

---

## Allocations Policy

Policy Number - HM01

---

<b>Prepared By</b>	Customer Services
<b>Policy Created</b>	Allocations Policy
<b>Effective Date</b>	June 2021
<b>Review Date</b>	June 2024
<b>Posted on Website</b>	Yes

If you need this publication in larger print, audio form, Braille, or in another language, please contact our office and we will try to help you.

# **CONTENTS**

PART 1 – GENERAL

PART 2 – ACCESS TO HOUSING

PART 3 – PRIORITISING APPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING

PART 4 – OFFERS AND REFUSALS

PART 5 – APPEALS

PART 6 – INVOLVING AND INFORMING APPLICANTS AND CUSTOMERS

PART 7 – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND MONITORING

APPENDIX 1 – CVHA ALLOCATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

## **PART 1 – GENERAL**

### **1. Introduction**

This document provides an overview of Clyde Valley Housing Association's Housing Allocation Policy and Procedures.

This document seeks to comply with a number of core corporate documents, namely:-

Corporate Strategy to 2020  
Business Plan and Budget.

In addition, it has linkages with a number of operational policies including:

Complaints Policy  
Equality Policy  
Standing Orders and Delegations  
Risk Strategy  
Fraud, Money Laundering and Bribery Policy  
Customer Engagement Strategy  
Payments and Benefits Policy

This policy document will be subject to comprehensive review every 3 years, unless further changes in legislation, regulations or good practice require an earlier review.

The document is supported by our partner local authority Housing Allocation Policies which can be found at the following links:

[North Lanarkshire Council](#)

[South Lanarkshire Council](#)

[East Dunbartonshire Council](#)

Clyde Valley Housing Association's Housing Allocation Policy is intended to be clear, comprehensive and non-discriminatory and to provide equal access for all.

The rules contained within our Housing Allocation Policy apply to all of our houses and this policy sets out how we will allocate our vacant houses. We will allocate in accordance with our local authority partner Housing Allocation Policies as Common Housing Register Partners. In some instances, we may apply additional considerations to meet the needs of our customers and organisation to ensure balanced and sustainable communities as well as best use of our housing stock. This document provides information on such instances.

This policy has been approved by the Board of Clyde Valley Housing Association and will be operated by officers of Clyde Valley Housing Association.

### **2. Legislative and regulatory framework**

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

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.

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 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) 2018 (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, 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 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.

### **3. Aims and objectives**

The aim of our Housing Allocation Policy is to help us 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.

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

#### **4. 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 latest General Data Protection Regulation 2018 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

#### **5. Corporate Fit**

##### 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.

##### Stable and sustainable communities

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 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.

We will use this information to:

- feed directly into partner local authority's Local Housing Strategy which will help to inform 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 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

### 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.

The Board will ensure that the Housing Allocation Policy meets its intended objectives.

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

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

There may be special circumstances where the provisions of our Housing Allocation Policy 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 committee members your name to protect your confidentiality.

### Equalities

We will consider all applications, regardless of sex, faith or religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, mental or physical health, disability or marital status.

We will operate at all times within our Equality Policy.

### Confidentiality

We recognise that confidentiality is important to applicants and will treat information that we receive in the strictest confidence under the Data Protection Law 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 Common Housing Registers 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 to 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.



## **PART 2 – ACCESS TO HOUSING**

### **1. 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 our partner local authorities and other housing associations to maximise choice and simplify access to housing. By filling in a single application form for the local authority area of choice, 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 (where CVHA are Gatekeeper) 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.

#### How to apply for housing

If you wish to make an application for housing you can do this by requesting an application form from us directly or through the local authority Common Housing Registers. 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. Application forms are available by contacting our office, online for South Lanarkshire and by contact local authorities or other partner organisations involved in the Common Housing Register you wish to apply to.

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.

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 Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire.

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

## **2. Notification**

We will write to every applicant to notify them of their acceptance onto our housing list. 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 needs met.

## **3. 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

## **4. Types of application**

All of our housing applications are held on a Common Housing Register that we manage in conjunction with partner local authorities and other partner landlord organisations.

Each local authority Common Housing Register categorises applicants differently, detailed information on categories is outlined later in this document and within each local authority policy document.

## 5. 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. Targets are set annually with our partner local authorities and are outlined below:

### 2020/21 Letting Targets

#### North Lanarkshire

Category	Target %
CVHA Transfer List Applicants	25%
CVHA Waiting List Applicants	30%
Homeless applicants	35%
Other Nominations from Council	10%

#### South Lanarkshire

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

#### East Dunbartonshire

Category	Target %
CVHA Transfer List Applicants	-
CVHA Waiting List Applicants	-
Homeless Applicants	-
Other Nominations from Council	-

We will make selections throughout the year by rotation, seeking to ensure that the target percentages are broadly achieved on an ongoing basis. However, quotas achieved may vary depending upon a variety of circumstances such as turnover, external circumstances out with our control (Covid19) and local letting initiatives, 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 local authorities, 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.

## 6. 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.

## **7. Assessing applications**

When assessing applications and working out your group and points, we will not take account of any of the following:

- whether you live in the area you want housing in.
- the length of time you have lived in the area.
- any debts you have that are not related to your current tenancy.
- any debts you have already repaid.
- debts related to your tenancy where:
  - they are less than 1/12th of the yearly amount of rent you pay; or
  - you have already arranged a repayment plan and kept to it for at least three months and you are still keeping to the repayment plan.
- your and your family's income (including any benefits you receive).
- the value of any property you or your family own; or
- your age, as long as you are over the age of 16 and the home you want to move to has not been designed or adapted.

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.

## **8. Applications which may be removed or suspended**

We aim to operate our waiting lists on local authority Common Housing Registers so that they are 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:

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

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 normally affect your points level, however, it is important to ask this if this is the case.

Reasons for suspension are outlined within each of the local authority Housing Allocations Policies which can be found in the Appendices.

## **9. Tenancy references**

When you apply, we will ask you for the contact details of any landlords you have had over the past three years. 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 contact your current landlord before we offer you a property and ask them to fill in a tenancy reference form. If your landlord tells us you owe them rent, have behaved anti-socially or have broken your tenancy agreement with them, we may suspend you from our housing list. 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 Law.

## **10. CVHA as a housing provider**

Through all three local authority Common Housing Registers, 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.

## **11. 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 2014 brought in on 1 November 2019.

Notification and residency requirements that have to be met for someone to inherit your tenancy 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 for the 12 months prior your death; or
- a joint tenant, if the house was his or her only or principal home for the 12 months 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 12 months immediately before your death.

#### 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 12 months prior to the date of death.

The 12 month period begins at the point we are told in writing 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.

#### 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 and Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

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.

If you want to assign this tenancy to another person, both you must also have lived in the property as your only or principal home during the 12 months immediately before the date of your written request to assign the tenancy to someone else. The 12 months will be from the date we received written notice of you living in the property.

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 Customer Services Manager will consider applications to assign tenancies and will advise the applicant in writing of their decision. If the Customer Services Manager decides that a tenancy should not be assigned, the Customer Services 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.

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, 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.

## **12. 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.

### **13. 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.

#### **14. Targeted 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 ensure properties identified as 'target lets' are regularly updated and that our housing staff have the opportunity to exercise discretion in the allocation of same.

#### **15. Specific provisions – low demand properties**

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

Locations:

Gartlea  
Douglas

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

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

Local Letting Initiative - under occupation permitted, advertising of vacancies, 'to let' notices, etc.

#### **16. 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.

## **17. 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 in line with our Payments and Benefits Policy.

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.

## **18. Application Groups**

Each local authority Housing Allocation Policy provides detailed information on how applicants are considered across a range of circumstances, these include:

- Homeless persons
- Victims of domestic abuse
- Relationship breakdown
- Victims of harassment
- Victims of racial harassment
- Young people
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Community Care needs
- Wheelchair and adapted housing

## **19. Size of Property**

We try to make the best use of the housing available. You will be eligible for a particular size of house based on the size of your household but you may also choose to be on the waiting list for a house size smaller than you need (we will only allow you to do this as long as the house size you ask for will not make you overcrowded in terms of housing

legislation and as long as this will improve your current housing situation). We will work out your house size based on the following rules.

Please bear the following in mind when applying for housing with us.

- We won't expect more than two children to share a bedroom.
- We will give some priority to applicants where children of opposite sexes are required to share a bedroom.
- We won't expect children to share a bedroom if there is an age difference of more than six years between them.
- We will take account of the size of the bedrooms in a house when deciding how many people in the household it would be suitable for. We recognise that some bedrooms are smaller and they will only have enough space for one person. This will be taken into account when calculating overcrowding points and when deciding what size of household, we should offer the house to when it becomes vacant; and
- Couples and single people without children can choose whether they want us to consider them for either a one-bedroom or two-bedroom property.

Because of the high demand for, and short supply of, one-bedroom properties, we will let people who live alone (single applicants) apply for a two-bedroom property.

But, when we allocate two-bedroom properties, if a household with children has the same number of points as a single applicant, we will give the household with children priority for the property.

We will use the applicant's 'time in need' date (the date from which they had the level of need they currently have, for example, when they were awarded the number of points they currently have) as the next factor when deciding who we offer the property to. So, if an applicant has had their current circumstances for longer than somebody else with the same amount of points and level of need, we will offer the person who has been in need the longest.

An example of the house size we will consider applicants for is set out below, however, please check each local authority Housing Allocation Policy for their individual position on eligibility for property size.

Household size	Accommodation size
Single person	one or two-bedroom property
Couple	one or two-bedroom property
Single parent or couple with one child	two-bedroom property
Single parent or couple with two children of the same sex if the children are both aged under 16 if the children are both aged under 16, but they have more than six years' age difference between them if one child or both children are aged 16 or over	two-bedroom property three-bedroom property three-bedroom property
Single parent or couple with two children of the opposite sex if the children are both aged under 8 if one child or both children are aged 8 or over	two-bedroom property three-bedroom property
Single parent or couple with three children if two children are able to share a room (for example if they are aged under 16 years and are of the same sex, or aged under eight and of the opposite sex)	three-bedroom property

Household size	Accommodation size
if no children are able to share a room (for example because they are all over 16 years of age)	four-bedroom property
Single parent or couple with four children if all children are able to share rooms if two children are able to share a room if no children are able to share a room	three-bedroom property four-bedroom property five-bedroom property

If you have more than four children, we would work out the size of property you need by following the same rules as in the table above.

We understand that your needs may not be the same as someone else's and we will consider your household's eligibility on an individual basis.

There are a number of circumstances where we may offer you a bigger house. We list some of these below.

Where there is a health reason for needing another bedroom – for example, where a member of your household uses special medical equipment at home and it would be unreasonable for them to share a room while they use this equipment. We will consider their health needs on an individual basis through our health and housing need assessment procedures.

Where a separated husband, wife or civil partner has access rights to a child or children – if you are separated from someone who you have children with and the children stay overnight at your house, we would normally include your children when we work out the size of property we will offer you. If your current house is too small and you need an extra room/s to accommodate your children, we could award additional points. We will take your individual circumstances into account when we do this. Please mention any specific needs you have when you apply.

We may also allow you to go on the waiting list for a house size smaller than you would normally qualify for. This would normally be:

Where we do not have housing that suits the size of your household – if we don't own properties of a size suitable for you, or if we have very limited stock and turnover of the house size you qualify for, you may choose to be included on the waiting list for a house size smaller than you are eligible for as well as being listed for the size you qualify for. We will only do this if moving to a smaller property would improve your current circumstances. For example, if you currently live in a two-bedroom house and need a four-bedroom house (which we have very few of and which do not become available very often), we may consider offering you a three-bedroom house to reduce the overcrowding in your current home.

Our approach to working out what house size you are eligible for is meant to take account of the needs of large families, as well as making the most of the housing we have available.

## **20. Interviewing and Housing Options Advice**

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 out with 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.

## **21. 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 Policy.

If an applicant has any issues about the standard of house we have offered then we welcome them to contact us about their concerns.

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.

## **22. 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'. 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.
- repair work 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 Decant Policy and 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.

### **23. Keeping pets**

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

### **24. 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 – PRIORITISING APPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING**

### **1. 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 local authority Common Housing Register they choose. 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.

We will process all applications within the timescales detailed in the table in the Performance Standards and Monitoring section of this policy.

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.

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.

### **2. The groups and points system**

Our policy for allocating housing is a 'groups and points' system. This means that when you apply for housing, we will do the following:

- put your application into one of the application categories within your local authority area:

North Lanarkshire: 'homeless', 'transfer', 'aspirational transfers' or 'general'

South Lanarkshire: 'urgent need', 'transfer', 'waiting list' or 'other categories'



East Dunbartonshire:

Priority Need: 'homeless or threatened with homeless', 'unsatisfactory housing conditions', 'underoccupancy'

Local Need: 'insecurity of tenure', 'overcrowding', 'under occupation', 'sharing amenities', 'access and support needs', 'family and social', 'preference'

- give you a certain number of points, depending upon your housing needs in line with the Allocation Policy for the local authority area you are applying to

We set a target for the number of housing offers we make to each group every year. Normally, we would offer a property to the person in each group with the most points.

We believe that our housing allocation policy means that we can recognise and balance the different housing needs of people who want housing in the areas where we have stock.

## **2. Our groups and targets**

**Within North Lanarkshire there are the following categories:**

### Homeless

This includes people who have applied for housing through a homeless assessment process and it has been decided they are unintentionally homeless (homeless through no fault of their own) and that they are vulnerable and need housing urgently.

### Transfer

This includes people who are currently our tenants or joint tenants and who have a need to move, for example because their house is too big or too small for them or because they need to move for health reasons.

A separate group within the transfer group is the 'aspirational transfer' group for people who do not have a housing need. For example, this would be for people who do not need to move for health reasons and their home is not overcrowded or underoccupied but they still want to move to be in a different area or to live in a different type of house.

### General needs

This includes everyone who has not applied or who does not qualify to be included on the homeless list, and who are not looking for a transfer. For example, this group could include people who are renting a house from a private landlord or people looking to set up a home for the first time.

**Within South Lanarkshire there are the following categories:**

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

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](http://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.

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

## 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.

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 out with 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.

### 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.

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

#### **Within East Dunbartonshire there numerous categories:**

Page 19 of [East Dunbartonshire Allocation Policy](#) provides a detailed breakdown of Priority Housing Categories and Page 23 provides information in relation to Local Housing Need Categories.

### **3. Mobility and the transfer grouping**

Over time, your household circumstances can change. Even if you are already a Clyde Valley Housing Association tenant, you may need to move to a different size or type of property (such as a smaller house because your children have moved out) or to a different area (for example, because of work). Overall, around a quarter of properties

that are allocated will go to our tenants of landlords who participate in the Common Housing Registers to help them to move to more suitable housing. This will help us to balance the needs of different communities across the areas where we have stock, by making sure that people with different circumstances will get equal chances of being offered different types of properties in different areas. When we allocate a property to somebody on the transfer list, this gives us a property back which will meet the needs of someone else on one of our other lists. This means we will be able to help two households on our waiting lists.

We give existing tenants who need to move (for example, this could be because their family has grown and they now need a bigger house) priority above our tenants who do not need to move but want to move.

Because of this, we ensure a reasonable number of housing offers to the transfer grouping will go to people who do not need to move but want to move.

If you are already a Clyde Valley Housing Association tenant, you can apply for a transfer whenever you like. You do not need to have been a tenant for any particular period of time before you apply to move to another property. We won't consider tenants for a transfer to a property if it means they are worse off, for example if it means their new home would be overcrowded.

#### 4. The points system

When you apply for housing, you receive a certain number of points based on your current housing circumstances. We award points for six main reasons:

- if you need to move house because of your health.
- if your housing situation is unsettled (for example, if you could soon become homeless or if your home is being demolished).
- if there are too many or too few people living in your home.
- if your current living conditions are not suitable for you (for example because the property is not suitable to live in because it is in a bad state of repair).
- if you are being abused or harassed; or
- if you have social reasons for moving (for example if you need to move to be nearer to support you have from family or friends or from a specialist hospital or school).

These categories take into account the reasonable preference criteria set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by the 2001 Act). We prioritise large families by recognising they could be overcrowded and by making sure that only households who need a certain house size are eligible for it. There is some flexibility in house size choice for smaller households (couples and single people) but not for larger households. This means we can make sure that large properties are only given to large households.

#### North Lanarkshire Council Points System

Category	Points we award
<b>If your housing situation is unsettled ('insecure housing')</b>	
if your property is being demolished	150
if you have been assessed and accepted through an agreed Council protocol (a protocol means a set of rules that has been agreed with another organisation who provides support or a service for a particular group of people)	150

Category	Points we award
if you are leaving the armed forces or have a confirmed date of losing accommodation within two months	150
if you have been accepted as prospective foster parents	150
if you do not have accommodation available for you and you are living outside or if you are living in temporary housing but you are not applying as homeless or you have been awarded a 'homeless – nonpriority' decision in terms of a homeless application you have made	80
if you are living with people who are not going to be part of your household when you move	30
if your housing situation is unsettled for any other reason	10
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'insecure housing' section	
<b>If you or a member of your household is being abused or harassed</b>	
if you or a member of your household is being abused or harassed by someone in your home	150
if you or a member of your household is being abused or harassed by people who do not live in your home	50
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'abuse and harassment' section	
<b>If your moving for health reasons</b>	
if you have an 'urgent' health reason to move (for example you cannot get out of hospital because your current property is no longer suitable for you and it would be dangerous if you returned home)	90
if you have a 'serious' health reason to move (for example if you cannot get to the bathroom in your property or it would not be practical for the property to be adapted)	40
if you have any other medical reason to move	10
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'health' section	
<b>If your home has too many or too few people in it ('over and under occupancy') – these points will be calculated taking account of the number of bedrooms within your house, the size of the bedrooms and the number of people these can accommodate</b>	
if there are too many people living permanently or for the majority of the week in your home (but we will disregard any points attributable to temporary members of the household who would not form part of your household when you move)	50 for the first extra room you need and 10 for every other bedroom that you need
if you have access to children who stay in your house for one or two nights a week and you need extra rooms	50
if you are overcrowded which means that children of opposite sexes have to share a room	10
if there are too few people living in your home (this applies to Council and housing association tenants)	40
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'over and under occupancy' section	50 for the first extra room you need and

Category	Points we award
	10 for every other bedroom that you need
<b>If your home is not suitable to live in</b>	
if your property is significantly below the tolerable standard (which means it falls below the standards set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987) and is not in good enough condition for you to live in (for example if your property has no hot or cold running water, mains electricity or is structurally unstable)	50
if your family has to live apart (for example if you do not have any housing available which is large enough for you all and you have to live in different houses)	20
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'unsuitable housing' section	
<b>If you have a social reason for moving</b>	
if you want a transfer to another home (this only applies to tenants who will be on the transfer and aspirational transfer lists)	20
if you want to move to give or receive support	10
if you want to move to access essential services that you need	10
if you are moving to enable you to get to your place of work	10
You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'social reason' section	

North Lanarkshire Council Allocation Policy recognises that some applicants may have an urgent need to be rehoused and therefore allows an award of 150 points. However, where an applicant is awarded 150 points under such circumstances they cannot be allowed to be unnecessarily restrictive in their choice of house type or area. If an applicant in such circumstances refuses two reasonable offers of accommodation, their application will be suspended for three months and the 150 priority points will be removed. The applicant will be offered a housing options interview.

### South Lanarkshire Council Point System

	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



## **East Dunbartonshire Council Point System**

The points system for East Dunbartonshire can be found on page 33 of the Council's [Housing Allocation Policy](#).

### **5. Applicants applying to join households together**

Where two families want to give up their current homes and swap them for one larger home, we will award them points according to the points system using the following rules. We will consider all extended family members (everybody who wants to live with you as part of your new household) from the two households as being in one household. We will then compare the combined household with the size of the larger of the two properties that your household currently live in, to see if this property would be large enough for the new household to move into. If this property is not large enough we will award points under the overcrowding criteria. We will then assess the new household for any other points we should give them for their circumstances (for example if they need to move for medical reasons or to be near services they need).

If both families wanting to move are our tenants, we will put your application in the 'transfer' group. If only one or neither of the families are our tenants, we will put you in the 'general' group.

### **6. What we do not take into account**

When working out your group and points, we will not take account of any of the following when we allocate our housing:

- whether you live in the area you want housing in.
- the length of time you have lived in the area.
- any debts you have that are not related to your current tenancy.
- any debts you have already repaid.
- debts related to your tenancy where:
  - they are less than 1/12th of the yearly amount of rent you pay; or
  - you have already arranged a repayment plan and kept to it for at least three months and you are still keeping to the repayment plan.
- your and your family's income (including any benefits you receive).
- the value of any property you or your family own; or
- your age, as long as you are over the age of 16 and the home you want to move to has not been designed or adapted for elderly people to live in.

### **7. Gathering supporting information**

For us to assess properly your level of housing need, we will need proof of your current circumstances.

We understand that sometimes the information we need may be personal and sensitive. In these cases, we will only need to see the sensitive documents — we won't need to keep an original or take a photocopy.

Examples of the type of information we will require is listed on the table below.

Your circumstances	Proof we need to see
Whatever your circumstances	Two forms of identity  For example, we will accept a driving license, a passport, an ID card that you were given when you started your job or your National Insurance card.  If you do not have any of these but you have a different form of ID, please contact us to see if we can accept it.
If you are homeless or could soon become homeless	The local authority will assess you through its homeless assessment process to see if you meet the unintentionally homeless and in priority need criteria as described in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
If you have been asked to leave your current home	Copy of a valid 'notice to quit' or a letter asking you to leave.
If you need rehousing because your health is affected by your current housing	We will assess your health and housing needs through our health and housing needs assessment process.
If you need a bigger home because you have access to your child and they want to stay overnight	A letter from your child's other parent, or a letter from a lawyer explaining your access rights to your child or children.
If you are moving for social reasons – to be near services you need	A letter from the service that you use, such as a school or medical centre, explaining your reason for moving and that you need to live near this service.
If you are moving for social reasons – to provide or receive support	A letter from the person receiving or providing support, explaining your reason for moving and that you need to be near them.
If you are moving for social reasons – to be closer to your place of work	A letter from your employer explaining your reason for moving and that you need to be near your place of work.

## 8. Homelessness

If you believe that your household is homeless or could soon become homeless, you have two options in terms of how you would like your application to be processed – you can be assessed through by the Council to determine whether you are 'statutory homeless' or be considered through the points system where you otherwise have 'no accommodation available'.

### Statutory homelessness

You can apply directly to the local authority and ask to be assessed under their homeless assessment process. If the Council assesses you and finds that you are unintentionally homeless and in priority need (which means you are homeless through no fault of your own and are vulnerable), they will put you into the homeless group within the Common Housing Register. You can't go into this group unless you go through the local authority

homelessness assessment process. If you want more information about the homelessness assessment process, please visit your nearest Council office.

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 local authority in terms of Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, and not through the Association's general Housing Allocation Policy and local authority Common Housing Register points scheme.

Where a Section 5 referral is identified and that person has a current live housing application on the Association's general housing list, that housing application would be suspended from the housing register pending the outcome of their statutory homeless status. If such a household is housed, their application on the general housing list will be cancelled and archived. If such a household experiences a change of circumstances whereby their statutory homeless status is removed by the local authority, their application on the general housing list will be reinstated and considered in terms of the Association's general Housing Allocation Policy and local authority Common Housing Register points scheme.

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

#### Not statutory homeless but no accommodation available

Alternatively, you can apply to join a local authority Common Housing Register without going through the Council's homeless assessment process. Their points framework has been developed to make sure that the needs of people who are homeless or who could become homeless, are prioritised within the group they are put in. If you choose not to apply through the Council's homeless process, you would go into our 'general' or 'transfer' groups, depending upon whether you are already a tenant or not. We would give you points in line with our local authority Common Housing Register points system.

## **9. Abuse and harassment**

If you or a member of your household are being abused or harassed and it means you cannot stay in your home, you can apply to the local authority for a homelessness assessment. The Council will give you the help and support you need to do this (for example, they could give you temporary housing and put you in touch with independent support agencies such as Womens' Aid).

But we understand that you may not want to apply through the Council's homeless assessment process. If you choose not to apply through the Council's homeless process, you would go into one of our other groups, depending upon whether you are already a tenant or not.

We also recognise that if you are suffering domestic abuse within the household where you are currently staying, that it is important that you are removed from this situation as quickly as possible. Because of this we will make sure that the options available for rehousing you are maximised and that you are recorded on our waiting lists for as many types of housing and areas of housing as would be suitable for you.

## 10. Health and Housing Needs and Medical Assessments

If you feel that your health is affected by your current housing circumstances, and that moving would help your health or reduce some of the problems you are experiencing as a result of your health, you will be asked to fill in a 'Health and Housing Need' form if you live in North Lanarkshire and if you live in South Lanarkshire you will need to arrange for a medical assessment.

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.

Medical points will only be awarded if the independent medical advisor assesses that your household suffers from a serious medical condition and that your present accommodation is unsuitable in light of your medical needs and cannot be adapted. If you wish to be considered for re-housing on the basis of your medical need, you must complete a medical assessment application form. Application forms are available on request. Applicants should not approach their GP or specialist directly to provide us with information.

The following process will take place when an applicant is applying for medical points:

- a Health and Housing Need form should be completed by the applicant giving full details of their medical condition, any prescribed medication being taken, contact details of doctor, information on why the applicant's current accommodation is medically unsuitable for their needs, etc.
- the medical advisor appointed by us will independently assess all applications using their medical experience and judgement (our staff are only involved in assisting with completion of the application and passing on details of the applicant's current accommodation).
- the independent medical advisor will make a recommendation on each case based upon the information provided.
- we must follow any recommendations that the independent medical advisor makes on the facilities that the applicant needs (e.g., ground floor accommodation only).
- the independent medical advisor decides which category of medical rating, if any, is to be assigned to the applicant's needs; and
- to award a category of medical priority, the independent medical advisor must be satisfied that the location, design or condition of the applicant's current accommodation is having an adverse effect on the applicant's medical condition and / or the medical condition of the relevant member of the household.

To allow the independent medical advisor to make an informed decision, we will provide full details on each case to be assessed. This may include:

- the Health and Housing Need form which the applicant has completed (this form is strictly confidential between the applicant and the independent medical advisor).
- details of any care or support packages being provided; and
- details of any equipment / adaptations being used.

We will not ask applicants to approach their GP or specialist directly to provide us with information. If the independent medical advisor needs clarification or further information they may contact the applicant's GP or specialist directly and in confidence.

Before we send the application to the independent medical advisor we may include any other information which we feel may assist the independent medical advisor in making the decision. This information may include:

- type of current accommodation.
- location of accommodation (e.g., on a hill).
- ease of access (e.g., number of steps to the house from the street).
- location of the bathroom (e.g., ground floor or upper floor); or
- proximity to transport, shops, etc.

In many instances, the above information will allow the independent medical advisor to make a decision. However, there may be times when the independent medical advisor will need to discuss the case with the applicant and the applicant should provide contact details to allow this.

We will make a one-off award of medical points, regardless of the number of members within the household who have applied for and been granted medical points.

Applicants are required to keep us advised of any changes in circumstances, including details of any medical conditions that may affect their housing circumstances. Where there are changes in an applicant's medical circumstances we will ask our independent medical advisor to make an assessment. Depending upon the findings of the independent medical advisor, points entitlement may be increased, decreased or kept the same.

The medical assessment procedure and the granting of medical priority will only work effectively if all the cases are genuine and fulfil the criteria. It is essential that medical points are not used as a means of fast-tracking an offer of housing. Both Clyde Valley Housing Association and the independent medical advisor will act at all times to maintain the integrity of the system.

Where a medical recommendation is received which appears to be inconsistent with the policy we will raise this with the independent medical advisor and seek clarification.

We will meet periodically with the independent medical advisor to discuss the operation of this process and to identify and seek to address any concerns or difficulties being experienced by the independent medical advisor or Clyde Valley Housing Association. We will also use such meetings to exchange general information and seek advice and clarity on any issues of concern.

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. We may be able provide appropriate equipment or carry out the necessary adaptations required to allow you to continue to live in your home, but when we are assessing whether or not a property can be adapted to meet your households needs, we will take the following factors into account:

- financial constraints.

- level of disruption associated with the required work; and
- landlord 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.

There are three levels of medical priority:

- urgent health reason.
- serious health reason; and
- other health reason

It is likely that you will have specific property requirements which we will aim to meet. Where the independent medical advisor 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 housing list, for preferences that meet your medical needs.

If you wish to be considered for a property or area which does not meet your medical needs, medical priority points will not be applied in relation to 'unsuitable' property / area / heating preferences.

No points will be awarded for health reasons where the independent medical advisor determines that:

- you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) have no medical problems that are due to your current accommodation; or
- you (or a member of your household who is moving with you) have medical problems, but these would be unlikely to be alleviated to any extent by different accommodation.

We may identify and designate suitable ground floor accommodation to alleviate existing problems in respect of living arrangements and health circumstances where you have been awarded points for health reasons (see above). Where this type of property becomes available for offer, we would give priority to those applicants who have points for health reasons.

## **11. Applicants leaving the Armed Forces**

If you apply for housing with us because you are leaving the Armed Forces and you are losing your Force's accommodation we will prioritise your application using the criteria set out in our pointing framework. When you are issued with your discharge papers you should provide a copy of these to us along with your application for housing and any other evidence that would be required to allow us to assess your level of housing need.

## **PART 4 – OFFERS AND REFUSALS**

### **1. Matching you to a property that suits you**

When we know that a property will soon become available, we will start to decide who the property is most suitable for.

Firstly, we will decide which group the property should be offered to. We have procedures for our staff to follow when they decide which group to offer a property to. This helps us to make sure that all our groups have equal access to different types of property in many different areas.

Then we will identify all of the applicants in this group whose needs and preferences match the property. We would then offer the property to the person with the most points. However, there are a number of exceptions to this.

### **2. If the property we are offering is adapted**

We want to make sure that we make best use of our adapted properties and properties specifically designated as 'Amenity Housing' for older people – this means they have been specifically built to make them suitable for people with particular needs, or have had things changed in them or added to them, for example, a walk-in shower (a shower with a wet floor area that does not have a shower tray to step into) or alarm pull cords to help elderly people to live more safely. If a property has been adapted or specifically designated as Amenity Housing for older people, we will check whether any of the people in the group we choose need an adapted property or, in the case of Amenity Housing, are 60 years old or over. If somebody does meet these criteria, we will offer it to the person who needs an adapted property or Amenity House, with the highest number of points. If nobody in the group we choose needs an adapted property or an Amenity House, we may choose to offer the property to a different group so we can match the property to a more suitable person.

### **3. Urgent need for rehousing**

We recognise that some applicants may have an urgent need to be rehoused and therefore additional points are awarded for this purpose. However, where an applicant is awarded points under such circumstances they cannot be allowed to be unnecessarily restrictive in their choice of house type or area. If an applicant in such circumstances refuses two reasonable offers of accommodation, their application will be suspended for three months and the priority points will be removed. The applicant will be offered a housing options interview.

Where an applicant has an urgent need to be housed and receives points under this category the points are valid for a period of three months. Where CVHA are the Gatekeeper for the applicant we will endeavour to ensure all applications are up to date and points removed if no longer required, however, where we are not the Gatekeeper and points have been awarded and expired we will bypass such applicants and inform them of the need to update their application.

### **4. Number of offers**

We want to make sure that we match you with a property that is suitable for you. We will support you in making your housing choices – in terms of where you are thinking of living and what type of housing you need. We will tell you what your realistic chances are of being offered housing in your preferred areas.

We are happy to discuss with you the house types and allocation areas that you 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 you to make informed and realistic decisions on choosing house types and allocation areas that best meet your requirements and hopefully this avoids us making unsuitable offers.

The Common Housing Register application form allows you to choose as many or as few house types and allocation areas as you want, and you can change these at any time. However, you should only select house types and allocation areas that you reasonably believe meet your needs and expectations.

Through the Common Housing Registers, you can ask to be considered for housing with another landlord who may have suitable accommodation within an area of your choice.

We don't expect many people to refuse housing offers because our offers will match the choices you made when you applied.

We understand that sometimes your needs change. Different local authorities have different approaches to refusals, these are set out below:

#### North Lanarkshire

In North Lanarkshire you are free to refuse one housing offer. But we will ask you why you did this and check if you want to change your housing choices.

If you then refuse a second housing offer which matches your choices, you will be suspended from the housing list for three months from the date you refused your second housing offer.

If you are included in the homeless group and you refuse two offers of housing which the Council thinks are reasonable, we will move your application to one of our other groups, such as our 'general' or 'transfer' group, depending upon your current circumstances. If the properties we offered you were in your preferred areas, we will also suspend your application from the housing list for three months.

#### South Lanarkshire

In South Lanarkshire applicants will be eligible to receive two reasonable offers of housing which meet the preferences states in their housing application.

One reasonable offer will be made to homeless applicants, this discharged legal duty under the relevant homeless legislation.

#### East Dunbartonshire

The Council has established rules concerning the number of offers that may be made. Due to the shortage of housing available for let, the Council makes one reasonable offer only. This rule also applies to numbers of offers made to homeless applicants. Generally, offers made are based on applicants' stated choice of area.

### **5. 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. This provisional offer will be done verbally where we have contact details for an applicant. Only where we are unable to make a verbal provisional offer will we do this in writing, this could be via email or post.

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 Policies and Common Housing Registers as well as the associated procedures. However, all provisional verbal offers must be checked and authorised by the Customer Services Manager or Senior Housing Officer before a formal written offer is made. Applicants will have 48 hours to confirm acceptance of a formal written offer. Should we have no contact from a prospective customer within 48 hours once a formal offer has been issued the offer will be withdrawn and the property matched to another applicant.

#### 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.

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 formal offer of housing. This offer will be made in writing, stating the address, size and rent of the property offered. The officer will then arrange a date with the applicant to sign up for the tenancy, view the property and handover of keys.

Where an offer of accommodation is made, the applicant will have a time limit of 48 hours to accept the offer.

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 formal 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 formal offer of housing. This offer will be made in writing, stating the address, size and rent of the property offered. The officer will arrange a date with the applicant to sign up for the tenancy, view the property and handover of keys.

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 48 hours to contact us to confirm they wish to accept this offer.

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.

### Covid19

During Covid19 restrictions no house visits will be carried out in relation to Allocation of our properties. We will carry out all necessary checks by telephone or virtual appointment. Transfer applicants will be asked to sign a disclaimer in relation to the condition of their property confirming they accept responsibility for all rechargeable repairs identified by our Technical Inspector when the property is returned to us.

## **6. 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.

### North Lanarkshire

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 North Lanarkshire Common Housing Register. We will make a second offer when availability of suitable vacancies permits. 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 North 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.

### South Lanarkshire

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 homeless applicant refuses an offer of accommodation, we will advise the local authority's Homelessness Service. An applicant 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.

## **7. Failure to contact regarding an offer**

If we have contacted an applicant regarding their application and a potential offer of housing and the applicant fails to contact us within 48 hours 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**

### **1. 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 the Customer Services 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 Customer Services 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.

### **2. 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 Policy. A copy of this is available at our offices or on our website.

### **3. 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](mailto:ask@spsso.org.uk)

Website: [www.spsso.org.uk](http://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 Policy.

### **4. 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**

### **1. Involving and informing tenants and applicants**

Local authorities consult tenants and strategic partners in developing and reviewing their Housing Allocation Policies and seek to reflect current legislation and good practice.

Local authority Housing Allocation Policies are publicised on their websites and through newsletters and tenant information services. Copies of Housing Allocation Policies are available from Council Offices and websites.

There is also information on how to apply for housing through the Common Housing Register.

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**

### **1. Purpose of monitoring**

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

### **2. Reviewing our policy**

The Housing Allocation Policy 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 work together in partnership with local authorities 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 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.

## CVHA ALLOCATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Service Standard	Target	Indicator
Making effective use of the housing stock	<p>Carry out pre-termination visits on all tenancies where appropriate notice is given.</p> <p>Monitor monthly allocation quotas achieved.</p>	<p>% of visits made as a proportion of terminations where notice is given.</p> <p>Quarterly report to committee detailing allocation quotas achieved, including breakdown of points awarded, section 5 referrals, local letting initiatives, etc.</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 Schedule 7 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 Schedule 7 Policy where this applies to allocations.</p> <p>Quarterly report to the Board including trends.</p> <p>Annual report to the committee of allocations made and terminated within a 12-month period, identifying key trends and proposals for local letting initiatives.</p>