner.

In considering admission to the list we will not take account of:

- any outstanding liability (e.g. rent arrears) in a property where the applicant was not the tenant when the liability accrued; or
- whether or not a divorce or judicial separation has been obtained.

We will award points to the applicant for all of their housing needs and we will always consider the nature of the relationship breakdown before we make any offer of housing.

We will give applicants who are experiencing a relationship breakdown and seeking accommodation general advice on occupancy rights. We may also refer applicants to relevant advice agencies and / or solicitor where appropriate.

Depending upon the circumstances, local authorities may also be able to help an applicant suffering from a relationship breakdown through their homelessness service. Such applicants should contact the Council directly for more details if the applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness due to relationship breakdown. We can refer the applicant to the local authority, if they wish.

Victims of harassment

'Harassment' is defined in Section 8 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (c40) as causing a person alarm or distress. We recognise that people have a right to a life free from violence and abuse as well as alarm and distress caused by harassment. We also recognise that fault in such circumstances rests with the perpetrators and not the victims.

We recognise that victims of harassment may wish to move from their home or from the area where they are experiencing the problems and will consider applications from them.

We acknowledge that harassment can take many forms including harassment, sexual harassment, and harassment against people who have mental health issues, learning difficulties, are HIV positive, are gay or lesbian, or victims of domestic abuse. Harassment can have a seriously detrimental effect on quality of life and at its most acute can be life-threatening.

Where a housing applicant alleges harassment and they appear to be at risk, we will in the first instance believe them and take prompt action to ensure their safety as far as possible. This may mean that we will move the individual/s temporarily or in extreme cases, move them permanently, whilst we investigate the matter.

We will take reasonable steps to obtain information to support the applicant's case. However if it proves impossible to obtain evidence of abuse or threat of violence, the applicant's expressed fears would be considered as sufficient evidence. A statement of circumstances will be requested from the applicant, allowing points to be awarded accordingly.

We recognise that confidentiality is crucial to ensure safety and will ensure that the applicant's wishes are respected with regard to contact points and people. We will also signpost applicants to appropriate agencies that may be able to give detailed or specialist advice and assistance.

Victims of racial harassment

If an applicant is experiencing racial harassment, we will meet with them to discuss the problem. If they require an interpreter, we will arrange this as quickly as we reasonably can.

As with other types of harassment, we recognise that victims of racial harassment may wish to move from their home or from the area where they are experiencing the problems and will consider applications from them.

Where a housing applicant alleges racial harassment and they appear to be at risk, we will in the first instance believe them and take prompt action to ensure their safety as far as possible. This may mean that we will move them temporarily or in extreme cases, move them permanently whilst we investigate the matter.

We will take reasonable steps to obtain information to support the applicant's case. However if it proves impossible to obtain evidence of racial harassment, the applicant's expressed fears would be considered as sufficient evidence. A statement of circumstances will be requested from the applicant, allowing points to be awarded accordingly.

We recognise that confidentiality is crucial to ensure safety and will ensure that the applicant's wishes are respected with regard to contact points and people. We will signpost applicants to appropriate agencies that may be able to give detailed or specialist advice and assistance.

Young people

We recognise that many young people have a need for housing of their own as they are in vulnerable situations. We can consider young people for housing providing that the applicant is aged 16 years and over.

As well as providing housing ourselves, we can refer young people to other agencies who can provide accommodation and specialist advice and information services.

Asylum seekers and refugees

We will accept applications from asylum seekers and place their application on our housing list provided that they are aged 16 or over. However if at the time of applying for housing, we are advised that the applicant is homeless and we are unable to offer housing at that time, either because there is no suitable housing available or their immigration status is unclear, we will refer them to the local authority who will assess the case under homelessness legislation. In accordance with legislation we are unable to make an offer of housing to anyone who is subject to immigration control.

Community Care needs

We recognise the key role that housing plays in the planning and provision of community care and seek to address the housing situation of identified community care groups through this policy. Meeting the needs of community care groups involves:

- a joint housing and care services approach;
- identifying the individual needs of service users;
- sustaining people in their own homes, where possible;
- making the best use of the housing stock; and
- avoiding over concentrations of vulnerable people in any one area.

We will work in partnership with local authority and health partners to seek appropriate methods of assessing and addressing the housing needs of a range of care groups, including the following:

- frail older people;
- people suffering from dementia;
- people with mental health issues;
- people with learning disabilities;
- people with physical disabilities; and
- people with HIV or AIDS.

Community care housing needs will be considered via the Common Housing Register. Applications will be assessed and prioritised using the Association's points scheme.

Wheelchair and adapted housing

We can visit applicants who indicate that they are wheelchair users or have a significant physical disability, to complete an application form and where appropriate a medical assessment form. We will request a detailed Occupational Therapist's assessment of the applicant's needs from local authority or health partners. This should identify any problems with the applicant's current accommodation, the suitability for the accommodation to be adapted and any additional needs the applicant may have.

When we receive the Occupational Therapist's assessment we will update our records. If an applicant requires adaptations then they will only be offered a house that either already contains the required adaptations or that can, subject to the availability of resources, be reasonably adapted to meet the applicant's needs.

Wheelchair and adapted housing needs will be considered via the Common Housing Register. Applications will be assessed and prioritised using the Association's points scheme.

To ensure that we make best use of wheelchair-adapted properties, when a wheelchair-adapted property becomes available, we will give priority to wheelchair applicants who meet the property attributes. Where there is more than one potential applicant, we will allocate the property in the normal way to the applicant with the most points.

When ground floor properties become available for relet we will firstly check their potential suitability for wheelchair applicants or for those with a medical need for ground floor accommodation, subject to the availability of resources to adapt such a property. We would consider the following:

- is the house suitable for a ramp?;
- is the house located in a level area?;
- is the house close to amenities?;
- is the house adapted or could it be adapted for wheelchair use?;
- is the bathroom large enough for a wheelchair user?; and
- are there resources available to make reasonable adaptations to the property?

What size of house are applicants entitled to?

Anyone who applies for housing with us and is placed on our housing list will be considered for a size of property that we assess to meet their needs. Part 3 (section 6.5) of the Housing Allocation Policy provides further information.

In all of the above, we will take into account the sizes of bedrooms and the ages of any children to be housed with the applicant when considering an offer of housing. We will only house applicants in a house that will cause overcrowding, if we do not have any houses of the size needed.

If you have child access arrangements we will assess the appropriate size of accommodation for your household's needs.

Applicants will normally be entitled to housing as detailed above. However there may be circumstances, such as a local lettings initiative, where we will consider applicants for houses that are larger than the applicant's assessed needs. We may do this in areas where there is limited demand and a higher supply of certain property sizes and types.

Interviewing and counselling new applicants

We recognise that there are advantages of direct contact with applicants at the point of their initial application for housing. We will therefore:

assist applicants with the completion of application forms. This will provide us with detailed and relevant information which will save us time when processing the applications; and offer to interview applicants either at the point of application or within 28 days. The purpose of this interview is to:

- ensure all addresses and tenure types during the previous 3 years are listed. Where an applicant has held a tenancy with a local authority or an RSL we will advise the applicant that we will seek a tenancy reference from their previous landlord;
- check accuracy of information given on the application form and in the case of home visits check the applicant's current housing situation;
- check the applicant's needs and preferences and give appropriate advice as to their prospects of housing in their areas of choice, property and heating type. Applicants should also be advised only to choose areas where they are prepared to live to keep refusals and void turnaround to a minimum;
- ensure that applicants are aware that they can choose as many or as few allocation areas as reasonably meets their needs and expectations;
- ensure that applicants are aware that they will only be considered for housing for the size, property type and heating type as stated on their application form;
- ensure that applicants understand the importance of informing Clyde Valley Housing Association of any change of circumstances e.g. change of address, household formation, or any medical or social factors which may affect their application;
- check that the applicant has their full entitlement of points;
- advise applicants of other housing providers available through the Common Housing Register;
- encourage applicants who have expressed an interest in sheltered housing to make a direct application or use the Common Housing Register to register with providers of specialist accommodation who operate within the area. It also provides an opportunity to carry out an initial assessment of need for sheltered housing and to assess the urgency of the need for an Occupational Therapists' assessment; and
- advise applicants who are applying from outwith our area of operation, in writing, of their prospects for housing within their areas of choice, and of the availability of their choice of property and heating types.

Our minimum lettable standard

We will seek to allocate all of our houses in good order and in line with our minimum lettable standard.

Our minimum lettable standard is contained within our Void Management Policy and in our Tenant's Handbook and is available at our office and on our website.

We will provide a copy of our minimum lettable standard with any paperwork we issue when making an offer of housing. This will allow the applicant to contact us if they have any issues about the standard of house we have offered.

If the applicant is a current Clyde Valley Housing Association tenant, we will expect them to have maintained their current house to a good standard. If they have not, we will require them to rectify any defects that we believe are their responsibility before we consider them for an offer of housing.

Decant accommodation

There may be times when it will be necessary to move a tenant temporarily to another house to allow us to carry out work in our properties. This is known as 'decanting' and this is covered in our Decant Policy.

For example, the work to the property may take the form of:

- planned major works or improvements where the disruption would be too great if the tenant remained in the house;
- repairwork due to fire, flood or storm damage; and / or
- work required for health and safety reasons.

If at any time we have to decant a tenant we will follow our decanting procedures and will do our best to provide temporary accommodation that meets the tenant's needs. In certain circumstances this may take the form of bed and breakfast accommodation. We may also ask the tenant to consider living with a relative if the decant period is for a short time and we are unable to find temporary accommodation to suit the tenant's needs. When we provide decant accommodation, it will be housing on a 'like-for-like' basis whenever possible, which means that we will endeavour to offer the same type of house that the tenant lives in at the time. Where there is no such housing available at the time we reserve the right to offer housing that is approximate to the tenant's needs.

When the work is complete in the tenant's home, the tenant must leave the decant accommodation and return to their home.

Keeping pets

Anyone allocated a house who wants to keep a pet must get our written permission first.

Lock-up garages

Our subsidiary, Clyde Valley Property Services (CVPS), has a small number of lock-up garages available for let.

We will allocate lock-up garages in date of application from our lock-up garage waiting list. Applicants who would like a lock-up garage must complete an application form.

PART 3 – HOUSING LISTS AND PRIORITIES

1. How applicants are queued for housing

Our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) is based principally upon housing need and the greatest priority for housing is given to those in greatest need.

The South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register is made up of four separate lists. Your application will be assessed according to your individual circumstances and you will be queued within one of the following four lists:

- urgent housing need;
- transfer list;
- waiting list; or
- other categories.

Information is provided below on the qualifying criteria for each of the lists and the points categories which prioritise your application.

2. Urgent housing need

If you are queued on this list, you are considered to have the highest priority for housing and will be queued solely according to the date of your homeless application or date of your application for urgent medical need.

This list contains the following two categories of applicant.

i. Homeless applicants

Applicants to whom South Lanarkshire Council has a legal duty to provide permanent accommodation under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended by Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003.

If someone presents themselves to the local authority as homeless, the Council will assess their needs using homelessness assessment procedures. If the Council determines that a homeless applicant is unintentionally homeless and in priority need, they will issue a determination letter.

Clyde Valley Housing Association will consider offering housing to statutory homeless households, in line with letting quotas, when a suitable property becomes available for let. In these circumstances, the allocation would be considered as a referral from the Council in terms of Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and not through the Association's general Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and points scheme.

One reasonable offer of housing will be made to a homeless applicant before the Council discharge their legal duty

Where a Section 5 referral is identified and that person has a current live housing application, that application would be suspended from the Common Housing Register pending the outcome of their homeless status. If such a household is housed, their application on the Common Housing Register will be cancelled and archived. If such a household experiences a change of circumstances whereby their statutory homeless status is removed by the Council, their application on the Common Housing Register will be

reinstated and considered in terms of the Association's general Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and points scheme.

Annually the Association will agree a target with the local authority for the quota of lets for statutory homeless, with such referrals forming part of the overall nominations quota agreed with the Council. The balance of lets will be allocated via the Association's general Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and points scheme, which in turn will include an agreed quota for transfer list and waiting list applicants.

ii. Applicants with an urgent medical need

Applicants (or member of their moving household) with an extremely serious and enduring medical condition who are unable to occupy their present accommodation because it is wholly unsuitable in light of their medical needs and cannot be adapted to suit those needs.

Your medical circumstances will be assessed by an independent medical officer, who will make a recommendation to us on the level of medical award you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) should be given.

Category A – Urgent medical need

Where the medical officer determines that:

- you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) has an extremely serious and enduring medical condition; and
- your present property is wholly unsuitable in light of your medical needs; and
- your present property cannot be adapted; and
- urgent re-housing to suitable accommodation is required to improve your housing situation.

If you are assessed as category A, you will be queued on the urgent housing need list by the date that you made the application for medical priority. As a category A applicant, you will be considered for housing on the basis of your individual needs for a particular property type or area.

If you wish to be considered for re-housing on the basis of your medical need (or the medical needs of a member of your household who is moving with you), you must complete a medical assessment application form. Application forms are available from our office, from a South Lanarkshire Council office, or via the Council's website (www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk).

If you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) have a medical need, assessed as category A, it is likely that you will have specific property requirements which we will aim to meet. Where the independent medical officer has recommended that you (or member of your moving household) be considered for a particular property type or area, for example ground floor level access, we will only award medical points or allow you to queue within the urgent housing need list, if your application preferences meet your medical needs.

If you wish to be considered for a property or area which does not meet your medical needs, you will not be able to queue within the urgent housing needs list.

If you are queued on the urgent housing need list we aim to make you an offer of housing which matches your preferences within a six-month period. To assist us to achieve this aim, you cannot be unreasonably restrictive in terms of the area or property choices you have

made and these preferences will be regularly reviewed to make sure that they are reasonable.

Where you are unreasonably restrictive and we are unable to meet your housing needs within a six-month period, we will make you an offer of housing which is considered to be reasonable in light of your assessed needs.

Only one reasonable offer of housing will be made to you as a high priority applicant. Where you unreasonably refuse an offer, your circumstances will be reassessed and you will be queued on one of the other lists, where you will be eligible to receive a further two offers of housing. Part 4 of the Housing Allocation Policy provides further information on offers and refusals.

The reasonable offer of housing made to you as a homeless applicant will discharge the Council's legal duty under the relevant homelessness legislation.

3. Transfer list

You will be queued on this list if you are:

- a tenant of Clyde Valley Housing Association; or
- a tenant of South Lanarkshire Council; or
- a tenant, living in South Lanarkshire, of a Registered Social Landlord; or
- a tied tenant of South Lanarkshire Council or a Registered Social Landlord (living in South Lanarkshire).

To help us to maintain a sufficient turnover of Council and Registered Social Landlord properties in order that we can meet the needs of applicants on the housing list, applicants queued on this list will be sub divided and prioritised in one of the following ways:

i. Transfer applicants with an assessed housing need

We will assess you on the basis of the points categories outlined below at section 6. You will be queued on the transfer list in order of the applicant with the highest combined points total (most need).

Where more than one applicant has the same level of points, the date of application for housing will be used to determine the priority placing on the list.

ii. Transfer applicants with no assessed housing need

If you have been assessed as having no housing need, you will be queued with other applicants on the transfer list solely by the date of your application.

4. Waiting list

You will be queued on this list if you are not statutorily homeless or have an urgent medical need or are a tenant or tied tenant with either South Lanarkshire Council or a Registered Social Landlord (living in South Lanarkshire). Examples of applicants who can queue on this list include:

- tenants of other local authorities or Registered Social Landlords (living outwith South Lanarkshire);
- sub tenants or lodgers;

- individuals living care of relatives or friends;
- owner occupiers;
- individuals living in houses in multiple occupation (for example, hostels);
- tied tenants who are not employed by South Lanarkshire Council or a Registered Social Landlord (living in South Lanarkshire);
- members of H.M. Forces; and
- individuals with a short assured tenancy or an assured tenancy within the private sector.

We will assess you on the basis of the points categories outlined below at section 6. You will be queued on the waiting list in order of the applicant with the highest combined points total (most need).

Where more than one applicant has the same level of points, the date of application for housing will be used to determine the priority placing on the list.

5. Other categories

You will only be queued on this list in exceptional circumstances where your housing need cannot be effectively met through any of the other lists. As the needs of those queued within this list are likely to be varied, each applicant will be considered for housing on the basis of their individual circumstances. Examples of applicants who may be eligible to be queued within this list include:

- applicants with significant community care needs, such as those returning to the community from long stay residential care;
- applicants who have previously been in the care of the local authority;
- applicants living in accommodation which does not meet the tolerable standard; and
- applicants who require to be re-housed as part of a regeneration programme.

The examples provided above are not exhaustive and other circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

All applicants queued within the other categories list will be considered to have the same urgent need for re-housing. Priority on the list will be determined by the individual circumstances of the applicants and not on the basis of an award of points.

If you are queued on this list you are likely to have a need for a specific type of housing which we will aim to meet. This means that you will only be queued for property types which are suitable for your needs.

If you are queued on the other categories list we aim to house you within a six-month period and make you an offer of housing which matches your preferences. To assist us to achieve this aim, you cannot be unreasonably restrictive in terms of the area or property choices you have made and these preferences will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are reasonable.

Where you are unreasonably restrictive and we are unable to meet your housing needs within a six-month period, we will make you an offer of housing which we consider to be reasonable in light of your assessed needs.

Only one reasonable offer of housing will be made to you as a high priority applicant. Where you unreasonably refuse an offer, your circumstances will be reassessed and you may be

queued on one of the other lists, where you will be eligible to receive a further two offers of housing. Part 4 of the Housing Allocation Policy provides further details on this.

6. Definition of points categories available to transfer list and waiting list applicants

Set out below are the points categories available to transfer list and waiting list applicants.

6.1 Serious medical need

Medical points will only be awarded if you or a member of your household has been assessed by the independent medical advisor as having a serious medical condition and your present accommodation is unsuitable in light of your medical needs and cannot be adapted.

Medical points will only be awarded where re-housing would significantly improve the suitability of your (or a member of your household who is moving with you) housing in light of your medical needs and only for accommodation which meets your medical requirements.

Having a medical condition will not in itself be grounds for an award of medical points.

If you wish to be considered for re-housing on the basis of your medical need (or the medical needs of a member of your household who is moving with you), you must complete a medical assessment application form. Application forms are available from our office, from a South Lanarkshire Council office, or via the Council's website (www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk).

Medical priority will only be awarded where your current accommodation cannot be adapted to meet your medical requirements (or those of a member of your household who is moving with you). We will discuss with you whether installing equipment or carrying out adaptations would make your home suitable to your needs.

In assessing whether a property can be adapted to meet your household's needs, the following factors will be taken into account:

- financial constraints;
- level of disruption associated with the required work; and
- willingness of the property owner (where relevant) to give consent to the necessary works.

Where more than one person within your household to be re-housed has a medical condition, an assessment of the combined medical needs of your household will be carried out. It should be noted however that only one level of medical points will be awarded.

Your medical circumstances will be assessed by an independent medical officer, who will make a recommendation to us on the level of medical award you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) should be given.

Category B – Serious medical need

Where the medical officer determines that:

- you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) has a serious medical condition; and
- your present property is unsuitable in light of your medical needs; and
- your present property cannot be adapted; and
- re-housing to suitable accommodation is required to improve your housing situation.

Serious medical need points are available to both transfer list and waiting list applicants.

Points Awarded : 120 points

If you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) have a medical need, assessed as category B, it is likely that you will have specific property requirements which we will aim to meet. Where the independent medical officer has recommended that you (or member of your moving household) be considered for a particular property type or area, for example ground floor level access, we will only award medical points or allow you to queue within the urgent housing need list, if your application preferences meet your medical needs.

If you wish to be considered for a property or area which does not meet your medical needs, the award of points for category B will not be applied in relation to the 'unsuitable' property / area/heating preference.

6.2 Insecurity of tenure (only available to waiting list applicants)

Insecurity of tenure points will only be awarded if you do not have a Scottish Secure Tenancy or an assured tenancy within the private rented sector or own your own home.

Points Available: 60 points

6.3 Members of H.M. Forces (only available to waiting list applicants)

H.M. Forces points will only be awarded if you meet the following criteria:

- you have completed a minimum of three years service or have been injured in action or have been discharged on medical grounds; and
- you have lived in South Lanarkshire immediately prior to commencing your service; or
- your partner is permanently resident in South Lanarkshire or previously lived in South Lanarkshire immediately prior to commencement of service or marriage / relationship; or
- your parents are permanently resident within South Lanarkshire; or
- you have an offer of full-time employment within South Lanarkshire.

We will award points under this category up to six months prior to and up to six weeks following the date of discharge from the service. You will be required to provide confirmation of your date of discharge and the period of your service either in the form of a letter from a senior officer or by providing a copy of your certificate of discharge.

If you receive H.M. Forces points you cannot be unreasonably restrictive in terms of your area or property choices. Where you are unreasonably restrictive and we are unable to meet your needs within a reasonable timescale, we will make you an offer of housing which is considered to be reasonable in light of your assessed needs.

If you refuse a reasonable offer, points under this category will be removed and your application re-pointed in accordance with your circumstances.

If you are awarded H.M. Forces points you will not qualify for points under any of the other categories.

Points Available: 150 points

6.4 Tied tenants

Tied tenant points will only be awarded if you are required to leave tied accommodation as a result of one of the following reasons:

- redundancy; or
- retirement; or
- ill health; or
- death of a spouse.

You will not be awarded points if you:

- voluntarily gave up your employment; or
- have been dismissed as a result of your own actions.

You must be able to demonstrate that you are required to live in the tied accommodation in order to carry out your job and occupancy of the house is a specific condition of your employment.

Points will not be awarded where you are merely allowed (rather than required) to live in accommodation because of the job you are doing.

You will be required to provide written confirmation from your employer of:

- your length of service;
- your employment is being terminated;
- that you are required to leave the tied tenancy;
- the reason for termination of employment; and
- the date you are required to vacate the property.

You will only be awarded points under this category if the:

- employment and accommodation are within South Lanarkshire; and
- length of service is in excess of two years.

We will award points under this category up to six months prior to and up to six weeks following the tenancy termination date.

If, prior to the allocation of a house, you obtain permanent accommodation then points under this category will be removed, for example where:

- you have a Scottish Secure Tenancy from another local authority or Registered Social Landlord; or
- you have an assured tenancy from a private landlord; or
- you have purchased a property.

Please note that a Short Assured Tenancy or Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will not be considered permanent accommodation.

If you receive tied tenants points you cannot be unreasonably restrictive in terms of your area or property choices. Where you are unreasonably restrictive and we are unable to meet your needs within a reasonable timescale, we will make you an offer of housing which is considered to be reasonable in light of your assessed needs.

If you refuse a reasonable offer, points under this category will be removed and your application re-pointed in accordance with your circumstances.

If you are awarded tied tenant points you will not qualify for points under any of the other categories.

Points Available: 150 points

6.5 Overcrowding

Overcrowding points will be awarded if you are currently occupying a property which is too small for your households needs.

The 'occupancy standard' set out below is used to determine the number of rooms that you and your household require.

A minimum of 1 bedroom is required by:

- a single person aged 16 years and above;
- a couple;
- two children of the opposite sex unless one is aged eight years or over, in which case each child will require a separate bedroom; or
- two children of the same sex under 16 years, unless the age difference is 10 years or over.

It should be noted that in calculating the occupancy standard, no more than two people, regardless of age, are expected to share a bedroom.

The table below provides details of the size/s of property that you can choose, based upon your household composition.

Number of bedrooms required	1	2	3	4	5
Size of property that can be chosen	bedsit 2 apt 3 apt	3 apt	4 apt	4 apt 5 apt	5 apt 6 apt

Given the variations in the supply and demand profile across South Lanarkshire it may be necessary in some areas to vary the above occupancy standard. Variations from the general occupancy standard are detailed within local letting plans.

You can queue for the size/s of property that meets your household's needs as determined by the occupancy standard.

Where you have a choice of property sizes, you can select one or all sizes of property you qualify for. It should be noted however that when allocating properties we aim to make sure that the best match of applicant to property size is achieved. It should be noted however, that the main basis for the allocation will be housing need.

If you are living in an overcrowded situation and there is no accommodation of the size required within your area/s of choice, then you can queue for accommodation which is smaller than your needs if it eases your overcrowding.

If you have equal or majority access to a child or children, you can queue for the size of property required by your household when all members are permanently resident.

Where you have overnight access to a child or children, you can queue for a property which provides one bedroom more than you would otherwise be entitled to under the occupancy standard. However if you are already queued for one bedroom more than your permanent household requires, you are not able to queue for an additional bedroom.

If you and a former partner have a shared responsibility for children, you will be considered for accommodation as outlined below.

Where children are mainly resident with you, (i.e. for four or more nights a week) or if block contact arrangements are in place for more than six months of the year, the number of rooms you require will be determined by the total number of people within the household. Similarly, if you and your former partner have equal residence rights, you will both qualify for property on the basis that the children are resident on a full-time basis.

In general, where you have overnight contact with children, you will be considered for accommodation which provides one bedroom more than is required by your permanent household unless this would result in statutory overcrowding as defined by sections 135-137 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. If your current accommodation is adequate for the children then you will not be eligible for an additional bedroom.

In certain circumstances, the Housing Manager may exercise discretion in determining the size of accommodation required by a household.

Where the residence and contact arrangements have been made formally through the court or a lawyer, copies of the court agreement or a lawyer's letter should accompany the application. Where there is no formal agreement, you will be required to provide details of the arrangement and a letter of confirmation from either your former partner or another acceptable source.

In addition to the above, there may be special circumstances in which the occupancy standard would be varied to allow you to queue for an additional bedroom. For instance, where you or someone in your household, requires an additional room to receive medical treatment from home, or where a child has significant behavioural issues that unfavourably impact upon another child who shares a bedroom.

Your application will be pointed on the basis of the number of bedrooms that your household requires in order to meet the occupancy standard, regardless of the property size for which you are queued.

The table below provides details of the points available under this category.

Additional bedrooms required	points awarded
1 additional bedroom required	40
2 additional bedrooms required	80
3 additional bedrooms required	120
4 additional bedrooms required	160

Points Available: 40 points per extra bedroom required
(up to a maximum of 160 points)

6.6 Care and support

Care and support points will be awarded if you require to move to be closer to a family member in order to provide or receive care and support.

You will only receive points under this category if you can demonstrate that:

- the care and support is essential to significantly enhance your ability to remain in your/their own home or to live independently; or
- it is not reasonable for the carer to provide the care / support from where they currently live; or
- the result of the carer ceasing to provide the care / support will place a significant demand on care services.

Points under this category will only be awarded for specific letting areas that are within reasonable distance of the person providing / requiring the care and support. Individual circumstances and availability of accommodation will be taken into account when considering letting area preferences (e.g. ability to access transport).

Where the individual requiring the support has a clear medical need, they will be advised to complete a separate medical application form for re-housing on medical grounds.

Points Available: 60 points

Underoccupancy

Underoccupancy points will be awarded if

- The applicant is a current of South Lanarkshire Council or a Homefinder Registered Social Landlord and:
- The applicant and their household do not require all of the bedrooms in their current home.

Under Occupancy criteria	Points awarded
Household requires 1 bedroom less	10
Household requires 2 bedroom less	20
Household requires 3 bedroom less	30
Household requires 4 bedroom less	40

6.7 Summary of points categories

Set out below is a summary of the points categories set out in sections 1 – 6 above.

	Points category	Points award	List eligibility
1.	Serious medical need	120	Transfer list Waiting list
2.	Insecurity of tenure	60	Waiting list
3.	H.M. Forces	150	Waiting list
4.	Tied tenants	150	Transfer list Waiting list
5.	Overcrowding	40 points per additional bedroom required to a maximum of 160 points	Transfer list Waiting list
6.	Care and support	60	Transfer list Waiting list
7.	Underoccupancy	10 points for each additional bedroom	Transfer List

PART 4 – OFFERS AND REFUSALS

Number of offers

We will make a maximum of two offers to applicants. This means that applicants who refuse their first offer will be made a second offer as availability of vacancies permits.

However we are keen to avoid wasting an applicant's time and the Association's time by making multiple offers to an applicant. We therefore aim to make offers that best meet an applicant's needs and expectations.

We are happy to discuss with an applicant the house types and allocation areas that they wish to be considered for and to advise on turnover. We can also advise on mutual exchanges and any local lettings initiatives. This will allow applicants to make informed and realistic decisions on choosing house types and allocation areas that best meet their requirements and hopefully avoid us making unsuitable offers.

The housing application form allows applicants to choose as many or as few house types and allocation areas as they want, and applicants can change these at any time. However applicants should only select house types and allocation areas that they reasonably believe meet their needs and expectations.

Through the Common Housing Register, applicants can ask to be considered for housing with another landlord who may have suitable accommodation within an applicant's area of choice.

Making an offer

When an applicant has met the criteria for a forthcoming vacant house and we match the house to the applicant, we will then consider the applicant for the provisional offer usually in advance of keys being available.

The identification and selection of potential applicants to be offered accommodation is delegated to specific staff who have a detailed knowledge and understanding of the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and associated procedures. However all provisional offers must be checked and authorised by the Customer Services Director or Housing Manager, before they are made.

Applicant lives in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property

If the applicant lives within a Clyde Valley Housing Association property, we will telephone the applicant to arrange a suitable date and time to visit their home. If we are unable to contact the applicant, we will write to the applicant advising that we need to carry out a home visit to discuss their application and will request that the applicant contact us.

We will always carry out this visit before we make any offer of housing. During this visit we will carry out a house inspection and also check that there has been no change in the circumstances of the application which could affect the applicant's points entitlement. We will ask for proof of residence for all members of the household who may be moving.

We will carry out a house inspection where the applicant has a tenancy. The applicant's current property must be in a lettable condition. If there are any property defects that have been caused by neglect or wilful damage, these must be rectified by the tenant prior to an offer being made.

If the visiting officer is satisfied that all of the details are correct, that there are no breaches of tenancy and that the house inspection is satisfactory, the officer will make a provisional offer of housing. This provisional offer will be made in writing, stating the address, size and rent of the property offered. The officer may arrange a date with the applicant for an accompanied viewing of the house.

If the details have changed and the applicant no longer qualifies for the offer, or the applicant's accommodation is in unreasonable condition, we will not make the offer. However if the details have changed and the applicant still qualifies for the offer, we will make the provisional offer as detailed above.

Where an offer of accommodation is made, the applicant will have a time limit of 3 working days to contact us to register an interest. Applicants will have 1 working day to accept or reject an offer after the accommodation has been viewed.

New tenants will normally be offered a Scottish Secure Tenancy but in certain circumstances it may be necessary to offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST). When we make an offer of housing to joint applicants, we will generally create a joint tenancy in respect of each of the applicants. This will help protect the rights of each joint tenant, while making them jointly and severally responsible for maintaining their conditions of tenancy.

Applicant does not live in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property

If the applicant does not live in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property, we will pursue a tenancy reference where appropriate. We will telephone the applicant to arrange a suitable date and time to visit their home where it is reasonably practical for us to do so. If we are unable to contact the applicant by telephone, we will write to them requesting that they contact us so that we can carry out a home visit or otherwise arrange to discuss their application and current housing circumstances.

Where it is reasonably practical to do so, we will usually carry out a home visit before we make any provisional offer of housing. During this visit, or through interviewing the applicant where it is not possible for us to visit, we will check that there has been no change in the circumstances of the application which could affect the applicant's points entitlement. We will ask for proof of residence for all members of the household who may be moving.

If the visiting / interviewing officer is satisfied that all of the details are correct, and that any house inspection is satisfactory, the officer will make a provisional offer of housing. This provisional offer will be made in writing, stating the address, size and rent of the property offered. The officer may arrange a date with the applicant for an accompanied viewing of the house.

If the details have changed and the applicant no longer qualifies for the offer, we will not make the offer. However if the details have changed and the applicant still qualifies for the offer, we will make the provisional offer as detailed above.

Where an offer of accommodation is made, the applicant will have a time limit of 3 working days to contact us to register an interest. Applicants will have 1 working day to accept or reject an offer after the accommodation has been viewed.

New tenants will normally be offered a Scottish Secure Tenancy but in certain circumstances it may be necessary to offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST). When we make an offer of housing to joint applicants, we will generally create a joint tenancy in respect of each of the applicants. This will help protect the rights of each joint tenant, while making them jointly and severally responsible for maintaining their conditions of tenancy.

Not making an offer

Applicant lives in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property

If the visiting officer is not satisfied with the house inspection or finds that there is a change in the circumstances, which affects the points, the officer will advise the applicant of the issues identified and confirm them in writing. The visiting officer will not make the offer of housing under these circumstances.

If the house inspection has failed due to condition or damage to the property which is the applicant's responsibility, the officer will advise the applicant in writing of the timescale that they have to bring the house up to standard. In exceptional circumstances, the manager may extend the timescale. If the house is not brought up to an acceptable standard within the timescale set by the officer or the manager, we will not make the offer and the application will be suspended. The suspension will continue until the house has been brought up to an acceptable standard. If the house is brought up to an acceptable standard within the timescale, we will make the offer.

If the visiting officer determines that the details on the application have changed and that the applicant no longer qualifies for the offer, we will not make the offer. However if the details have changed but the applicant still qualifies for the offer, we will make the offer.

Applicant does not live in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property

If the applicant does not live in a Clyde Valley Housing Association property and they advise us that the details on their application have changed we will re-assess their application using the amended details. If the assessment confirms that the applicant no longer qualifies for the offer, we will withdraw the offer. However, if the assessment confirms that the applicant still qualifies for the offer, we will make the offer as detailed above.

Refusing offers

We will apply penalties for refusal of offers of housing, to discourage applicants from refusing any reasonable offer. We define a 'reasonable offer' as one that meets the needs and reflects the choices of the applicant.

Refusing first offer

If we offer a house to an applicant that meets the applicant's needs and reflects the applicant's choices, and the applicant refuses it, we will record this on our records and the application will remain on the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register. We will make a second offer when availability of suitable vacancies permits.

Refusing second offer

If we make a second offer of housing that meets the applicant's needs and reflects the applicant's choices, and the applicant refuses it, we will record this on our records and the application will remain on the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register. However we

will normally suspend the application for three months and during this time invite the applicant to reconsider their housing options before making any future offers.

Refusals in writing

The applicant must refuse the offer in writing and the reason for the refusal must be clearly stated. We will update our records with the details of all refusals.

We seek to allocate all of our houses in good order and in line with our minimum lettable standard, although some minor repairs may be carried out or items may be upgraded through our investment programme after a new tenant moves into a vacant property. If an applicant has concerns about the condition of the property, outstanding repairs or programmed works, they should discuss this with us before refusing the offer.

If through refusing an offer an applicant wishes to change the housing types or allocation areas that they are interested in, we are happy to discuss the availability of alternative house types and allocation areas. Applicants may be advised to amend their application form so that any future offers better meet their needs and expectations.

When a Council nominee or Section 5 homeless referral refuses an offer of accommodation, we will advise the local authority's Homelessness Service. Section 5 homeless referrals may appeal to the Council that the offer of accommodation was unreasonable, in which circumstances the local authority's homeless appeals procedures will apply and determine whether or not an alternative offer of accommodation should be made.

If an applicant is refusing an offer because the applicant believes that we have not followed our policy, the applicant can complain to us using our Complaints Policy, see part 5 - Appeals.

Failure to contact regarding an offer

If we have written to an applicant regarding their application and an offer of housing and the applicant has failed to contact us to arrange a suitable date and time for a home visit, we will suspend the application. We will write to the applicant advising of this, stating our reason for doing so. If we receive no further contact we may remove the application from our list, although the applicant will be able to reapply for housing at a future date.

PART 5 – APPEALS

Appealing against a decision made

If at any time an applicant is unhappy with a decision or with an offer, the applicant may appeal to our South Housing Manager in the first instance who will deal with the appeal and advise the applicant of the decision taken. If the applicant is unhappy with the decision made by the South Housing Manager, the applicant can appeal to the Customer Services Director. All appeals must be made in writing. We will be happy to assist applicants with this if they require and request assistance.

Appealing about the way we have handled an application

If, at any time, anyone feels that we have not dealt with their application in a fair and consistent manner and in accordance with the written policy or that our staff have not treated them reasonably, they may register a complaint through our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy. A copy of this is available at our offices or on our website.

Appealing to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

The Ombudsman will deal with complaints of maladministration. If, having followed our complaints procedure, an applicant does not consider that we have dealt with the matter to their satisfaction they have the right of appeal to the Ombudsman.

The address is:

SPSO, Freepost,
Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road,
Edinburgh, EH7 4NS.

Telephone 0800 377 7330
E-Mail: ask@spsso.org.uk
Online: www.spsso.org.uk

The Ombudsman will not normally deal with complaints regarding our policies unless it is considered that the policy operates unfairly and the applicant has followed our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy.

Recourse through the legal / judicial system

If at any time any applicant feels that any decision that we have taken is in breach of any legislation, the applicant is free to seek legal advice and pursue the matter through the appropriate legal channels.

PART 6 – INVOLVING AND INFORMING TENANTS AND APPLICANTS

How we will involve and inform tenants and applicants

We consulted tenants and strategic partners in developing and reviewing our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and have sought to reflect current legislation and good practice.

We publicise our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) through our newsletter, our Tenants' Handbook and on our website. A copy of our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) is also available on request at our office.

We also provide information on how to apply for housing through the Common Housing Register, as do South Lanarkshire Council and other local partner organisations.

If any applicant has difficulty in filling out any of our forms, they can contact us or call into our office and our staff will be pleased to help. We may also be able to arrange for one of our staff to call at an applicant's home to help with the form.

We seek to provide information in a format that is clear, concise and in plain English. On request, we will provide translations of all our documents, in various languages and other formats such as computer disc, tape, large print Braille etc. This can be arranged by contacting the Association's office.

PART 7 – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND MONITORING

Purpose of monitoring

The purpose of the monitoring process is to measure how well we are performing under our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire).

Our managers regularly monitor our performance and we will provide reports to the Board as appropriate, but at least once a year. We will use this information to highlight issues and trends, which will help us to inform recommendations for any future amendments to our Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire).

Reviewing our policy

The Board will annually review the effectiveness of the Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) and associated procedures and will identify areas requiring policy and / or service development.

The Housing Allocation Policy (South Lanarkshire) will be reviewed every three years or earlier if circumstances require it. We will consult our tenants when reviewing our policy and any proposed revisions to policy will be subject to approval by the Board.

We will review the points scheme and letting quotas annually, reporting the outcome to the Board and if appropriate making recommendations for revisions to our policy. We will also specifically review the operation of the South Lanarkshire Common Housing Register and Section 5 homeless referrals, if appropriate suggesting revisions to our policy or procedures.

What we will monitor and our targets

Appendix 1 summarises our current South Lanarkshire Letting Quota. To ensure flexibility in meeting the changing needs of our local housing markets, we aim to review local letting quotas annually in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and report to Board. Quotas can be adjusted to meet the changing needs of local housing markets.

Appendix 2 sets out details of current South Lanarkshire Local Letting Initiatives. To ensure flexibility in meeting the changing needs of our local housing markets, we aim to review local letting initiatives annually and report to Board. New initiatives can be added and existing initiatives can be extended, amended or withdrawn.

Appendix 3 details the performance standards, targets and indicators, which we have set for our allocation service.

South Lanarkshire Letting Quotas

In order to achieve stable and sustainable communities we seek to use a quota system to maintain a balance when we are allocating properties.

We will make selections throughout the year by rotation, seeking to ensure that target quota percentages are broadly achieved on an ongoing basis. However quotas achieved may vary depending upon a variety of circumstances such as turnover, availability of Council referrals /nominations, local letting initiatives, low demand, etc.

Category	Target %
CVHA Transfer List Applicants	23%
CVHA Waiting List Applicants	35%
Section 5 Statutory Homeless Referrals from Council	42%
Other Nominations from Council	0%

Council referrals and nominations will be managed, recorded and monitored via the Common Housing Register. Outcomes will be reviewed annually and future quotas adjusted as appropriate in discussion with South Lanarkshire Council.

From time to time the Council, as strategic housing authority, may analyse patterns of housing demand and supply and propose local letting plans that will seek to specify variable quotas for local letting areas. To ensure flexibility in meeting the changing needs of our local housing markets, we aim to review local letting quotas annually in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and report to Board.

South Lanarkshire Local Letting Initiatives

GENERAL PROVISIONS

G1 New build letting plans

Aim / justification – to make best use of housing stock and to create balanced communities and sustainable tenancies

Outcome – best use of housing stock, balanced communities and sustainable tenancies

Review period – annually and / or when Housing Allocation Policy is reviewed

We will develop letting plans for all of our new build stock at the point when the housing mix is finalised. These letting plans will clearly and straightforwardly explain how we will spread the allocations between priority needs groups, nominations and any special categories (e.g. people whose homes they are demolishing).

As part of the process, we will consult with our relevant local authority partner. We will publish these letting plans and make them available to applicants and other interested parties. By doing this the community will be aware how we are going to allocate houses and why, and applicants will be able to understand the process and have a better understanding of their housing prospects.

G2 Target lets

Aim / justification – to make best use of housing stock, to create balanced and sustainable communities and to minimise void rent loss

Outcome – best use of housing stock, balanced communities and sustainable tenancies

Review period – annually and / or when Housing Allocation Policy is reviewed

Through our allocations system, we will identify properties which have either:
received 3 or more property based refusals;
been fit to view for over 3 weeks; or
have no queue.

We will compile a list of these available 'target lets' – we will brief our frontline staff and advertise on the website. We will update the list of target lets daily and reviews notes of interest. A vacant property will stay on the 'target lets' list until we have received at least 3 notes of interest or after 1 week, whichever is sooner.

We will then rank interest in points order and allocate the property to the applicant with the highest points. If there are applicants with similar or no points we will consider the applicant with the earliest application date. We will hold notes of interest on our system until we have successfully let the property.

Areas within South Lanarkshire that we have currently identified as having low or limited demand and subject to a local lettings initiative include:

- Douglas;
- Lesmahagow.

These are the areas that are therefore likely to experience most target lets.

SPECIFIC PROVISIONS – LOW DEMAND PROPERTIES

SL1 South Lanarkshire – Douglas

Aim / justification – to make best use of housing stock, address low demand and minimise void rent loss through creating balanced communities and promoting sustainable tenancies

Location – all streets, Douglas

Outcome – best use of housing stock, balanced communities and sustainable tenancies within four-in-a-block properties

Review period – annually and / or when Housing Allocation Policy is reviewed

Local Letting Initiative - underoccupation permitted, advertising of vacancies, 'to let' notices and suspension of zoned relets as appropriate pending finalisation of low demand strategy.

Allocation Performance Indicators

Appendix 3

Service Standard	Target	Indicator
Making effective use of the housing stock	<p>Rolling review of 100% of applicants on the list, at least every 12 months.</p> <p>Carry out pre-termination visits on all tenancies where appropriate notice is given.</p> <p>Monitor monthly allocation quotas achieved.</p>	<p>% of applicants reviewed every 12 months.</p> <p>% of visits made as a proportion of terminations where notice is given.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring</p>
Ensuring that allocations are made fairly and promote equality, as well as create stable and sustainable communities	<p>Monitor as required all allocations made in terms of Clyde Valley Housing Association's Payment and Benefits Policy.</p> <p>Monitor monthly the number of void houses, turnover, number of refusals, reasons for refusals and reasons for terminating tenancies, household types being housed and void spend.</p> <p>Monitor annually all allocations made and terminated within a 12-month period.</p>	<p>Full compliance with Clyde Valley Housing Association's Payment and Benefits Policy where this applies to allocations.</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring</p> <p>Quarterly monitoring</p>