

Housing Allocation Policy

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1. Why does the Council need this policy?

1.1 The Council has a duty to make and publish rules covering priority of allocation of houses, transfers, and exchanges, setting out clearly how it will determine priority for housing.¹ (section 21 of the 1987 Act, as amended by section 155 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and the 2001 Act).

1.2 The policy will comply with the following legislative and regulatory framework for the allocation of social rented sector homes:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 ("the 1987 Act")
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 ("the 2001 Act")
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 ("the 2014 Act")
- The Social Housing Allocations Practice Guide (2019)
- Legal Framework for Social Housing Allocations
- Statutory Guidance for Social Landlords
- Scottish Social Housing Charter

1.3 The policy will also comply with the homelessness rules set out in Part II of the 1987 Act (as amended by the 2001 Act, the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act")) and the Code of Guidance on Homelessness (2019) to demonstrate how the Council will meet its statutory obligation to provide housing for homeless households.

1.4 In order to comply with its statutory duties, the Housing Allocation Policy refers to and considers the Equality Act 2010; Human Rights Act 1998; Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection (Scotland) Act 1981; Children Scotland Act 1995; Civil Partnership Act 2004; Immigration & Asylum Act 1999; Protection from Harassment Act 1997; and the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulations. In the development of this policy, the following guidance was also incorporated:

- Social Housing Allocations Practice Guide (2019)
- Legal Framework for Social Housing Allocations – Statutory Guidance for Social Landlords
- Statutory Guidance on Suspensions
- Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans
- Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Local Housing Strategy

1.5 Equal opportunities Access to housing is available to everyone aged 16 or more. This

¹ Section 21 of the 1987 Act, as amended by section 155 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and the 2001 Act

does not give applicants a right to receive an offer of housing however, as offers are dependent on the priority given to each individual application. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Council will ensure that no individual is discriminated against on the grounds of sexual or marriage status, on racial grounds, disability, age, sexual orientation, transgender, language or social origin, faith or religion, or political opinion. This allocations policy is designed to allocate houses on a needs basis but recognises that need outstrips supply. The policy has undergone a thorough equality impact assessment.

1.6 The policy will provide clarity to applicants and staff on how decisions relating to allocating our housing stock are made and will ensure that all allocations are administered fairly and consistently within the required legal framework. In order to mitigate any risks as far as possible the policy aims to ensure that we let our council houses in line with current legislation and guidance from the Scottish Government.

2. Application and Scope Statement

2.1 The policy affects all applicants for social housing regardless of their current tenure.

2.2 Fundamentally the priority, points award, and property size assessed by the Allocation Policy remain the same as its current iteration. The introduction of a Choice Based Lettings approach is designed to provide applicants to the scheme a greater degree of choice and control in their housing selection, increase transparency in the housing selection process, and increase customer satisfaction with their housing outcome.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 The Chief Officer Early Intervention and Community Empowerment is responsible for managing the policy.

3.2 The policy has been developed to ensure it meets the standards and outcomes set out by the Scottish Social Housing Charter.²

3.3 Any instances of non-compliance with the policy should be reported to the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment.

3.4 Feedback on the policy should be communicated to the Housing Options and Allocations Team Leader. Housing Options and allocation advice can be accessed here housingaccess@aberdeencity.gov.uk.

3.5 Misuse or breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action against Aberdeen City Council staff for misconduct. Applicants found to have provided fraudulent or misleading information may be suspended from bidding for properties or have their applications cancelled.

² As required by section 31 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, the Scottish Ministers, in this Scottish Social Housing Charter, set the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities

4. Supporting Procedures & Documentation

4.1 The Council has a housing options advice module which helps applicants to consider other housing options in the city. Click here to access the guidance on how to use this self-assessment tool <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/find-home/apply-council-house/self-assessment-guidance>

4.2 Details of how the Council allocates property can be found [here](#).

5. About this Policy

5.1 The aim of the Allocation Policy is to meet housing need fairly and help secure accommodation for households in the greatest housing need in line with the Council's legal duties. We aim to do this by working to the following service objectives:

- Respond quickly to people in acute and urgent housing need
- Give the right priority to the people who are in most need of housing; including specific groups identified in legislation to whom we must give 'reasonable preference', namely
 - People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness (including those at risk of harassment and abuse).
 - People who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions with unmet housing needs.
 - Social housing tenants who are under-occupying their home; (Persons have unmet housing needs where the social landlord considers the persons have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options available).
- Prevent and respond to homelessness by being proactive in the provision of appropriate advice and assistance or suitable housing within a reasonable timescale.
- Take a housing options approach to meet the needs of our applicants, which involves taking early action if their home is at risk, encouraging them to make informed and realistic decisions on their options and assessing and meeting any support needs they may have, in partnership with other agencies.
- Provide support to those who need help to find and keep a home by helping them access help and support to find a property and to live in their new home independently and successfully in partnership with agencies such as NHS, Social Work Services, and other support providers.
- Make best use of housing that becomes available for rent.
- Work to create communities where people want to live.

5.2 The Allocation Policy sets out the rules we will apply to every housing application made to the Council with a view to providing council officers and the general public clarity about the allocation process.

6. Risk

6.1 This policy is designed to mitigate the Council's risks in letting its housing stock.

- **Strategic** - Having a clearly defined policy together with detailed and robust procedures and processes will help staff to clearly understand their role and provide appropriate help and advice to applicants.
- **Compliance** – The policy clearly outlines the agreed principles through which all Aberdeen City Council houses will be allocated in order to comply with government legislation and guidance.
- **Operational** - This policy will ensure our staff provide a consistent and robust approach in allocating our council houses. It also provides those applying for housing with greater transparency of the process so they can make a better informed choice about whether they wish to seek council housing.
- **Financial** – The intention of this policy is to reduce the number of refused or withdrawn offers made to applicants on the council housing lists. Reduction of the number of refusals and withdrawals will result in savings against staff time used to generate and enact these unsuccessful offers. In addition, making less unsuccessful offers should reduce the amount of time properties are vacant for, reducing the repair and rental loss associated with vacant properties. Data gathered through the Choice Based Letting process should also assist the council to better manage its stock profile as applicants will be able to clearly register their specific preferences for particular house types, developments, streets and areas, in a level of detail that cannot currently be gathered from the process better informing analysis of demand.
- **Reputational** - Clearly setting out the policy principles, procedures, and actions on how we allocate our council houses will help to eradicate the risk of reputational damage caused by high levels of refusals. This policy will help to mitigate this risk by providing staff and applicants with details on how the process works and affects their priority, together with a robust appeals process.

6.2 Risks will be monitored through a comprehensive quality assurance and performance management framework.

- Statutory recording of the HL1 – case level homelessness data, HL3 – case level temporary accommodation data, and Prevent1 – case level housing advice data, will monitor the performance of services in the processing of applications to prevent and alleviate homelessness.
- Scottish Housing Regulator monitoring will report on the general performance of the allocation policy against national standards and benchmarking.
- The council's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan will monitor the overall

performance of the council homeless process in relation to our service objectives.

- Frontline staff engaging with the public will receive mandatory training on the PREVENT Strategy, Child and Adult Protection, and Data Protection to mitigate risks in relation to this policy.

7. Environmental Considerations

7.1 It is anticipated that this policy will reduce the time that council properties are vacant between tenancies thus reducing the environmental impact of vacant properties in the city generally. The policy should also encourage better use of council accommodation, leading to less instances of under occupancy in the city and therefore greater energy efficiency.

8. Policy Performance

8.1 There are numerous reports which focus on the performance of the various aspects of the allocation process.

8.2 The reports are produced by the Quality Assurance and Performance Management team and are distributed to appropriate officers either daily, weekly, or monthly. These detail current performance and year-to-date information so that officers can monitor and scrutinise performance and trends against targets to inform operational directives.

8.3 We will monitor performance against the following indicators which assess admission to our housing lists:

- Number of new applications received.
- Number of new applications registered.
- Time taken to register an application.
- Number of new applications by ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

8.4 We will monitor performance against the following indicators which evaluate our assessment of applications:

- Time taken to process an application.
- Number of applicants reviewed and removed from the list.
- Number of applicants suspended including group and grounds for suspension.
- Number of applicants who have chosen to defer their application.
- Number of appeals made, including outcomes.
- Number of complaints received, including outcomes.

8.5 We will monitor performance against the following indicators which assess the

outcomes achieved by housing applicants:

- Number of applications in each group.
- Number of lets to applicants by group against proportion.
- Time taken to offer housing to Homelessness Households.
- Number of offers accepted and refused, by group and reason for refusal.
- Number of applicants re-housed through a mutual exchange.
- Number of applicants under-occupying by one or two bedrooms who are re-housed.
- Number and reason for bypassing an applicant for an offer of housing.

8.6 In addition to performance monitoring information we will obtain feedback from using a variety of methods to assess our service and working practices to review our policy. A policy review will be carried out on a 5 year cycle with more regular reviews in light of any changes in legislation or good practice guidance.

8.7 Reports will provide data on the properties advertised including the address, area, type, and size, the number of bids and from which list they come. Also, the number of offers generated and to which list they pertain and, number of refusals and acceptances will also be monitored to assess the performance of the policy in achieving its objectives.

8.8 It is anticipated that the introduction of a Choice Based Letting system will reduce refusals and help to reduce void rent loss, it is also anticipated that customer satisfaction levels relating to quality of the property will increase given the increased choice for the applicant. Applicants and members of the public can find information regarding this policy on our website, when reporting to council committees, the Scottish Government, or the Scottish Housing Regulator.

9. Design and Delivery

9.1 This Policy will have a positive impact on homelessness. For those who cannot make bids for properties under a choice based letting system, we will use auto-bidding. Auto bidding is a feature of the system which make bids automatically where applicants are unable to bid on-line e.g., those who have no access to computers. This will ensure that people move quickly through the homeless journey. It may also contribute to improved mental health and wellbeing by enabling people to have an improved choice of property and location to meet their needs and improving customer service.

9.2 The policy will address the Local Outcome Improvement Plan stretch outcome 11- Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026 by the provision of settled accommodation which is fit for the household needs.

9.3 The Councils statutory obligations will be met through the policy implementing requirements from the legislation detailed in section 1.

10. Housekeeping and Maintenance

10.1 This policy will be monitored regularly with changes made where either there are changes in legislation or there are changes to the supply and demand for our homes. This policy and supporting documentation will be reviewed and updated annually or sooner if there is new legislation or guidance issued.

11. Communication and Distribution

11.1 This policy will be available on the Aberdeen City Council website to be accessed by householders/service users and shared with relevant staff. If applicants have no digital access, information can be obtained through the Council's Contact Centre phone on 03000 200 292. If applicants request it, the policy can be provided in other formats such as different languages or fonts.

12. Information Management

12.1 Information generated by the application of this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Corporate Information Policy and supporting procedure.

13. Appendix 1 - Allocations Policy Provisions

1. Our Housing Stock

Aberdeen City Council holds around 23,000 properties across the city. Broken down by property size approximately 38% is bedsit or one bedroom properties, 45% is two bedroom properties, 17% is three bedroom and 1% is four bedrooms or larger. In the financial year 2021 around 2,000 properties were let of which approximately 80% were general needs accommodation and 20% were amenity or sheltered accommodation.

We classify our housing by five different groupings:

- General Needs – accommodation available to all applicants.
- Amenity Housing – adapted properties for ambulant disabled households generally over the age of 55.
- Sheltered Housing – properties with additional services for people of pensionable age.
- Very Sheltered Housing – properties with additional support for people of pensionable age with severe health issues.
- High Support Housing – properties for people of any age group who have been assessed as having severe health issues and adverse social circumstances which would be significantly improved by living in this type of housing.

You can view our housing stock in each area of the city using our [interactive map](#) which shows the breakdown of our properties by size and type.

2. Who can apply?

Anyone over 16 years and over can apply for housing unless they are “subject to immigration control”³.

For these purposes a person is ‘subject to immigration control’ if s/he ‘is a person who under the Immigration Act . From 1 January 2021, every person requires leave to enter or remain in the UK unless s/he is:

- a British citizen
- an Irish citizen (with certain exceptions) or
- a Commonwealth citizen with the right of abode

EU (European Union), EEA (European Economic Area) and Swiss citizens, resident in the UK prior to 31st December 2020, must be able to provide evidence of Settled or Pre-Settled Status before their application for housing can be processed.

³ A person is ‘subject to immigration control’ if s/he ‘is a person who under the Immigration Act 1971 requires leave to enter or remain in the UK (‘whether or not such leave has been given’ (Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, s118(6)).

Everyone applying for housing will be placed on our Common Housing Register, however, applications can only be made live, meaning they will not be considered for an offer of accommodation, once all the required information is provided such as proof of identification, birth certificates, proof of settled status or a visa confirming eligibility for public funds.

Prior to any offer of accommodation being made, applicants may have to provide further evidence of their eligibility if their rights are not indefinite.

The detail of housing rights for migrants is very complex, and greatly depends on individual situations. More detailed information on the subject can be found on the [Chartered Institute for Housing's Housing Rights Information](#) website.

3. How to Apply for Housing with Aberdeen City Council

To apply for housing, applicants have to register through our [Housing Online](#) portal via the Aberdeen City Council website. To do so you must have a functioning email address that they can access (details on how to set up an email address are available [here](#)). You will be asked to provide your email address, which will be your Username for your account, and create a password for your account. Once complete an email will then be sent to this address asking you to respond and set up your account.

Existing applicants and Aberdeen City Council tenants can complete a shortened registration process by selecting the “Existing Applicants and Tenants – Register” button but they will be required to provide their Application, Payment, Tenancy or Person reference number (if you do not know this you can contact our services and request this information).

Once registered, applicants must select “My Housing Options” and complete a short form describing their current living arrangements, their basic financial circumstances, whether or not they wish to discuss their situation with one of our advisors and agree to our data sharing agreement.

On the basis of the information provided applicants are given a list of Housing Options to pursue, one of which will be to apply for social housing with a suggested priority of low, medium, or high.

Once an application has been submitted, we aim to process it within 28 days and provide written confirmation that the process is complete. At times due to service demand or difficulty gathering information it may take longer than 28 days to process an application.

For customers who require assistance, our Housing Options Team can be contacted on 03000 200 292 for assistance to complete an application and provide Housing Options advice.

4. Checks carried out on an application

All applicants are required to provide proof of identification for themselves and any household members. Households including children must provide evidence to demonstrate the primary residence of the children in their household.

Where applicable, applicants must demonstrate their eligibility for public funds by

providing their visa details or evidence of Settled Status.

In some circumstances applicants may be required to provide proof of their address and status there such as a leasing agreement or proof of ownership.

All applicants and anyone included on an application aged 16 years or over are required to provide details of any Council, Housing Association or Housing Co-operative tenancy they have held during the previous five years, or since their 16th birthday if more recent.

Any current or former tenancies will be checked with landlords to determine whether they were conducted in a satisfactory manner and that there are no outstanding debts related to the tenancy.

Aberdeen City Council can decide to defer or suspend an application if an applicant, or any member of their household: -

- Has engaged in anti-social behaviour in the locality of their current or former tenancy.
- Has a conviction for using their home for immoral or illegal activity or any other offence punishable by imprisonment.
- Has previously abandoned or neglected a property resulting in a repossession order.
- Has had a court order for recovery of possession granted against them.
- Has outstanding rent arrears and/or other tenancy-related debt.
- Has refused an offer of housing from Aberdeen City Council previously.

In the event that we are unable to assess your application from the information provided we may arrange to carry out a home visit to clarify your living situation. Checks will be completed at the time of application and prior to any offer of housing being made.

All deferments and suspensions will be considered in relation to the circumstances of the application and subject to appeal. Further information on our Suspension Policy can be found in section 11.

5. Making a False Statement in an Application for Housing

If an applicant knowingly gives false information on a housing application, the application will be cancelled from the list. Any tenancy that has been granted based on false information or where the applicant has withheld important information may be subject to legal proceedings for repossession and the tenants may be reported to Police Scotland should any criminal activity be suspected.

6. Who can be included on an application?

Reflecting the Housing (Scotland) Acts 1987 and 2001, the following can be considered members of your household if you wish to include them on your application:

- Your spouse, civil partner, or live-in partner

- Your parent, grandparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece
- A child for whom you are the legal guardian.

Aberdeen City Council, at its discretion, may also consider the following to be members of an applicant's household:

- Live-in carers (formal confirmation of this arrangement will be required)
- Children placed under foster care (formal confirmation of this arrangement will be required)
- Couples who are in a relationship but do not live together
- Cousins
- Friends (but only flatbed accommodation will be offered)

Aberdeen City Council will not normally accept as part of the applicant's household for the purposes of the housing application any member of the household (other than a partner):

- Who is a hospital patient and is unlikely in the opinion of medical professionals to be discharged.
- Who indicates in writing that she/he does not want to be regarded as a member of the household.
- Who has applied for separate accommodation in his/her own right.
- Who is an adult and is resident with the applicant less than 50% of the time. Special consideration can be given for students and persons in the armed forces.

7. Determining the number of bedrooms required by a household

We will register your application on the housing list according to the type and size of property you require. This helps us to make best use of the stock that becomes available. We will work out the number of bedrooms that you require using the following criteria:

- One bedroom is required for a single adult.
- One bedroom is required for an applicant and partner.
- One bedroom is required for two single related household members of the same sex, for example, two sisters, two brothers, where there is not 10 years or more difference between their ages.
- One bedroom is required for up to two children under eight years of age, regardless of the sexes of the children.
- One bedroom is required for up to two members of the householder's family eight years of age or over of the same sex, where there is not 10 years or more difference between their ages.
- One bedroom each is required for a child under eight years of age and a child over eight years of age of different sexes, where they cannot share with any

other child of the family.

- One bedroom each is required for the youngest and the next eldest child in the family of the same sex, where there is 10 years or more difference between their ages and they cannot share with any other child of the family.
- One bedroom is required for a member of the family where the Housing Need Assessment Team determine they require their own bedroom.

Other factors that are considered when determining the number of bedrooms required

- The maximum number of people who would be expected to share a bedroom would be two.
- An expected child will be included in the calculation of the number of bedrooms required.
- The age at which children of different sexes qualify to be in separate bedrooms is eight. For example, a child under eight years of age and a child over eight years of age of different sexes would be assessed as requiring separate bedrooms.

Children with an existing principal home

To make best use of our housing stock, applications including children who hold a principal home elsewhere will be subject to the following considerations. Principal home is defined as the child's main residence where their parent may claim child benefit and they are registered with their school/nursery or GP practice.

- A child or children from a former relationship who have an existing principal residence outside of the applicant's household will only be eligible for one additional bedroom in flatted accommodation, irrespective of the number of such children.
- Where the household comprises of a mixture of children whose primary residence is with the applicant and others who have a primary residence elsewhere, only one additional bedroom in flatted accommodation will be allocated for the children who will not occupy the property as their primary residence, irrespective of the number of these children.

Exceptions to the bedroom requirement rules

Applicants who have indicated a preference may be offered accommodation of a different size (larger or smaller) than they would normally qualify for in the following circumstances:

- When no suitable applicants are identified requiring two-bedroom accommodation, applicants requiring one-bedroom accommodation will be considered. When no suitable applicants are identified requiring three-bedroom accommodation, applicants requiring two-bedroom accommodation will be considered followed by applicants requiring one bedroom.

- Applicants who are currently in two-bedroom accommodation or smaller and who require four bedrooms may be considered for three-bedroom accommodation if they have stated that option.

8. Assessing Your Housing Need

Aberdeen City Council operate four housing lists. Once an application has been processed and all relevant information received, applications will be placed on the appropriate list based on their circumstances and assessed housing need. The four lists are:

Urgent Housing Need

Applicants will be placed on the Urgent Housing List if they are assessed as being in the following groups:

- Statutory homeless
- Community Safety – Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements & Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference cases.
- Next Stage Housing Applicants
- Care Experienced Young People
- Committee and Discretionary Cases
- Extreme Medical Need
- Statutory Notice Applicants
- Armed Forces Personnel leaving full time regular service.
- Aberdeen City Council tenants eligible under the Downsizing Scheme.

Applications are placed on the Urgent Housing Need list by way of assessment with either a Medium or High priority awarded dependent on their reason for placement on the list. Applicants are ordered on the list by their priority with applications of same level of priority further prioritized by date of assessment for the list. Further details of the categories of assessment and awards can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

Applicants on the Urgent Housing List are eligible for one reasonable offer of suitable accommodation. Following acceptance on the Urgent Housing List applicants are granted a 21 day period to bid for properties of their choice through the Housing Online Portal from their date of decision.

After 21 days Urgent Housing List applicants will have their applications set to “autobid” for all properties deemed suitable to meet their needs. Areas and house types for this process will be set by the assessing officer following discussion with the applicant and will balance their requirements against our housing stock to determine what can reasonably be offered. This is to ensure that applicants do not unduly prolong their stay in an unsuitable or temporary housing situation when accommodation that will resolve their issues is available.

Applicants who refuse an offer on the Urgent Housing List will have their

application removed from the list and the application will default to the appropriate Waiting, Transfer, or Housing with Support list.

Anyone who believes they are at risk of losing their home or believe they require to be assessed for the Urgent Housing List can request to speak with an advisor in our services by completing the My Housing Options checked on Housing Online or by calling our general line on 03000 200 292.

Waiting List

Applicants will be placed on the Waiting List if they are:

- Tenants of other local authorities or Registered Social Landlords outside the Aberdeen City Council area.
- Joint tenants of Aberdeen City Council applying to leave their tenancy.
- Private sector tenants
- Sub tenants or lodgers
- Households living care of relatives or friends
- Owner occupiers
- Households living in houses in multiple occupation (for example, student accommodation).
- Members of H.M. Forces
- Tied tenants who are not employed by Aberdeen City Council or a Registered Social Landlord
- Individuals who occupy a property through Shared Ownership.

Applicants placed on the Waiting List are prioritised by awarding points based on their current housing circumstances. See Appendix 3 for an explanation of the points categories. Applicants who have the same number of points will be further prioritised by the date of registration on the list. Waiting List applicants who refuse an offer of accommodation will have their application deferred for a period of 12 months.

Transfer List

Applicants will be placed on the Transfer List if they are.

- A tenant of Aberdeen City Council.
- A tenant of a Registered Social Landlord with a tenancy in Aberdeen.
- Employees of Aberdeen City Council or a Registered Social Landlord in the city occupying tied accommodation.

Applicants placed on the Transfer List are prioritised by awarding points based on their current housing circumstances. See Appendix 4 for an explanation of the points categories. Applicants who have the same number of points will be further prioritised by the date of registration on the list. Transfer List applicants who refuse an offer of accommodation will have their application deferred for a period of 12 months.

Housing with Support (Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered/High Support)

Applicants are placed on this list following assessment by the Housing Needs Assessment Team who will determine what category of housing they are eligible for (Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered/High Support) and which of the three priority categories (High/Medium/Low) best describes their housing situation. Definitions for the High, Medium, and Low assessment categories for Housing With Support can be found in Appendix 5.

Applicants are listed against each property category based on their priority award. Applications with equal priority are further prioritized by date of their priority award. If an applicant is re-assessed and is awarded a higher or lower priority, then they will be queued on the appropriate list by the date of that new award.

Housing With Support List applicants who refuse an offer of accommodation will have their application deferred for a period of 12 months.

Housing with Support Property Types

➤ Amenity Housing

Generally available to applicants of a particular age group generally 55+, who have been assessed as having health problems which are adversely affected by their current living circumstances. Amenity housing can have similar facilities to those in sheltered housing but is not in a purpose-built complex and does not generally have common areas for tenants to gather, or a senior carer service.

➤ Sheltered Housing

Sheltered properties have special facilities to make life more comfortable and safer for tenants, including a carer service. They are intended for people of pensionable age who have been assessed as having significant health issues and adverse social circumstances which would be significantly improved by living in this type of housing.

➤ Very Sheltered Housing

Very Sheltered housing provides tenants with special facilities over and above those provided by sheltered housing to make life more comfortable and safer for the most vulnerable tenants, these including a carer service and the provision of a midday meal. This type of supported housing is intended for people of pensionable age who have been assessed as having severe health issues and adverse social circumstances which would be significantly improved by living in this type of housing.

➤ High Support Housing

High Support Housing provides tenants with special facilities over and above those provided by sheltered housing to make life more comfortable and safer for the most vulnerable tenants, these include a carer service and the provision of a midday meal. This type of supported housing is intended for people of any age group who have been assessed as having severe health issues and adverse

social circumstances which would be significantly improved by living in this type of housing.

9. How We Allocate Housing

Aberdeen City Council operates a Choice Based Lettings system to allocate properties. Properties available to let are advertised through the Council's website and applicants can register an interest in the properties they wish to be considered for by bidding through our Housing Online portal.

Properties are advertised on a 7 day cycle with a closing date for bids marked against each property. During the cycle applicants can register their interest in up to ten separate properties with the option to withdraw or change their bids at any point up until the closing date.

Following the closure of the advert a shortlist for each property will be drawn listing all applicants who registered an interest. The applications will be ordered based on their assessed priority on our housing lists. The applicant with the highest priority on the shortlist will be considered for the property.

If for any reason the highest priority applicant is not suitable or does not wish to proceed with the offer of the property, the second highest priority bidder will be considered and so on until the property is let.

Applicants can only bid for properties once registered on our housing list and all checks on their application have been completed. Properties are clearly advertised showing their grouping (General/Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered/High Support) and only applicants eligible for the advertised property type will be considered.

To meet our legal responsibilities and policy objective "to respond quickly to people in acute and urgent housing need", all available properties are considered for applications on the Urgent Housing List in the first instance. In the event that no Urgent Housing List applications register an interest in the accommodation, general needs properties are considered for Waiting and Transfer List applicants.

Housing with Support properties (Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered/High Support) will similarly be considered against any suitable applications on the Urgent Housing List. Where no suitable applicants on the Urgent Housing List exist, these properties will be made available to applicants in each category of the Housing with Support List based on their assessed need and medical recommendations.

Please note that applicants can only be considered for one property at a time.

Offer Restrictions

Notwithstanding the order of priority, certain restrictions will apply when selecting applicants for a vacancy as follows:

- Properties on the ground floor that have five or less access steps will be offered to applicants who have a recommendation for ground floor accommodation as determined by the Housing Needs Assessment Team. Where a property has been adapted or can be adapted to suit applicants with special needs such as wheelchair users, priority is given to applicants who have a need for this type of accommodation. Any prospective offer

would be subject to assessment by an Occupational Therapist.

- Applicants should note that in some accommodation cats and dogs are banned, except for guide dogs and hearing dogs therefore applicants who have a cat or dog will not be considered for these pet ban properties. A leaflet is available providing details of properties where dogs and cats are not permitted.
- Applicants whose applications are deferred or suspended will not be considered for an offer of accommodation until the deferment has expired.

10. Offering A Property

At the close of the bidding cycle a shortlist of all applicants who have registered an interest in each property will be prepared. Applicants will be ordered by priority and the household top of the shortlist will be considered for an offer.

If appropriate, checks will be carried out at this stage to determine that the application should not be deferred or suspended due to outstanding debts or other issues highlighted when applying. Transfer List Applicants may also be subject to a Standards Check to determine their current tenancy not in poor condition. (See Section 15)

If we decide to offer you a property, we will make you a formal offer of housing. This offer will be confirmed in writing either by letter or email. We may also make additional contact by phone to make arrangements. The written confirmation will confirm:

- The address of the property.
- The number of bedrooms.
- What type of property it is (such as a flat or house).
- How much rent and service charge you will pay if you accept the offer.
- What you will be required to provide before you can sign your lease.
- The timescale required for you to respond to your offer.
- The consequences of refusing your offer and your right of appeal.

Applicants who do not respond to contact within a reasonable period will have their offer refused and application deferred in line with our deferment policy.

Applicants will be asked to make a decision on their offer of accommodation within a set time period and will be required to formally accept or refuse their offer on this date. Applicants choosing to refuse will be offered a right of appeal.

Applicants who accept their offer will be invited to sign a tenancy agreement. We will provide advice, information and support throughout the offer process and clearly explain your rights and responsibilities as a tenant before signing any tenancy agreement.

Types of Tenancy

Generally, we will offer applicants a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) in line with our legal

responsibilities. A SST means the tenant can keep their tenancy for as long as they want as long as they do not break the terms of the tenancy agreement.

In a limited number of situations, we may offer a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. A Short Scottish Secure tenant has many of the same rights as a Scottish Secure Tenant however, their rights are more limited on eviction, sub-letting, and succession. The majority of Short Scottish Secure Tenancy agreements will state that the tenancy is for a fixed period of time (at least six months). If by the end of that time, neither the tenant nor landlord has requested that the lease ends, it will renew itself for the same amount of time again (for example, for another six months).

We can only give Short Scottish Secure Tenancies in very specific circumstances. This is defined by law in Section 37, Schedule 6 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and associated amendments in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. These circumstances will apply if:

- You have previously been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last three years.
- You or someone you live with has an anti-social behaviour order.
- You, a member of your household or a visitor has been involved in anti-social behaviour in or near their home within the last three years.
- Where you're living is scheduled for development and we need you to move to allow us to get the work done.
- Where the tenancy is provided on the basis of allowing you to commence or seek employment in the area.
- You are homeless and the property is let to you on a temporary basis for more than six months.
- You need housing support to help you maintain your tenancy.
- The tenancy provided is in a property not owned by the council.
- You own a property.

In all cases prospective tenants will be served with a notice informing them we are offering a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, stating why it is being offered and the period for which the tenancy is being created.

If a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy has been granted because of a previous eviction for anti-social behaviour or because someone you live has an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) served against them, the Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will be converted to a Scottish Secure Tenancy at the end of 12 or 18 months, provided the landlord hasn't served a notice to quit.

11. Reviewing, Removal, Deferral, Suspension and Merging of Applications/Households

Applicants are required to advise the Housing Access and Support Service of any

change in their circumstances as soon as possible so that their application can be reviewed and kept up to date. A change of address will require a new application form to be completed. In all cases applicants should contact the Housing Advice Team for housing options advice.

Applicants who have not been in contact regarding their housing application will be contacted at least once a year and asked to confirm their application details and whether they still wish to remain on the housing list.

Applicants will be asked to respond within 28 days with a further reminder sent 7 days prior to the expiration date. If they do not respond, it is assumed that they no longer wish to be considered for housing and their housing application will be cancelled.

Applicants on the Urgent Housing List will be reviewed more regularly depending on their circumstances to determine they are still in acute housing need and consider available housing options to resolve their situation.

Deferred Applications

Waiting, Transfer, and Housing With Support applicants can choose to defer their application if they do not wish to be considered for housing for some reason. This means they can remain on our housing list but will not receive any offers. It is the responsibility of the applicant to inform the council when they wish to have their application “made live” again. Whilst deferred applicants must still respond to requests to confirm application details to remain on our list.

Applicants on the Urgent Housing List will not normally be allowed to defer their application. Any request will be considered on an individual basis.

Suspending Applications

In certain circumstances applications can be suspended from our housing lists. If an application is suspended it cannot be considered for an offer of accommodation.

- Applicants with housing related debts

At the time of applying for an Aberdeen City Council home all applicants will be advised of any housing related debts that may affect their entitlement to housing and the action they should take to address the debts. Applications will be suspended from obtaining an offer until the applicant provides evidence that the identified debts have been satisfactorily addressed.

Further checks on housing related debt will be carried out should an applicant subsequently qualify for an offer of housing. Applicants will be advised whether these checks affect their entitlement to housing.

See table below which shows our policy on debt for all applicants for housing.

| | Current Tenant Arrears | Current Tenant Legal Charges | Current Tenant Recharges | Former Tenant Arrears | Former Tenant Legal Charges | Former Tenant Recharge |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| 1. All applicants for housing will be subject to the same debt criteria. | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent then an arrangement | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent then an arrangement | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent, then an arrangement | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent then an arrangement | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent then an arrangement | If the debt is greater than 1 month's rent, then an arrangement |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. | needs to be in place to clear the debt. The arrangement must be continuous and have been in place for at least 3 consecutive months. |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

- **Applicants who have refused a reasonable offer of accommodation**

Waiting, Transfer and Housing With Support applicants who refuse an offer of accommodation from our housing list will have their application suspended for a period of 12 months. Should applicants disagree that their offer of accommodation was reasonable their case can be considered through appeals process within 21 days of refusing their offer.

Urgent Housing List applicants who refuse an offer of accommodation will lose their place on the list and default to the Waiting, Transfer, or Housing With Support list.

- **Applicants with an existing Scottish Secure Tenancy or Short Scottish Secure Tenancy**

Applications from a joint tenant of a Local Authority or another Registered Social Landlord who no longer reside at the tenancy address will have their application suspended from the Housing Lists until the joint tenancy has been resolved.

- **Existing Tenants Who Have Failed A Standards Check**

Aberdeen City Council tenants on the Transfer List will be subject to a Standards Check of their property prior to any offer of housing being made. Where problems or damage exist, their application may be delayed or deferred to allow them to rectify these issues before an offer is made. Discretion will be applied in such circumstances to allow reasonable timescales for work to be completed and offers made.

- **Merging Applications/Households**

In the event that two households with existing applications wish to be considered for housing together we will merge the applications using the date of the earliest application.

Where an application is received from two separate households wishing to be housed together in a larger or more suitable house, the application will be assessed as though both households were already living together. Any housing points will be awarded based on the accommodation currently occupied that best meets their housing need.

12. Appeals & Complaints Procedure

All applicants have the right to appeal a decision made in connection with their

housing application. Appeals against the processing of an application or an offer of accommodation from the lists should be addressed to the Housing Access and Support Service. The Housing Access and Support Service will aim to respond within 21 days of receipt.

Applicants unhappy about any decision we have made on their application can appeal:

- The group or points we award your application.
- A decision to suspend you after receiving an offer.
- Decision to cancel your application.
- The level of medical priority awarded.
- An offer of housing if you think it was not a reasonable offer.
- Any decision we make which you believe has not been dealt with in accordance with the Allocations Policy.

Appeals can be lodged by email to housingaccess@aberdeencity.gov.uk or by mail addressed to the Housing Options & Allocations Team Leader, Housing Access & Support Service, Business Hub 1, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB.

Complaints

Should anyone be dissatisfied following the appeals process they can make a complaint. Complaints regarding the Allocations Policy are dealt with in line with our Corporate Complaints procedures. Complaints can be registered online [here](#).

Complaints can also be made in person at any council office or by contacting our Customer Feedback Team by telephone 01224 523058 or in writing to: Customer Feedback Team, Business Hub, First Floor South, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB

13. Other Housing Options

Mutual exchange

A mutual exchange is where a tenant of Aberdeen City Council wants to swap houses with another tenant of this Council or a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord or Housing Cooperative or a tenant of another Council. By exchanging homes applicants may be able to find the home that best suits their family's needs without having to wait on the Council housing lists.

This applies to applicants who have a live housing application and have indicated their interest in considering a mutual exchange. Applicants can request a list of tenants whose properties match their requirements, and who have indicated that they would be interested in exchanging to the type and size of property they currently occupy.

A Mutual Exchange requires approval from the Council and Registered Social Landlord or Housing Cooperative. All parties involved must have secure tenancies. A Mutual exchange will not be approved if one or more parties is an owner occupier or a tenant of a private sector landlord.

Applicants wishing to exchange must satisfy themselves that the property to which they wish to exchange meets any medical requirements they may have. However, where the property has been adapted to meet a medical condition, the proposed exchange may be referred to the Housing Needs Assessment Team. If it is considered that the proposed exchange does not make the best use of the adapted property, the exchange may not be permitted.

- Applicants who, for medical reasons, require adaptations to the property to which they wish to exchange, must contact the Housing Needs Assessment Team for approval prior to applying for the mutual exchange. Applicants who, for medical reasons, require adaptations to the property to which they wish to exchange, must contact the Housing Needs Assessment Team for approval prior to applying for the mutual exchange.
- The sizes of the properties proposing to be exchanged must comply with this policy's bedroom requirements as detailed in section 7. However, applicants looking to exchange from a three- bedroom property to another three-bedroom property would be allowed even if they require a four-bedroom property.
- In some circumstances applicants may be allowed to exchange to accommodation larger than they require subject to Council approval: The Council will allow any tenant to exchange to one bedroom more than they require regardless of the type of accommodation.

When an applicant finds someone to exchange with, they should

- Contact them and make arrangements to visit each other's home.
- Inspect the other person's house carefully and make sure they are happy with the condition of it. The Council will not be responsible for any decoration needed or for carrying out any repairs which are the tenants' responsibility.
- All parties decide, after viewing, that they wish to proceed with the exchange then they must both complete a Mutual Exchange application form. These can be obtained from local housing offices or by downloading a Mutual Exchange form from the Council website.

Aberdeen City Council will:

- Ensure properties are inspected to see that they are in good condition. The Council may refuse an exchange if, for example, unauthorised alterations have been made to the property.
- Verify the size of the houses to make sure that there will be no overcrowding issues or excessive under occupation. The Council will ensure the property is suitable for the whole household.
- Ensure that all applicants have a clear rent account and have no

outstanding debt in relation to overpayments of Housing Benefit, Rechargeable Repairs or for a former tenancy.

- Ensure that all tenancies have been conducted in a satisfactory manner and that there are no breaches of the tenancy agreement which may prohibit the exchange.
- Provide applicants with a decision within twenty-eight days of receiving the applications from all parties. The Council will not refuse consent to exchange without reasonable grounds.
- Consider any appeal submitted by households who have had their request to exchange refused. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 21 days of a refusal decision being issued.
- Respond to any request for appeal within 21 days of receipt either rejecting or upholding the original decision.
- If the exchange is approved, arrange for new tenancy agreements to be signed by all parties. Applicants must not move until they have signed their new tenancy agreement.

Support needs

Applications for rehousing from a single person or a couple will be assessed by the Housing Needs Assessment Team in conjunction with Social Care and Wellbeing and other professionals to determine the best option for the applicant(s).

If the assessment finds that the applicant requires to be rehoused, then the appropriate level of priority will be awarded for housing in the letting area nearest the supportive relative or other letting areas as determined by the Housing Needs Assessment Team. If the applicants' housing is suitable but support is required, the Housing Needs Assessment Team will refer the case to the Social Care and Wellbeing Team who will assess the level of support and who should provide such support.

If it is determined by the Housing Needs Assessment Team in conjunction with the Social Care and Wellbeing Team that a supportive relative is best placed to deliver this support, the supportive relative will be offered appropriate housing in the letting area where the applicant lives when the applicant's application qualifies for an offer.

If the supportive relative's required house size and type is not available in the area in which the applicant's lives, then an adjoining area will be substituted.

If the applicant's supportive relative is not a current tenant of Aberdeen City Council, the case will be referred to the Housing Options & Allocations Team Leader to determine whether the application is acceptable under this policy. The supportive relative will be offered flatted accommodation of an appropriate size in the letting area where the applicant lives when the applicant qualifies for an offer. If flatted accommodation of the appropriate size is not available in that letting area, then an adjoining letting area will be substituted.

Downsizing Incentive Scheme

General Needs Housing

Aberdeen City Council operates an incentive scheme aimed to assist Aberdeen City Council tenants who are under occupying their current home to move to smaller more suitable accommodation. Applications will be accepted from tenants who are under-occupying their current property and where a high demand exists for that property. The scheme aims to free-up larger properties suitable for families which are increasingly in demand by those on the council house waiting list.

The Council cannot and would not wish to force tenants who are under occupying their homes to move against their will.

The Council offers an incentive grant of £1,000 for tenants to move to smaller accommodation within Aberdeen City Council Housing Stock.

The general qualifying criteria are: -

- The applicant must be an Aberdeen City Council tenant living in a property larger than their needs, designated as high-demand and who wishes to move to a smaller council property.
- Applicants with rent arrears or other housing related debt will generally not qualify for downsizing unless the debt is cleared in full or the applicant enters into a suitable repayment arrangement (See section 11 of this policy). Where suitable, the downsizing payment may be used to offset arrears if this facilitates a move.
- The house they are living in must be left in good condition.
- The applicant must not have previously been awarded a downsizing grant.
- There must be a **sufficiently high demand** for the qualifying applicant's property (as determined by the Allocations Team and the Area Housing Teams).

Supported housing

Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing are options for rehousing applicants where their current home is no longer suitable for their needs.

Only applicants who have been assessed as having priority for Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing and who are under-occupying properties of high demand, will be considered as part of the downsizing scheme. Applicants who are not in high demand properties will not be eligible.

If you think you may be eligible to apply under this Scheme, please contact your Housing & Support Officer who will help you complete the Downsizing application form and answer any questions you may have. Downsizing applicants are awarded one offer of accommodation.

Armed forces personnel

We will ensure up to 1% of our Council new build houses are offered to those leaving the armed forces. With up to a further 0.5% being adapted for those injured in

service.

Applications from service personnel who are planning to leave the armed forces and who wish to be housed in one of the Council's new social housing developments only, will be given priority status and placed on the Urgent List and awarded a medium priority 56 days before they are due to leave the forces. They will be made one reasonable offer of accommodation under this priority. Where a reasonable offer is made and subsequently refused, the priority will be removed.

If applicants wish to add other housing choices such as house types and areas out with the new build properties, their housing application can also be placed on the waiting list and they will be awarded points in accordance with their housing needs as per the criteria in this policy.

14. Temporary Accommodation

Homeless people or people threatened with homelessness

Homeless people or people threatened with homelessness should seek the advice of the Housing Advice Service, Early Intervention and Community Empowerment, Marischal College, Aberdeen. The Service will assess applicants to determine whether they qualify for assistance in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 Part II as amended. If an applicant is assessed as being statutory homeless, they will receive Urgent Priority in order of the date of their assessment and given one offer of accommodation anywhere in the city, unless there is an extreme reason why the applicant cannot be considered for certain letting areas. If the offer of accommodation is refused the Council has discharged its duty.

Housing Renewal Areas

- **Applicants applying for temporary accommodation from a designated housing renewal area**

Aberdeen City Council may designate certain areas as Housing Renewal Areas, in order to improve the dwellings within the area to meet the legal requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. To enable the upgrading of these dwellings to proceed, the Council may assist landlords, owner occupiers and Aberdeen City Council tenants as detailed below.

- **Private tenants**

Where private landlords are unable to provide their tenants with alternative accommodation, they may apply to the Council for temporary flatted accommodation either in the same area or areas of similar letting demand for the duration of the works.

- **Owner occupiers**

Owner occupiers within a Housing Renewal Area may be provided with temporary flatted accommodation either in the same area or areas of similar letting demand for the duration of works.

- **Aberdeen City Council tenants**

Where Aberdeen City Council tenants have to vacate a dwelling within a Housing Renewal Area they will be provided with temporary accommodation for the duration of the works.

Work Notices

Where a Work Notice has been served by the City Council using powers under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, owners or part owners may be considered for temporary accommodation for the duration of the works.

Decant Tenancies

Aberdeen City Council will transfer its own tenants to another property on a temporary basis while essential repairs or improvements are being carried out, where it would be unreasonable to expect the tenants to continue to reside in their tenancy. If a similar size and type of accommodation within the same letting area is available, it will be offered. Otherwise, accommodation of the same type and size will be offered.

15. Other Allocation Issues and Information

Using Our Discretion

It is recognized that the Allocations Policy cannot cover all of the circumstances that may lead to someone needing to move home. In situations where it is felt that a housing need is not adequately covered by the Allocations Policy or accompanying legislation, the Chief Officer of Early Intervention and Community Empowerment has delegated powers to enhance the priority of particular applications. Discretion will only be used in cases where housing is needed urgently and there are “good reasons” or “special circumstances” that are not necessarily covered by the Allocation Policy.

Applicants granted increased priority through discretionary powers will be awarded a medium or high priority on the Urgent Housing List for one offer of reasonable offer of suitable accommodation. Should this offer be refused, the applicant will lose their priority status.

Local Lettings Initiatives

Although designed to be comprehensive the Allocations Policy does not always address specific local issues. In certain circumstances it is necessary for the Council to initiate a Local Lettings Initiative to take additional factors into account when allocating properties. Local Letting Initiatives must:

- Comply with all relevant legislation.
- Operate alongside the main policy, and act as an additional set of circumstances which will be considered or rules which will be applied.
- Apply to a specific geographical area and be supported by evidence on why it is required.

- Have clear outcomes and be time limited.
- Be published.

Circumstances where a Local Letting Initiative may be used are:

- To stimulate demand for low demand housing.
- Reverse a trend of increasing incidence of antisocial behaviour in a particular development or area.
- Achieve a balanced community in new build developments.

Any decision to introduce a Local Lettings Initiative will be evidence based and made in consideration of the local community and partners to ensure that the overall aims and objectives of the Allocations Policy are not negatively affected.

Nomination Agreements

Aberdeen City Council has agreements with some housing associations operating in the city to allocate their vacant properties to applicants from the Council's housing lists. These allocations are known as 'nominations' and are made using the same criteria as council properties. Applicants not wishing to be considered for nomination to these housing associations must indicate on their application that they do not wish to be considered for these properties.

Applications from Staff or Council Elected Members

Members of Aberdeen City Council staff or Elected Members, including people who live with them and close relatives, must declare their interest on their application for housing. No offer of housing will be made to someone with a declared interest unless it has been authorized by the Chief Officer of Early Intervention and Community Empowerment.

Appendix 2

Urgent Housing Needs List Categories

Applicants on this list are awarded either Top, High, or Medium priority depending on their category of award as detailed below.

Applicants will be allowed to bid for properties through the Housing Online Portal for an initial period of 21 days from their date of decision to add them to the Urgent List. Following this period their application will be set to autobid based on area and house type criteria agreed with their housing advisor.

After 21 days Urgent Housing List applicants will have their applications set to “autobid” for all properties deemed suitable to meet their needs. Areas and house types for this process will be set by the assessing officer following discussion with the applicant and will balance their requirements against our housing stock to determine what can reasonably be offered. This is to ensure that applicants do not unduly prolong their stay in an unsuitable or temporary housing situation when accommodation that will resolve their issues is available.

Applicants who refuse an offer on the Urgent Housing List will have their application removed from the list and the application will default to the appropriate Waiting, Transfer, or Housing with Support list.

Applicants dissatisfied with an offer of accommodation from the Urgent Housing List have a right of appeal to request a review of the suitability of any offer made. Within the initial 5 days of refusing an offer the property will remain available to the applicant so that, should their appeal be refused, they have the option of accepting the offer. The right of appeal remains for a total of 21 days from the offer being made but out with the initial 5 day period applicants will not have the option to reconsider the property offered if their appeal is rejected.

| Category | Description |
|---------------------------|--|
| Statutory homeless | Applicants determined by a Homeless Assessment carried out in accordance with the terms of Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended to be eligible for housing under the council’s duty to homeless applicants. Such applicants will be awarded a Medium priority on this list. |
| Community Safety | Applicants assessed as requiring to move as a result of Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements & Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference cases. Such applicants will be awarded a Medium priority on this list. Where applicants already requiring housing under statutory homeless duties are assessed as requiring moved for reasons of community safety a High priority will be awarded. |

| | |
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| | |
| Care Experienced Young People | Young people over the age of 16 but under the age of 26, who have been looked after by Aberdeen City Council and require permanent accommodation will have their accommodation needs jointly assessed by housing and social work services. Those defined as Care Leavers will also be considered as part of this grouping. Such applicants will be awarded a High priority on this list. |
| Next Stage Housing Applicants | Applications accepted through the Next Stage Housing Group who require rehousing from Care Agencies to return to the community as part of a planned programme for independence will be awarded a High priority on this list. |
| Extreme Medical Need | <p>Determined after an assessment has been carried out by the Housing Needs Assessment Team. Examples of when this priority may be awarded are given below: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The household cannot access their current accommodation due to extreme health issues and it is not practical to adapt their present home to meet their needs and where a move will significantly improve their quality of life, or • To allow discharge from Hospital/Care Settings where their current accommodation is totally unsuitable due to extreme health issues and it is not practical to adapt their present home to meet their needs and where a move will significantly improve their quality of life, or • Where the current accommodation coupled with the applicant's extreme health issues make a move imperative to significantly reduce the risk of injury to the applicant, or. • Where the applicants present home makes essential activities of daily living impossible, and it is not practical to adapt their home to meet their needs. <p>Application will normally be placed on the list according to the date their priority was awarded but may be backdated</p> |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| | using the discretion of the assessing officer. Such applicants will be awarded a Medium priority on this list. |
| Statutory notice applicants | Applicants requiring permanent accommodation because of a Closing Order, Demolition Order or a Compulsory Purchase Order served on the owners of properties by the City Council. Affected tenants/owners will be interviewed by a member of staff from the Housing and Community Safety to confirm requirements for rehousing. Such applicants will be awarded a Medium priority on this list. |
| Downsizing Scheme | <p>Applicants who are accepted under the Downsizing Scheme may be awarded Top, High, or Medium priority on this list depending on their circumstances as detailed below: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants accepted under the Downsizing Scheme who are receiving housing benefit and of working age and who are under occupying their current property by 2 bedrooms or more will be awarded a Top priority. • Applicants accepted under the Downsizing Scheme who are receiving housing benefit and of working age and under occupying their current property by 1 bedroom will be awarded a High priority. • Applicants who are accepted for the Downsizing Scheme, who are not subject to the welfare reform, will be awarded a Medium priority. |
| Delegated Powers | Applicants awarded priority through powers delegated to the Chief Officer Early Intervention and Community Empowerment may be awarded a High or a Medium priority on this list depending on their circumstances (See Appendix 6 for definitions). |

Appendix 3

Waiting List Point Categories

Waiting List points are allocated for the following categories:

- Overcrowding
- Accommodation Below the Tolerable Standard
- Insecure Accommodation

Applicants can receive points in every category that applies to your circumstances. Applicants on this list may be considered for all types of accommodation except for Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing.

Waiting List applicants living with a partner who is a joint tenant or has occupancy rights to their current property will be pointed as if occupying half their current accommodation if applying for housing on their own.

Households registering from No Fixed Abode will not be awarded room deficiency points and will be referred to our Housing Options Team for assistance.

Any household intimating a threat of homelessness will be referred to our Housing Options Team for assistance.

| Category | Points |
|---|-----------|
| Room Deficiency - Any rooms less than 4.45 square metres (48 square feet) in area or without natural lighting will not count as a room and are disregarded under this policy. Any room used for cooking and washing purposes is disregarded and the largest of the remaining rooms is regarded as a living room except in properties where open plan rooms are a design feature, for example, in studio flats. | |
| For every room by which the applicant's accommodation falls short of the required number of bedrooms. | 10 points |
| For every room which is more than 4.45 square metres (48 sq. ft.) and less than 8.00 square metres (86 sq. ft.) in area, if occupied by two people or by a single applicant. | 5 points |
| If the room is more than 4.45 square metres (48 sq. ft.) and less than 8.00 square metres (86sq. ft.) in area and is occupied by one person who is not the applicant, then no points are awarded for room deficiency. | 0 points |
| Mixing of sexes | |
| Where the existing accommodation requires the sharing of a bedroom by people, who form part of the application aged eight years and over and of opposite sexes (other than partners). | 4 points |
| Size of Family Where bedroom deficiency exists, and the application requires two bedrooms, family points are awarded as follows. | |
| Where the second bedroom would be occupied by one person | 0 points |
| Where the second bedroom would be occupied by two people. | 4 points |
| Where bedroom deficiency exists, and the application requires three bedrooms or more, family points are awarded as follows: | |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by two people: | 0 points |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by three people: | 4 points |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by four people | 6 points |
| Lack of Facilities | |
| There is no piped hot water supply within the house | 1 point |
| There is no fixed bath/shower within the house | 1 point |
| There is a toilet outside the dwelling but within the building | 2 points |
| The water supply is outside the dwelling but within the building | 2 points |
| The toilet is outside the building | 5 points |
| The water supply is outside the building | 4 points |
| Non-Security of Tenure | |
| Single persons, couples or families living care of, in the parental home or of no fixed abode | 10 points |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Applicants in privately rented accommodation whose lease has expired or have been served with a valid notice to quit or notice to leave by their landlord through no fault of your own | 10 points |
| Applicants who live in a static caravan where living condition not below tolerable standards | 10 points |
| Applicants in tied accommodation whose employer has told you that you will have to leave their accommodation within the next 6 months (for example, as a result of retirement or redundancy) | 10 points |

Appendix 4

Transfer List Point Categories

Transfer List points are allocated for the following categories:

- Under Occupancy
- Overcrowding

Applicants on this list may be considered for all types of accommodation except for Amenity, Sheltered and Very Sheltered housing. Applicants are prioritised by the number of points they have been awarded. Applicants who have the same number of points will be further prioritised by the date of registration.

Applications where joint tenants wish to be rehoused separately are assessed on the basis that the people requesting to be rehoused are occupying half the number of rooms in the property.

Where an application is received from two separate households wishing to be housed together in a larger or more suitable house, the application will be assessed as though both households were already living together. Any housing points will be awarded based on the accommodation currently occupied that best meets their housing need.

Any household intimating a threat of homelessness will be referred to our Housing Options Team or relevant Housing & Support Team for assistance.

| Category | Points |
|--|-----------|
| Under Occupation | |
| For 1 Bedroom surrendered | 4 points |
| For 2 Bedrooms surrendered | 7 points |
| For 3 Bedrooms surrendered | 10 points |
| Room Deficiency | |
| Any rooms less than 4.45 square metres (48 square feet) in area or without natural lighting will not count as a room and are disregarded under this policy. Any room used for cooking and washing purposes is disregarded and the largest of the remaining rooms is regarded as a living room except in properties where open plan rooms are a design feature, for example, in studio flats. | |
| For every room by which the applicant's accommodation falls short of the required number of bedrooms. | 10 points |
| For every room which is more than 4.45 square metres (48 sq. ft.) and less than 8.00 square metres (86 sq. ft.) in area, if occupied by two people or by a single applicant. | 5 points |
| If the room is more than 4.45 square metres (48 sq. ft.) and less than 8.00 square metres (86sq. ft.) in area and is occupied by one person who is not the applicant, then no points are awarded for room deficiency. | 0 points |
| Mixing of sexes | |
| Where the existing accommodation requires the sharing of a bedroom by people who form part of the application aged eight years and over and of opposite sexes (other than partners). | 4 points |
| Size of Family | |
| Where bedroom deficiency exists, and the application requires two bedrooms, family points are awarded as follows: | |
| Where the second bedroom would be occupied by one person | 0 points |
| Where the second bedroom would be occupied by two people. | 4 points |
| Where bedroom deficiency exists, and the application requires three bedrooms or more, family points are awarded as follows: | |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by two people: | 0 points |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by three people: | 4 points |
| Where the final two bedrooms would be occupied by four people | 5 points |

Appendix 5

Housing With Support Categories

Applicants will be awarded a High, Medium or Low Support categorisation following assessment by our Housing Needs Assessment Team and matched to the appropriate housing category for their needs (Amenity/Sheltered/Very Sheltered/High Support). Where applicant's housing needs exceed the below categories, they may be considered for our Urgent Housing List under the Emergency Medical Need category.

| Category | Definition |
|---------------|--|
| High | Produce an extreme improvement in the individual's quality of life. Substantially reduce the risk of physical injury. Where the applicants present home makes essential activities of daily living impossible and it is not practical to adapt their home to meet their needs. |
| Medium | Produce a significant improvement in the individual's quality of life. Reduce the risk of physical injury. Where the applicants present home makes essential activities of daily living very difficult, and it is not practical to adapt their home to meet their needs. |
| Low | Produce an improvement in the individual's quality of life. Reduce the risk of physical injury. Where the applicants present home makes essential activities of daily living difficult, and it is not practical to adapt their home to meet their needs. |

Important Information for Sheltered, Very Sheltered and High Support Applicants

The housing support service provided in Sheltered, Very Sheltered and High Support Housing is a chargeable service. An individual household's contribution towards this service is calculated using a financial assessment, which considers the individual's income, including capital. The calculation will consider an individual's allowable expenditure (contribution towards housing costs) and a personal allowance based on their circumstances.

The financial assessment form and further information about Housing With Support can be found on our website [here](#).

Appendix 6

Delegated powers

Aberdeen City Council recognises that very occasionally an applicant may have exceptional housing circumstances which fall out with the circumstances described in this Policy. In these situations, applicants may be considered under delegated powers given to Chief Officer of Early Intervention and Community Empowerment.

Where required, applicants accepted under discretionary powers for rehousing will be offered accommodation under the terms of the Urgent Housing List.

Applicants who choose to refuse an offer on the Urgent Housing List will lose the urgent priority granted under discretionary powers.

The following discretionary powers have been sub-delegated to Locality Inclusion Managers for decisions relating to council tenants:

1. Matrimonial home

The provision of temporary accommodation during the settlement of a matrimonial home. To provide temporary accommodation on a non-secure basis to a person who is pursuing a court action to transfer the tenancy of the matrimonial home to a single party.

2. Break in a joint tenancy

Applications from partners living within the matrimonial home and wishing to be rehoused separately from other partners will be dealt with in accordance with the Waiting list of the Allocation Policy, having been pointed based on the applicant occupying half the accommodation available, unless otherwise decided by the Senior Housing Officer.

3. Better use of Amenity, Sheltered/Very Sheltered, or Disabled Adapted Accommodation

Where a transfer request is received from an applicant occupying a sheltered house, or a house which has been designed or adapted for occupation by a person with special needs, and there is no longer a person with such needs occupying the dwelling house, to offer a transfer to suitable alternative accommodation.

4. Better use of ground floor accommodation

Where a transfer request is received from an applicant occupying a ground floor accommodation which is found to be suitable for an applicant on the Urgent Housing List, to offer the ground floor tenant a transfer to suitable alternative accommodation.

5. Transfer within the same sheltered/amenity housing development

To transfer sheltered housing tenants within the same sheltered housing

development, where the tenants' circumstances have changed since originally allocated sheltered/amenity housing, and where the current accommodation is now considered to be no longer suitable.

6. Termination of tenancy on admittance to hospital or residential care establishment

Where a tenant has been admitted to hospital or a residential care establishment on a long term basis, to accept the voluntary termination of the tenancy on the understanding that one reasonable offer of suitably sized accommodation will be offered on discharge, provided the tenancy has been considered to have been conducted satisfactorily and that a satisfactory arrangement has been made, at the termination of the tenancy, to pay any outstanding debt.

7. In relation to requests for transfers of tenancies

To accede in appropriate circumstances to requests by a member or members of a tenant's family, over 16 years of age, arising from the tenant's intention to leave the house (for example to marry), even if the accommodation is in excess of the applicant's requirements; and in the event of the declinature of such a request, to offer, in appropriate circumstances, suitable alternative accommodation.

8. In relation to requests for transfers of tenancies

To accede in appropriate circumstances to requests by sole tenants to transfer the tenancy to a partner.

9. Transfer a tenant who is unwilling to maintain the garden

Where a tenant is unwilling to maintain their garden in a tidy condition and the tenant is willing to move of their own accord, to arrange to re-house the tenant in flatted accommodation without a garden.

10. Essential repairs - temporary housing

To transfer tenants on a temporary basis to suitable accommodation where transfer is considered to be necessary to enable essential repairs or improvements to be carried out.

11. Essential repairs - permanent housing

To transfer tenants on a permanent basis to enable essential repairs or improvements to be carried out.

12. Fear of victimisation or other harassment

To re-house a tenant to suitable accommodation in cases of violence, intimidation, fear of victimisation or other harassment by neighbours or any party where no other suitable remedy exists.

13. Death in Tenancy

To re-house a tenant on compassionate grounds following a death within their property.

14. Repeated break-ins

To re-house a tenant to suitable accommodation in cases where there have been repeated break-in incidents directed at the tenant, subject to corroboration by the Police.

15. Unsatisfactory tenancy

To re-house a tenant to suitable accommodation in cases where a tenancy is proving unsatisfactory and the tenant concerned is prepared to move.

16. Dispute between two neighbours

Where there has been an irreconcilable dispute between two non-compatible neighbours to offer suitable accommodation to either or both parties.

17. Conversion to SSST to resolve an Unsatisfactory tenancy

To permit a tenant of Aberdeen City Council to be re-housed to suitable accommodation where a Scottish Secure Tenancy proves to be unsatisfactory, and the tenant is prepared to be re-housed to a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, together with appropriate housing support.

18. Adopted or foster children

To re-house a tenant to suitable accommodation in cases where the natural parent(s) of adopted or foster children move into accommodation situated in close proximity to the tenant.

19. Current tenants with rent arrears or outstanding debt due to the Council

To accede, in appropriate circumstances, to requests for housing/rehousing from applicants who are in rent arrears or have any other outstanding debt due to the council, on the basis that a satisfactory arrangement has been made in relation to the outstanding debt. Thereafter, the application would be considered on normal turn of point's priority.

20. Acceptance of offer of accommodation where one partner dies or goes into a residential home or institution before the lease is signed

Where an offer of accommodation has been accepted but one partner dies or goes into a residential home or institution, prior to the lease being signed, to permit the remaining partner to occupy the accommodation provided that the accommodation is of a size suitable to their needs.

21. Domestic Abuse

To offer alternative accommodation to perpetrators of Domestic Abuse providing they are engaging with housing staff and are willing to move on a voluntary basis.

22. Downsizing Scheme

To grant approval for officers to provide priority and financial incentive to re-house a tenant, currently downsizing their accommodation to a smaller and suitable sized property under the approved "downsizing scheme".

The following discretionary powers have been sub-delegated to the Serious Offender Liaison Officer for decisions relating to council tenants:

23. Termination of tenancy by a tenant sentenced to imprisonment

Where a single tenant is sentenced to a term of imprisonment which will lead to an absence from home of a duration which will impact on their ability to sustain their tenancy, to accept the voluntary termination of the tenancy on the understanding that one reasonable offer of suitable accommodation will be made on release.

The following delegated powers cover requests for succession to a tenancy. The Locality Inclusion Manager is responsible for determining the outcome of discretionary requests.

Discretions can be considered for non-qualified persons (defined in Schedule 3 to the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001) in appropriate circumstances. Factors which should be taken into account include length of residency, demand for the accommodation, the interests of the Council and any other exceptional circumstances.

Applicants can either be granted a tenancy of the accommodation, offered suitable alternative accommodation, or required to vacate the accommodation.

24. In relation to requests for succession to a tenancy from a non-qualified person

In circumstances where an occupant does not have a legal right to succeed a tenancy, but officers believe there to be circumstances that justify allocating a new tenancy, Senior Housing Officers have the ability to award an Urgent priority for one reasonable offer of suitable accommodation.

25. In relation to requests for succession to a tenancy from a non-qualified person

In circumstances where an occupant does not have a legal right to succeed a tenancy, but officers believe there to be circumstances that justify allocating a new tenancy, Senior Housing Officers have the ability to allocate a new tenancy at the address on the basis of “exceptional circumstances”. In these cases, a new tenancy will be granted, and it will not be a succession.

The following discretionary powers have been sub-delegated to The Housing Options & Allocations Team Leader for decisions relating to non-council tenants.

26. Repairs notice

To arrange for the provision of suitable temporary accommodation for tenants of private sector accommodation which is the subject of a Repairs Notice under Section 108 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 in cases where a landlord is unable to secure alternative accommodation.

27. Witness Protection Programme

In the case of an applicant included by Police Scotland in the witness protection programme, to grant that applicant priority for rehousing to suitable accommodation deemed to be appropriate (as advised by Police Scotland).

28. Kinship Carer

To assess individual kinship carer applications on a case by case basis and grant increased priority where the need for alternative accommodation is of an urgent nature.

29. Alternative Family Care

To assess individual applications involving Alternative Family Care on a case by case basis and grant increased priority where the need for alternative accommodation is of an urgent nature.

30. Applicants with former rent arrears or outstanding debt due to the Council

To make live applications which would normally be deferred for former tenancy arrears or other outstanding debt due to the council, on the basis of urgent priority for rehousing.

Delegated powers exercised by the Chief Officer of Early Intervention and Community Empowerment

31. UK Resettlement Programs

To grant increased priority to applications from households moving to the city under government resettlement programs.

32. Hard to Let Houses

To define properties as hard to let and subsequently determine the allocation of such houses out with priority in the interests of good housing management.

33. Removal of Properties from Letting Stock

To facilitate provision of properties in accordance with meeting the Strategic Priorities of Scottish Government and/or Community Planning Partners, removal of properties from letting stock to allow for resolution of complex cases.

Appendix 7

Additional Information

Online applications

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/find-home/apply-council-house>

Mutual Exchange

If you are interested in taking part in a mutual exchange, please visit

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/housing/information-council-tenants/exchanging-your-council-home>

Housing Access and Support Service

Housing Access and Support Early Intervention and Community Empowerment
Marischal College Broad Street Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Telephone

For help completing a housing advice self-assessment contact the Housing Advice service on Tel: 03000 200 292

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www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Allocation Policy Strategic Place

Planning Aberdeen City Council

Business Hub 3, Ground Floor South

Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB