



SUMMARY ALLOCATION POLICY

CLYDESDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Summary Allocation Policy and Procedures

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 Clydesdale Housing Association Limited is a Housing Association registered with Communities Scotland and registered as a charity with the Inland Revenue commissioners. Its aims and objectives are to provide high quality affordable homes to those most in need of rented housing and create sustainable tenancies and communities. To achieve that aim it has developed and adopted an Allocation Policy to regulate the letting of its houses to ensure these are allocated fairly and in a non prejudicial or discriminatory manner.
- 1.2 This statement represents a summary of the main elements of the approved Allocation Policy, and is included in all application and information packs issued to prospective applicants, and is available to members of the public free of charge. Its purpose is to provide a broad outline of the Association's Allocation Policy and Procedures relating to the processing of applications for housing.
- 1.3 It is not a definitive statement of the Association's Allocation Policy. A full copy of the approved policy is available for inspection at the Association's office. Copies are available to applicants and members of the public on request for which a small fee (£1.00) will be charged to cover administration costs.
- 1.4 In developing and adopting its Allocation Policy, the Association has taken account of Legal requirements, guidelines issued by Communities Scotland as the regulatory body for registered Social Landlords, and recognised good practice.
- 1.5 By periodic reviews, the Association will ensure that the Allocation Policy continues to comply with legal requirements, Communities Scotland guidelines and good practice, and will justify its actions to applicants or other interested parties.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 2.1 Admission to the waiting list is open to all applicants aged 16 years of age or over who are citizens of the United Kingdom or a EC members state regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, religion, creed or nationality.
- 2.2 The circumstances of all applicants will be assessed in accordance with the approved Allocation Policy and points awarded to reflect the extent of the housing needs of individual applicants.
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2.3 Broadly a person is defined as being in housing need if he/she:

- is homeless;
- does not have permanent accommodation;
- is sharing with relatives or friends;
- does not have security of tenure;
- has secure accommodation which is:
 - ◆ too large or small for needs;
 - ◆ unsuitable on medical grounds;
 - ◆ subject to a date of sale or Notice to Quit;
 - ◆ remote from employment or facilities;
 - ◆ lacking basic facilities or amenities.

NB The above list is for illustration only and is not exhaustive.

3. ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEED

3.1 The Association operates a 'Points System' to assess the needs of applicants.

3.2 To determine the extent of an individual applicant's housing need, points are awarded to each of the 'need' factors referred to previously at '**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**'. The total points awarded determines an applicant's placing on the waiting list relative to that of other applicants.

3.3 Applicants seeking to be housed on medical grounds will require to complete a confidential questionnaire which will be referred to an independent Medical Advisor who will award the appropriate level of points to reflect the seriousness of the condition or ill health. A fee may be charged for referrals to the Independent Medical Advisor.

4. OPERATION OF HOUSING LIST/ALLOCATIONS

4.1 The Association seeks to make the best use of its housing by matching available accommodation to the needs of applicants. Applicants therefore are recorded on the list for the size and type of accommodation most suited to their circumstances and in order of total points awarded.

4.2 Generally available accommodation is allocated to those applicants who have been assessed as having the greatest housing need as determined by the total points awarded. However the Association reserves the right to deviate from the stated policy in particular circumstances where there are justifiable

management reasons for doing so.

- 4.3** Applicants who are assessed as having no housing need, eg awarded '0' (zero) points will only be considered for housing as and when accommodation becomes available which is surplus to the requirements of applicants in housing need, or where in the interest of estate management purposes or a local letting initiative it is desirable or necessary to suspend the normal selection process.
- 4.4** To ensure that applicant details on file are up to date and accurately reflect their housing circumstances, the Association will review the waiting list, at least once every year.
- 4.5** All applications received are acknowledged.
- 4.6** The needs of applicants are assessed on the basis of the foregoing criteria and a decision communicated to every applicant as quickly as possible. Applicants will be provided with details of the points awarded to their application.
- 4.7** Applicants dissatisfied with the points awarded to their application or by the manner with which it has been processed can in the first instance appeal to the Housing Manager. Thereafter any applicant who continues to be dissatisfied has recourse to the Association's Formal Complaint and Appeals Procedure, details of which are available on request.
- 4.8** As a general note, applicants will not be restricted to a maximum number of offers, but statutory homeless applicant who refuse a reasonable offer may have their homeless priority status withdrawn by the Local Authority .
- 4.9** **Existing Tenants**
- 4.9.1** Admission to the waiting list is also open to existing tenants, regardless of whether or not they have a housing need. However, alternative housing will only be provided to those tenants who have a demonstrable housing need, or in the absence of housing need, only when available accommodation is surplus to the requirements of applicants in need.
- 4.9.2** Tenants will only be considered for an offer of rehousing if at the time there are no active legal pending or ongoing actions relative to any breaches of tenancy, including non payment of rent.
- 4.10** **Nominations**
- 4.10.1** A nomination agreement is presently in place with South Lanarkshire Council, under which Council applicants can be nominated to the Association for housing.
- 4.10.2** In addition, the Association will consider applicants nominated through H.O.M.E.S (Housing Organisation Mobility and Exchange Scheme).
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4.10.3 Where appropriate to do so the Association will enter into nomination agreements with other voluntary organisations for an agreed quota of allocations.

4.11 Homelessness

4.11.1 In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 the Association will assist and support South Lanarkshire Council in the discharge of its statutory obligations of meeting the housing needs of the area and the homeless in particular.

4.11.2 The Association will seek to improve communication links and liaison with South Lanarkshire Council on housing provision and needs, particularly in relation to homeless people.

4.12 Housing Support

4.12.1 The Association will liaise with appropriate agencies to ensure all necessary support is available for those tenants who need support in order to sustain a tenancy.

4.13 Mutual Exchanges

4.13.1 Consideration will be given to requests from existing tenants wishing to exchange dwellings, either with other Association tenants, or tenants of other public sector landlords.

4.13.2 Such requests will not be unreasonably refused, but permission will not be granted where overcrowding or excessive under occupation will occur.

4.14 References/Validation Of Circumstances

4.14.1 In submitting an application for housing, applicants will be required to sign a mandate authorising the Association to make enquiries of other agencies or landlords for references and tenancy reports

4.14.2 The Association reserves the right to seek from applicants any other information reasonably required to validate the circumstances detailed in their application.

4.15 Responsibilities Of Applicants

4.15.1 Applicants are required in good faith to complete applications accurately and honestly, and to notify the Association immediately in writing of any change in circumstances affecting their entitlement to housing, particularly in respect of place of residence.

4.15.2 Applicants who no longer have a housing need or require to be housed by the Association should inform the Association accordingly in writing.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1** Clydesdale Housing Association operates under the overarching duty of a Registered Social Landlord to provide housing accommodation and related services in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of equal opportunity requirements as specified in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 5.2** No person or group of persons applying for housing will be treated less favourably than other persons or group of persons because of their sex, marital status, family circumstances, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, religion, political orientation or sexual orientation.
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CLYDESDALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

CURRENT LIST OF AREAS FOR RENTED PROPERTIES

ABINGTON	Hunters Court	2apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs
BIGGAR	Macdiarmid Court	2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs/ Wheelchair access
BLACKWOOD	Knoweknock Terrace Lindsay Road Lochanbank Drive	4apt 3apt/4apt 3apt/4apt	General Needs General Needs General Needs
BRAIDWOOD	Nellfield Gardens Nellfield Lane	3apt/4apt 3apt/4apt	General Needs General Needs
CARLUKE [stock transfer properties mostly heated by gas]	Cairneymount Road Clyde Street GAS Glenmavis Crescent/Court Glendermott Court Hillhead Avenue Hope Street Kings Crescent Miller Street Moorside Street Queens Crescent Sandy Road / Stonefield Gardens Stanistone Road Stewart Place Windmill Gardens Windsor Court / Quadrant Woodend Road	3apt / 4 apt 3apt 2apt/3apt/4apt 2apt 3 apt 3 apt 3 apt /4 apt / 5 apt 3 apt / 4apt 5 apt 3 apt 3 apt 3apt 3apt/4apt 2apt/3apt 3 apt	General Needs General Needs General Needs Amenity only General Needs General Needs General Needs General Needs General Needs General Needs Amenity Only General Needs General Needs Amenity/General Needs Amenity/General Needs <u>General Needs</u>
CARNWATH	Lockhart Place Lang Whang Court/ George Paul Road	2apt/3apt 2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs/ Wheelchair Access Amenity/General Needs/ Wheelchair Access
CARSTAIRS	Castledyke Road/ Avenue Road	2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs
COALBURN	Caledonian Gardens/ Coalburn Road	2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs
KIRKFIELD BANK	Riverside Road Clydesholm Court	2apt/3apt 2apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs General Needs
LANARK	Forsyth Court GAS Greyfriars Court GAS Guschet Place Stanmore Avenue Smiddy Court Stuart Drive Wellgate GAS	3apt/4apt 2apt/3apt 2 apt 3apt/4apt 2apt/3apt 3apt/4apt 2apt	General Needs Amenity Amenity/Wheelchair Access General Needs General/Needs/ Wheelchair Access General Needs Amenity/General Needs
LEADHILLS	Symington Street CFH	2apt/3apt	General Needs
LESMAHAGOW	Cordiner Court Bakers Brae/New Trows Road	2apt/4apt 2apt/3apt	Amenity/General Needs Amenity/General Need/ Wheelchair Access
RIGSIDE	Broomfield Street Douglasdale Street Mountstuart Court Newtonhead Road Whiteside Street	4apt 4apt 2apt/3apt 4apt 4apt	General Needs General Needs Amenity/Wheelchair Access General Needs

			General Needs
SYMINGTON	Millburn Court	2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs/ Wheelchair Access
TARBAX	Viewfield Road Crosswood Terrace	3apt 2apt	General Needs General Needs
THANKERTON	Mill Place	2apt/3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs
WOOLFORDS	Woolfords Row	3apt	General Needs

CURRENT LIST OF AREAS WITH SHARE OWNERSHIP PROPERTIES

CARLUKE	Glenmavis Court Stewart Place	3apt/4apt 3apt	General Needs General Needs
CARNWATH	Lang Whang Court/ George Paul Road	3apt/4apt	General Needs
CARSTAIRS	Castledyke View	3apt/4apt	General Needs
KIRKFIELD BANK	Clydesholm Court	2apt/3apt/4ap t	Amenity/General Needs
LANARK	Greyfriars Court Forsyth Court	2apt/3apt 3apt/4apt	Amenity/General Needs General Needs
SYMINGTON	Millburn Court School Road	3apt/4apt 3apt/4apt	General Needs Amenity/General Needs

Guide to Making a Complaint or Appeal

Why have a complaints and appeals procedure?

Clydesdale Housing Association aims to provide a first class service but there may be occasions when you are not happy about something. If this is the case, it is important for you to tell us.

The aim of this complaints and appeals procedure is to give you clear details of what steps you can take to try and get things put right where there is a problem.

The complaints and appeals procedure also gives us the chance to keep an eye on the quality of service we provide so that we can continually work to improve it.

Who can use the complaints and appeals procedure?

Anyone who receives or requests a service from Clydesdale Housing Association can use the complaints and appeals procedure. This includes tenants, people applying for housing, owners or sharing owners and people living in neighbouring property or anyone seeking information from the Association.

The procedure is also open to people who would be acting on your behalf, such as a Councillor, Member of Parliament, advice agency or solicitor (but, as you will see later, we do encourage you to try to sort things out with us first).

If you belong to a tenants' group or residents' association and would prefer to ask them to help you complain we will be happy for them to contact us on your behalf.

What can you complain or appeal about?

You can complain or appeal about any aspect of our service which you are unhappy about, for example:

- Where services provided have not been to an acceptable standard
- Where the behaviour of a member of our Management Committee, staff or another person providing services on our behalf (e.g. a tradesman) has been unacceptable
- Where someone affected by a decision made by the Association disagrees with that decision
- if you feel you have been unfairly discriminated against

Complaints against neighbours will be dealt with under our Estate Management procedures. But if you have a complaint about the way we have dealt with a neighbour dispute, then you can use the complaints and appeals procedure.

We will always try to deal with complaints sympathetically, but there are some things we will not be able to give you information about. For example, it would be wrong for us to discuss with you the detail of someone else's housing application, as this would be a breach of confidentiality, but we can of course talk to you about how our allocations procedure works.

Trying to sort things out informally (Stage 1)

You have every right to make a formal complaint whenever you wish to, but in the first instance it can often be quicker and easier for everyone if the problem can be sorted out informally; the choice is yours.

To try and resolve a problem informally, the best thing for you to do is to talk to (or drop a line to) your housing officer or any other officer if this is appropriate, and let him or her know what you would like to be put right. He or she will look into your complaint and get back to you within 10 working days and hopefully a solution will be reached. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal stage you should proceed to Stage 2.

The formal complaints and appeals procedure (Stage 2)

If the problem has not been sorted out informally, you should make a formal complaint using our complaints form. (A copy will be sent to you on request).

When you make a complaint it is really important for you to let us know exactly what the problem is and how you would like to see it resolved. We would encourage you to provide as much information as possible in the Complaint Form, but if this is not easy, you can complain by telephone or in person. If the officer dealing with your complaint is not available, your complaint will be noted by the person who speaks to you and passed on to the officer.

If you have made a complaint by telephone or in person, the member of staff who notes the complaint will check with you that they have taken a correct record, and you will normally be asked to sign it. In this way everyone is clear on what the complaint is about.

Whether you have complained in writing, by phone or in person, we will write to you within two working days to acknowledge that your complaint is being dealt with.

We will then write to you again within ten working days of receiving the complaint to let you know the outcome or the progress of your complaint. Do please remember that some things may not be within our control and may therefore be less easy to sort out. If this is the case, we will keep you advised of our progress. Our Depute Chief Executive will oversee this part of the process.

If you are not happy with the response, you will be able to appeals against our decision - you should submit your appeal to us within ten working days of receiving our decision letter.

Taking your complaint further – (Stage 3)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 2, an independent review will be carried out by the Chief Executive. The timescale for this part of the process is ten working days.

You will be informed of the decision and given details of your right of appeal. You should inform us within ten working days if you wish to move onto the next stage of the process.

Assessment by the Management Committee – (Stage 4)

If you are still unhappy after Stage 3, the final internal stage of the process will be dealt with by the Management Committee. You will be told when the next available Management Committee will be held and you can attend this meeting and bring a friend or adviser.

A report will be prepared for the Management Committee and you will be given a copy of this one week before the Committee meets to consider the appeal.

The Management Committee will reach a decision within one week of the meeting and issue its decision in writing to you within 7 working days. If you remain unhappy after Stage 4, you can appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman investigates individual complaints against housing associations and co-operatives. This is a free and impartial service and a leaflet about it is available from our office.

The service is available to anyone who receives a service from a housing association or co-operative, or who has applied to one of them for housing. Normally you must have gone through the association's own complaints procedure before the Ombudsman can deal with your complaint. You should also submit your complaint to the Ombudsman within 12 months of making the original complaint.

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman is based at 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS, tel: 0800 377 7330.

Who will know about my complaint?

We will as far as possible respect the confidentiality of your complaint. Whilst we are looking into your complaint, your name will not be divulged any more than is absolutely necessary within the association, and if your complaint goes to the Management Committee then other Committee Members will not be told who has complained.

You will appreciate, however, that if your complaint involves another tenant or a member of staff it may be very difficult for us to look into this without talking to that tenant or staff member. If you ask us not to talk to the tenant or staff member we will try to respect your wishes, but it will probably not be possible for us to take any action to tackle the problem.

It will not normally be possible for us to deal with anonymous complaints as it is obviously difficult for us to check things with the person making the complaint. However, where these are of a serious nature, we will investigate them and take the necessary action to resolve the problem.

Getting independent advice

We would always hope that a problem can be sorted out informally.

However, you may feel it is important for you to get independent advice before you decide whether to complain to us formally.

Advice agencies in this area include :

Money Matters
South Lanarkshire Council
Council Offices
South Vennel

Tel : 01555 678539

LANARK, ML11 7JT

Clydesdale Advice Centre
10-12 Wide Close
Lanark, ML11 7LX

Monday-Thursday
10.00 am to 3.00 pm
Tel : 01555 664301

How do we record and monitor complaints?

Complaints can help us as well as you! All complaints made to the Association are recorded and reported to the Management Committee with a note of changes or improvements the Association may be taking because of complaints received.

Improving our service to you

Complaints are not the only way of telling us what you think of the service we provide! We always welcome suggestions on how we can improve things so if you have any ideas about this please let your housing officer or other member of staff know or drop us a line. We will also be issuing you with a Complaints Customer Feedback Form. Your co-operation in filling in this form is greatly appreciated.



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