

Allocations

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Our Vision, Mission Statement and Values

Glen Oaks' vision statement '**Where Communities Thrive**' and our mission statement '**Our aim is to provide good quality affordable housing and an excellent service. We will encourage resident participation and work with other agencies to regenerate our community**' provide the foundation for Glen Oaks Housing Association's commitment to its residents and the communities they live in.

This commitment is also demonstrated in the Association's values which were agreed following discussions with the Board and staff. Glen Oaks' values are fundamental to how we carry out our day-to-day activities.

Our values are:

respectful

we trust and respect our customers and each other

dedicated

we will give 100% commitment to our work

transparent

we will be open and honest about what we do

aspirational

we will strive to achieve the best we can for our communities

Equality & Diversity Statement

The Association is intent on ensuring people or communities do not face discrimination or social exclusion due to any of the following protected characteristics: age; disability; sex; marriage & civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy & maternity.

This document complies with the Association's equality & diversity policy.

The Association will regularly review this document for equal opportunities implications and take the necessary action to address any inequalities that result from the implementation of the policy.

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Part 1

1.0 Introduction

Glen Oaks Housing Association is a registered social landlord. It aims to ensure effective, efficient and accountable management of its properties. This Policy sets out how the organisation meets the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, regarding the allocations of its properties.

The Association is committed to promoting social inclusion and to creating a balanced and stable community, by making the best use of its available housing stock.

1.1 Compliance with Standards, Legislation and Good Practice

In developing this policy Glen Oaks Housing Association has taken into consideration the Scottish Social Housing Charter, legislation, guidance and good practice, which directly or indirectly affect this policy.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords aim to achieve. This policy aims to meet the requirements of Charter Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12

1: Equality

Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognized is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

2: Communication

Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

3: Participation

Social Landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

7, 8 and 9: Housing Options

Social Landlords work together to ensure that:

- People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them
- Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.

Social Landlords ensure that:

- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

10: Access to Social Housing

Social landlords ensure that:

- People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospect of being housed.

11: Tenancy Sustainment

Social Landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

12: Homeless People

Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

The legislative framework affecting the allocation of properties namely:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Immigration Act 2014
- Welfare Reform Act 2010
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection)(Scotland) Act 1981
- The Civil Partnerships Act 2005
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sex Offenders Act 1997
- Management of Offenders, etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements - MAPPA);
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2004

1.2 Objectives of the Policy

Glen Oaks Housing Association will ensure that our Allocations policy and procedure will:

1. Enable everyone to have an equal opportunity to apply for housing.
2. Prioritise the allocation of property to people in the greatest housing need.
3. Provide good information and advice to applicants to allow them to make informed choices about available housing.
4. Be fair, efficient and non-discriminatory.
5. Provide greater access to our waiting list by ensuring that the allocation process is easily understood and simple to administer.
6. Encourage participation by having processes in place to involve tenants, applicants, Board members and staff in development and implementation of the policy and procedure.
7. Ensure confidentiality of each applicant.
8. Make the best use of the available stock and minimise the time properties lie vacant.
9. Use the allocation process to develop social inclusion and create and maintain stable and balanced communities where people wish to live and remain.

10. Consider opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations to identify and alleviate need.

1.3 Access to Social Housing

1.3.1 Admission to the Waiting List

All applicants have the right to be admitted to the Housing List, following which their application is fully assessed. Glen Oaks Housing Association accepts applications from any person 16 years of age and over.

All applicants will have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process. Applications can be made at any time by obtaining an application form from the Association's office or website at www.glenoaks.org.uk. Assistance is offered to applicants who need help to complete an application form, and interpreters can be made available on request. The issue of an application form should not be taken as an indication that the Association will eventually be able to make an offer of housing.

1.3.2 Removal of an Applicant from the Waiting List

The Association would only remove an applicant from the waiting list where:

- The applicant has requested that they wish to be removed from the list.
- The applicant has died.
- The applicant has failed to respond to the periodic review of the waiting list.
- The applicant does not respond to two or more consecutive letters sent or attended an interview.
- Applicants mail has been returned as "gone away".

1.3.3 Suspending Applicants

Glen Oaks Housing Association can suspend applicants from offers of housing for a specified period. Where a suspension is to be applied, the applicant will be notified clearly of the reason for the suspension, the timescale involved and advised of action that can be taken to end or appeal the suspension. This practice will be kept to a minimum and will only be implemented following full consideration and assessment of the applicant's circumstances. The Association will however take into consideration the

safety of existing tenants, stability of the community and the public investment in its properties.

Suspensions would apply in the following circumstances

- Arrears in respect of tenancy matters**

An Applicant will be suspended where they owe arrears directly attributed to their current tenancy or a former tenancy.

The arrears can include rent arrears, unpaid service charges, rechargeable repairs, costs associated with clearing out of a property or cleaning of a property which has been left in poor condition.

In considering arrears, the debt must be more than one twelfth of the annual rent, less than 5 years old and must not be technical Housing Benefit arrears.

Applicants with more than one month's rent outstanding will only be eligible for housing where they have demonstrated a commitment to clear the arrears through a repayment agreement of at least three consecutive months with their landlord.

Glen Oaks Housing Association will not take into account current arrears which have been caused by delays in payment of Housing Benefit which is due to be paid direct.

If the applicant is an owner-occupier factoring debt or property repair charge can be considered but mortgage arrears cannot be included.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be reviewed every three months.

- Anti-Social Behaviour**

The Association will withhold an offer of housing from an applicant or a member of their household who has previously harassed or been violent to other tenants, neighbours or staff or who has damaged the Association's property.

Anti-social behaviour in this context can include

- Relevant criminal convictions (relevant to a tenancy or to community safety)**

- Drug dealing from a tenancy
- Prostitution from a tenancy
- Fire-raising
- Extensive damage to a property
- Harassment of or threats to neighbours

When considering a suspension of this nature the Housing Services Manager will take account of the following criteria to assess if the suspension is reasonable:

- The nature, frequency and duration of the conduct
- The extent to which the conduct is the consequence of acts or omissions of people other than the tenant
- The effect which the conduct is having on other people
- Any alternative action taken by the landlord to address the conduct

Suspension of the application will be taken where there is clear robust evidence of the behaviour, which is supported by the current or previous landlord, Professional Witnesses, Acceptable Behavior Contracts, mediation attempts or the Police.

Applicants (or a member or a visitor of their household) whose tenancy record highlights that they have been involved in anti-social behaviour will be suspended if it has been previously established that the anti-social behaviour took place.

Where however the Association offers to re-house an applicant, (or a member of their family or a visitor), who has had relatively serious Anti-social Behavior, been evicted in the last 3 years for anti-social behaviour or has had an ASBO served against them, or has shown that they have persistent low level breaches of tenancy, a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy may be given for up to 18 months to make sure the tenancy is conducted satisfactorily. In offering a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, the Association would ensure the provision of appropriate support services to enable the conversion of the tenancy to a Scottish Secure Tenancy.

If the tenant or a member of their family continues to act in an anti-social manner, the Association may seek possession under the appropriate conduct grounds contained in Schedule 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be reviewed every 6 months. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant provides clear and substantiated evidence that they no longer pose a risk.

- **Condition of house or tenancy**

An offer of housing will be withheld where the tenant has not adhered to the conditions of tenancy in respect of the property as stated in their tenancy agreement.

Matters related to the tenancy include state of the garden or common areas, control over pets, rubbish and vandalism.

Where a home visit or a tenancy reference show that a tenancy condition in respect of the property has not been adhered to, the application will be suspended for a period of 3 months. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant has brought the property up to an acceptable standard.

Suspensions may also occur where debt is owed for the cost of making good repairs which are the tenant's responsibility or for reinstating fixtures.

- **Declined Offers**

Applicants will not be suspended from future offers, should they decline an offer of accommodation. However, where an applicant has declined three offers, a review of their application will be undertaken to ensure all information about their stated choices are known.

- **False Information**

Where an applicant has deliberately given false or misleading information to gain advantage over other applicants then the Association will suspend their application for a period of 6 months. The applicant will be invited to attend an interview to discuss the contents of their application following which the applicant can re-submit a new application. The suspension may be lifted prior to the 6 months where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances in respect of housing need.

Applicants who are offered a tenancy agreement will be required to declare that they have not knowingly given false or misleading information to obtain the tenancy.

Should it come to the Association's attention that this has occurred, a Notice of Proceedings for Possession of the property may be served, and Legal Action instructed to end the tenancy.

- **Property Ownership**

Applicants who own their own home do not require to sell their property. However, it is a legal requirement that the applicant will be required to occupy a tenancy as their only or principal home.

- **Abandonment or Eviction**

Where an applicant has abandoned a property or been evicted their application will be suspended for 12 months from the date of the abandonment or eviction. Where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances the application may be reviewed prior to the 12-month period.

- **Voluntarily leaving a tenancy**

Giving up a previous tenancy will not in itself be grounds for suspension. However, where it can be established that the applicant deliberately placed themselves in a worse circumstance to gain higher priority on the waiting list, their application will be suspended for 6 months. Each case will be considered on its own merits and where it can be demonstrated that there are special or extenuating circumstances the suspension will be reviewed prior to the 6 months.

- **Asylum Seekers**

Where it is confirmed that the applicant cannot yet be offered a property as they are subject to immigration control, the Association will suspend the application until their rights to a tenancy is confirmed by the Home Office. Glasgow City Council can provide appropriate support as required.

Details of relevant agencies will also be provided to the asylum seeker for information and advice.

- **Threatening or violent behaviour**

The Association reserves the right to suspend an offer, to applicants who threaten or verbally or physically abuse any member of staff. Similarly, any applicant who attempts to offer an inducement or bribe to any member of staff in order to obtain an offer of housing will be suspended from

receiving an offer.

A suspension for either of these categories will be for a period of 12 months. Where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances the application may be reviewed prior to the 12-month period.

Cases where this occurs will be reported in the first instance to the Housing Services Director and thereafter to the Housing, Technical and H & S Sub-Committee.

1.3.4 Referrals

- **Homeless applicants**

The Association will accept referrals for statutorily homeless applicants referred to us by Glasgow City Council (GCC). We will work constructively with GCC to prevent and alleviate homelessness. We will agree with GCC annually the proportion of lets we will make to homeless applicants, and work to fulfill our contribution to Rapid Rehousing and Housing First. We will note the agreed quota of lets in the annual Lettings Plan.

- **Registered Sex Offenders**

The Association will respond to requests for re-housing by registered sex offenders (as defined by the Sex Offenders Act 1997) in line with the Duty To Co-operate Protocol as agreed between Glasgow City Council and Registered Social Landlords.

The Association will always manage any allocations to offenders utilizing the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) as introduced by the Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005.

Glen Oaks is committed to minimising the risk to local communities and a decision to offer a tenancy will be taken following information being made available in consultation with relevant agencies such as the Police and Social Work Services to the Link Officer by the local authority's SOLO officer.

1.3.5 Common Housing Register

Glen Oaks Housing Association is committed to the development of a Glasgow-wide Common Housing Register. Once this is established its purpose will be to:

- Maximise and simplify access for applicants to the waiting lists of Registered Social Landlords.
- Provide a broad applicant base from which landlords may allocate housing.
- Reduce duplication of work and maximise information leading to greater efficiency in the allocation process for both the Landlord and the applicant.

1.3.6 Information Awareness and Advice

The Association promotes its services to the wider community and makes available information about our housing stock and how to gain access to it. This is undertaken by:

- Liaison with Glasgow City Council, other social landlords and local support agencies, e.g. the Mungo Foundation, Enable and the Richmond Fellowship.
- Direct contact with Positive Action in Housing, to promote availability for ethnic minority groups.
- Allocations Booklet and advertising materials displayed in the Association's office.
- Information on Glasgow City Council's website at www.glasgow.gov.uk
- Access to Glen Oaks' website at www.glenoaks.org.uk
- Updates on our Facebook page
- The Association subscribes to Happy to Translate.

The Association will ensure that all communication is in plain language. Where appropriate it can make available interpretation services and will provide information in different formats, e.g. tape, large print, Braille, and key minority languages on request.

1.3.7 Confidentiality

Information given by an applicant on the application form will be treated confidentially by any member of staff who has access to it. The information will not be revealed to any third party, unless required by law, without the written consent of the applicant.

1.3.8 Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 an applicant has the right to see information stored about him/her on the Association's computer systems.

The Association will require proof of identity and an administration charge of £5 will be requested prior to the release of information.

The Association will respond within 40 days to a data subject access request.

1.4 Allocation of Housing

1.4.1 Reasonable Preference

In line with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, the Association seeks to give priority (the legal term being "reasonable preference") to applicants in one or more of the following categories:

- To homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs
- People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions; and who have unmet housing needs; and
- Tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and which the social landlord selecting its tenants considers to be under-occupied

The first two of the reasonable preference groups (homelessness and unsatisfactory housing conditions) are subject to the applicant having unmet housing needs. People have unmet housing needs where the Association considers them to have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options which are available.

1.4.2 Homelessness

Where a homeless applicant approaches the Association directly, we will refer them to Glasgow City Council Homelessness Partnership for assessment within the terms of the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003.

Glasgow City Council will also be able to provide advice and access to emergency accommodation.

Applicants who are classified as Statutory Homeless can be referred to the

Association for re-housing, in line with the Section 5 referral process.

We will also advise the applicant that they can also make a direct application to the Association.

1.4.3 Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions with unmet housing need

The Association will consider the physical condition of the property and the suitability of the property for the applicant. This will be considered in the following categories:

1.4.4 Applicants who are occupying houses which do not meet the tolerable standard as defined by your local authority's environmental health department.

The tolerable standard sets out the basic requirements for a healthy safe home. Where standards adversely affect the applicant's living conditions due to lacking amenities or property condition, the Association will award points in recognition of the standard.

1.4.5 Applicants who are occupying overcrowded houses

Overcrowding points will be given where it is identified that there is a lack of bedrooms, to meet household needs. Points will be awarded on the basis that all rooms in a property, except the living room, bathroom, kitchen and toilet are available for use as bedrooms.

1.4.6 Harassment, Abuse and Domestic Abuse

Issues of harassment and abuse can take many forms and can be of a physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, financial or life-threatening nature. In recognition of this, the Association will award points at different levels of priority depending on the severity of the situation.

1.4.7 Insecure Accommodation

The Association will award points to applicants who have insecure housing circumstances but who have not applied through the statutory homeless route. This category will cover situations where the applicant is at risk of losing their home through no fault of their own, or where they do not have a right to occupy and the accommodation is temporary.

1.4.8 Health and Disability

The Association will consider the severity or urgency of a health condition and will award points to recognise different levels of priority where re-housing would significantly alleviate the difficulties the applicant is facing.

1.4.9 Under-Occupation

The Association will award points to applicants who live in a **social rented property** and the home they live in is too big for the household who lives there. Points will be awarded for each bedroom surplus to requirements. The Association will support tenants to consider whether their current home meets their needs.

The Association will use a points system to assess housing need and will achieve reasonable preference by ensuring the above categories attract a sufficiently high number of points.

1.4.10 Age

We will not take into account the age of applicants in the allocation of housing, unless the house has been designed or substantially adapted for occupation by persons of a particular age group or the persons are to be in receipt of housing support services.

1.4.11 Exceptional Circumstances

We recognise that there will be situations that because of exceptional circumstances may not be covered by this policy. This may be to allow good management of our housing stock or to alleviate severe exceptional difficulties within a household. The Housing Services Director will have delegated authority to deal with such cases. The decision made on these cases will be reported to the Housing, Technical and H& S Sub Committee.

1.4.12 Granting of a Tenancy to Relatives of Persons connected with the Association

To ensure that the Association complies with statutory requirements regarding entitlements, payments and benefits to our Board members and employees, and/or to someone connected to them, all applicants shall be asked to state whether, to their knowledge, they are connected to a Board member and/or employee of Glen Oaks Housing Association.

The definition of relevant relationships is provided in the Association's Entitlements, Payments and Benefits policy, Section 6 - 'People Connected to You'.

All applications where the applicant has declared a connection to a Board member and/or employee will require to meet the following criteria:

1. Demonstrate that the allocation complies with the Association's published policy and procedures.
2. The person in question has no involvement or influence over the process by which the Association allocates the tenancy.
3. The applicant's circumstances will not be discussed with the Board, although the Housing Services Director will verify that the allocation is in line with the policy.
4. Any decision to allocate a property will be made by the Board.
5. The decision is recorded in the Association's minutes.
6. The Association will enter details of any let into the appropriate Register of Interest within five days of the tenancy commencing. Each entry is required to be counter-signed by the Housing Services Director or the Chief Executive.

1.5 Reviewing and Monitoring Allocations

The Association will ensure that this policy and its operation, effectively meets the objectives set out in Section 1.2 and complies with the Scottish Social Housing Charter standards and outcomes.

The Housing, Technical and H & S Sub-Committee will monitor this policy, review its operation and make recommendations for policy changes.

At Housing, Technical and H & S Sub-Committee meetings, reports are compiled quarterly detailing:

- The number of applicants who have applied for housing and the number of lets made to homeless applicants, waiting list applicants and transfer applicants. This information is gathered to monitor demand.
- The number of applicants suspended or removed from the waiting lists and reasons for this action.
- The number of applications received by ethnic group, gender and disability. This is monitored to ensure that the housing lists are accessible to all sections of the community, and that appropriate

- information and advice is given.
- Number of offers made and number of offers accepted, monitoring reasons for refusal and taking relevant action to meet the aspirations of the applicant.
- Number of days taken to allocate properties, void periods and rent loss. This is monitored to maximise rental income.

The Association also complies with the monitoring requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator and provides information for the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). Annual letting statistics are published in the Association's Annual Report.

As well as reviewing technical data, the Association consults with the Service Improvement Group and the Registered Tenants Organisation about their perceptions and experience of the allocations process.

1.5.1 Lettings Plan

The Housing Technical and H & S Sub-Committee will set out a Lettings Plan to assist in the creation of sustainable communities. The Plan will indicate the likely level of lets to allow quotas to be met.

Selections throughout the year will be by rotation to ensure that the target percentages are broadly achieved on an ongoing basis. However, quotas achieved may vary depending upon a variety of circumstances such as turnover and availability of referrals

The Lettings Plan will be reviewed annually.

1.6 Administration

1.6.1 Application Forms

The Association provides an application pack to prospective applicants when they request an application for housing. This consists of the application form and an Allocations Booklet - 'A Summary of the Allocations Policy'.

This booklet includes information on who can apply, a summary of the Allocations policy and how points are awarded. Information regarding local schools, amenities, transport links, community activities and other local housing providers is included.

The booklet also provides information about housing stock owned by the

Association, typical rents and details of turnover of properties to enable all applicants to exercise choice in their re-housing prospects.

Applicants can choose certain closes or streets within an area in which they wish to be re-housed. It is explained on the application form that although this choice is available, availability in certain streets and areas may be lower so the applicant may be on the waiting list for a longer time period.

Applicants can discuss the availability at their allocation interview or by contacting staff at our office.

The Association is committed to processing applications, where possible within 10 working days from receipt, provided no additional information is required.

1.6.2 Verification of Information

Every applicant who is likely to be offered a property will be interviewed before an offer is made. The purpose of the interview is to check that the details on the application form are correct and that points have been correctly awarded and allow applicants to provide any additional information in support of their application.

Every applicant must provide two pieces of correspondence confirming their identity and address.

Tenancy reports will be obtained from previous and current landlords. Applicants are required to sign a mandate authorising the Association to contact landlords to obtain information about the conduct of a tenancy.

Change in circumstances must be notified to the Association. Failure to notify changes may result in applications being suspended to allow a review of the application.

1.6.3 Offers and Refusals

Applicants from both the waiting and transfer list will receive offers in their choice of area unless the Association considers that there are strong reasons why any offer is unsuited to the applicant's needs.

Applicants will not be suspended from future offers, should they decline an offer of accommodation. However, where an applicant has declined three offers, they will be invited to review their application to ensure all information about their stated choices and re-housing requirements are

known. Failure to respond to this request will result in the application being cancelled.

Where Glasgow City Council Community Casework team makes a Homeless Referral, the applicant will normally be given one offer unless the Community Casework Team deems the offer to be unsuitable.

In all cases every effort is made to ensure that applicant's preferences are considered. All offers of tenancies will be made in writing. Applicants will be given 48 hours to respond to the offer of a tenancy.

The applicant will be required to view the property before signing a tenancy agreement.

1.6.4 Allocations Audit Trail

The Association is committed to a clear audit trail to demonstrate for any given let how and why that allocation was made and to confirm that the Allocations Policy is achieving its objectives. Responsibility for implementing the policy is delegated by the Board to the Housing Services Director.

Allocation of housing is administered by the Housing Services Officer and authorised by the Housing Services Manager. All allocation decisions are recorded and are available for monitoring purposes to internal or external regulators. This information will not be made available to the public due to the requirements of confidentiality.

Where the applicant is dissatisfied with the Association's decision, they have a right to appeal.

1.7 Appeal/Complaints Procedures

Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the way this policy has been implemented or are appealing against a decision that has been made, he/she should contact the Housing Services Director, who will respond to their enquiry in the first instance. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal/complaint, they can refer to the Association's formal Complaints Procedure. A copy of this is available from the Association and gives details of the next steps available.

1.8 Policy Review

The Association's elected Board members have determined this policy. The Association will develop the Allocations Policy in consultation with tenants.

The policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner if required by changes in law or good practice.

Applicants will be notified in writing of any changes to their points as a result of a Policy Review.

1.9. Risk Management

Risk can arise from the Association's Allocations policy such as:

- Loss of rental income when a property is not allocated.
- Failure to meet performance targets where a property is proving difficult to let.

Given the importance of these risks the effective management of this policy is vital.

1.10 Further Information

Any person seeking further information should contact the Association's office at:

3 Kilmuir Drive, Arden, Glasgow, G46 8BW.

Telephone: 0141 638 0999
Fax: [0141 638 5999](tel:01416385999)
E-mail: go@glenoaks.org.uk

Part 2

2.0 Points System

Glen Oaks Housing Association will administer the allocation of housing on a points-based system. The system of awarding points for various categories of housing need is designed to give appropriate weighting to applicants in recognition of their housing requirements.

2.1 Priorities for Rehousing

The Association will give reasonable preference to the undernoted categories of applicants in housing need.

- 1 Homeless and Persons threatened with homelessness, including Referrals from Glasgow City Council's Community Casework Team. .
- 2 Persons who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions.
 - (i) Persons who are occupying houses that do not meet tolerable standards
 - (ii) Persons who are occupying overcrowded houses.
 - (iii) Applicants who have suffered harassment, abuse or domestic abuse.
 - (iv) Insecure Accommodation
 - (v) Health and disability
- 3 Under-occupation
- 4 Existing tenants due to be re-housed due to the Association's plans for demolition
- 5 Internal Transfers - quotas are agreed annually and set out in the Lettings Plan
6. Housing for support - quotas are agreed annually and set out in the Lettings Plan.

2.2 Allocation of Points

2.2.1 Homelessness

The local authority has a statutory responsibility for determining homelessness. Applicants who consider themselves homeless or threatened with homelessness should seek a determination from the local authority, The Association contributes towards housing people in this category by accepting Homeless Referrals.

The Association will agree a target with the local authority, annually, for the quota of lets to statutory homeless applicants.

Points will be applied in the following circumstances:

- 1. The applicant is confirmed by the Local Authority as homeless
60 POINTS**

Young Care Leavers

Applicants who are leaving care – managed through GCC Care Leavers protocol

50 POINTS

- 2. Prevention of Homelessness**

Applicant is homeless as a result of relationship break down. Supporting documentation will be required to prove these circumstances.

40 POINTS

- 3. Owners are subject to homelessness due to repossession action.**

Supporting documentation will be required to prove these circumstances.

40 POINTS

As the Association works in a limited geographical area, we may need to refer applicants who need to live out with the area to GCC Community Casework Team, to facilitate a suitable offer of accommodation.

Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions

2.2.2 Below Tolerable Standard

In recognition of Section 20(1) of the 1987 Housing (Scotland) Act as amended by the 2001 Act, the following points will be awarded where standard amenities are lacking or below tolerable standard.

Lacking Amenities

A standard number of **40 POINTS** are awarded if one or more of the following is lacking:

- Lack of inside toilet facilities, for exclusive use of the occupants.
- Lack of fixed bath or shower and wash-hand basin with satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water suitably located within the house.
- Lack of sink with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water.

Property Conditions

If one or more of these conditions exist, which adversely affect the applicant's living conditions, **40 POINTS** will be awarded in recognition of below tolerable standards:

- Structurally unstable.
- Rising or penetrating damp.
- Unsatisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting in respect of ventilation and heating.
- Inadequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house.
- Ineffective system for drainage and disposal of foul and surface water.
- Unsatisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house.
- Unsatisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.

2.2.3 Inadequate Heating

Points will be awarded to applicants whose present property does not have full central heating **15 POINTS**

2.2.4 Sharing Amenities

Sharing amenities points are awarded to applicants who do not have their own home and who have to lodge with someone or live in a hostel or house in multiple occupations (bedsit) where basic facilities are shared.

Applicants who share a living room, kitchen, toilet or bathroom with others **10 POINTS**

2.2.5 Property Due for Demolition

Where a property is due for demolition and written confirmation has been received from the landlord **40 POINTS**

2.2.6 Overcrowding

Overcrowding is a key factor in determining housing need and overcrowding points will reflect the degree of overcrowding. Overcrowding points are calculated on the basis that all rooms in a property, except the living room, bathroom, kitchen and toilet are available for use as bedrooms

Where there is a lack of adequate accommodation, the minimum standard will be:

1. One living room and one double bedroom for applicant and/or partner.
2. One double bedroom for 2 children regardless of sex under 10 years.
3. One double bedroom for 2 persons of the same sex under 16 years.
4. One single bedroom for each remaining member of the household regardless of sex, over 16 years.

A double bedroom provides two 'bed spaces', and a single bedroom provides one 'bed space'. Overcrowding points are calculated on the basis of bed spaces required compared with bed spaces available in the present accommodation. Points for each 'bed space' required **20 POINTS**

For applicants who do not already have a house of their own, the numbers of bed spaces available are taken as the number available in rooms in the present accommodation that the applicant's household has exclusive use of. Rooms used for living and sleeping will not be counted as bed spaces.

Where an applicant is expecting a child, and the birth of the child will result in overcrowding, the appropriate points will be awarded when the

application is submitted or revised. This will require confirmation by a doctor or hospital consultant.

Applicants with the same number of points will be given priority by length of time they have been overcrowded.

Points for overcrowding will not be awarded to applicants who have a legal right to occupy a property and who have allowed overcrowding to occur as a result of another household moving into their property. Points will not be awarded for one year from the date the other household moved into that accommodation.

Points for overcrowding will not be awarded to any applicant who deliberately moves into another household's accommodation causing overcrowding, for one year from the date they moved into that accommodation.

The only exception to this rule shall be where the overcrowding has been due to the birth of a child to the applicant/partner, permanent custody of a child to the applicant/partner or the formation of a family unit by marriage/cohabitation.

Tenants of the Association must seek permission from the Association before allowing lodgers into their home. Should overcrowding be caused, permission shall not be granted and if the lodgers are already resident the tenant will be found to be in breach of their tenancy agreement which will be dealt with accordingly.

2.2.7 Applicants who have suffered Harassment or Abuse or Domestic Abuse.

Points may be awarded to applicants who are or have experienced exceptional social circumstances not adequately covered under other sections of the Policy (e.g. racial or other harassment, domestic violence/abuse etc.).

Accordingly, where an applicant has experienced exceptional social circumstances the Association, where possible, will seek supporting evidence from official agencies, e.g. Police, Social Work Department, etc.

Where applicable Points will be awarded as follows:

High Priority

Where the applicant's personal safety is in danger in the present household owing to actual abuse or violence **50 POINTS**

Medium Priority

Serious harassment or severe neighbour problems (where the applicant is confirmed as not causing the problem). Documentation or evidence will be required and approved by the Housing Services Director **30 POINTS**

Low Priority

Differences in lifestyle **20 POINTS**

2.2.8 Insecure Accommodation

Points in this category can be obtained in the following ways:

Applicants who have limited security of tenure in their current accommodation will be eligible for points in this category.

Only one award of points can be made in this category.

1. Tied accommodation - where the applicant is required to vacate their home due to retiral, termination of employment (but not through intentional homelessness) **30 POINTS**
2. Personnel leaving HM Forces **30 POINTS**
3. Caravans/lodgers/sub-tenants, applicants in short term accommodation (up to 12 months lease) only where no security of tenure is applied **20 POINTS**
4. Where single applicants or couples 16 years of age who are non-householders (where there is no security of tenure) **20 POINTS**

Supporting documentation will be required to prove these circumstances, before points are awarded.

2.2.9 Health and Disability

Medical points will be awarded depending on the extent of the medical

condition and if it is related or aggravated by physical, social or environmental conditions of the present property and to the extent that the medical condition and quality of life will be eased by rehousing of the applicant.

Emergency Cases

Where the applicant or family member has a need to be rehoused due to the property being unsuitable because of the applicant or family member's **severe physical disabilities 50 POINTS**

Severe Medical Problems

Where the applicant or family member's current housing circumstances mean mobility is impaired, and this is deemed to be causing aggravation to the applicant's medical condition **30 POINTS**

Less Severe Medical Problems

Where an applicant or family member's current housing is detrimental to health **20 POINTS**

In all cases a self-assessment form will be completed and where required, supporting evidence of medical circumstances must be provided.

2.2.10 Under-Occupation

Under-occupation points are awarded to assist transfer and waiting list applicants in larger houses who wish to move to smaller houses. This also allows for the utilisation of larger properties for larger families.

Where there is under-occupation based on the household composition, the following standards will apply:

Each bedroom surplus to requirement **20 POINTS**

2.2.11 Social or Family Support

Applicants wishing to move for other reasons may be eligible for social or family support points. These points will be given to enable applicants to give or receive support to allow them to live independently

Points can be awarded for an applicant's local connection within an area, but the length of residence in the area cannot be used to influence decisions on

priorities.

Local connection will only be considered in the following categories:

Support Requirements

Applicants who have been approved for adoption, are approved for fostering or for kinship care

20 POINTS

Consideration will be given to a close relative who requires to provide support in order to sustain independent living for a tenant in the community

10 POINTS

Applicant requires to move nearer to family for social or medical reason

10 POINTS

Where an applicant requires to live in an area to access essential facilities, e.g. schools, hospitals, training centre **10 POINTS**

Where the applicant requires to provide support to a relative who lives in the Association's area of operation, or requires to live in the area to access employment **10 POINTS**

Factors that affect an applicant's ability to sustain employment. Points will be given to applicants who require to be near their place of employment where distance, transport arrangements or financial difficulties prevent ease of access **10 POINTS**

The Association will not suspend an application on the basis that there is no local connection.

2.2.12 Access to Children

Where an applicant requires a property larger than his/her needs due to access arrangements to his/her children, documentary proof will be required. This will be either a copy of a Custody or Court Order. Informal arrangements will not be sufficient.

2.2.13 Living Well

Physical Environment

This category recognises that people can be inconvenienced due to their physical environment.

Where an applicant requires amenity housing and is seeking ground floor accommodation, then the following points will be awarded:

1. Resident on 1st floor **5 POINTS**
2. Resident on 2nd floor **10 POINTS**
3. Resident on 3rd floor **15 POINTS**

Where a person cannot physically maintain a large garden **10 POINTS**

Where young children, aged 10 years and under are living at height - 4th floor (or above) **10 POINTS**

The maximum points awarded are 20 points.

Points in this category will only be awarded where no medical points have been awarded for the same reason.

Part 3

3.1 Nominations

The Association will work with other agencies to maximise and simplify access routes into our housing.

Homelessness Referrals

The Association will accept referrals of statutory homeless households for housing under section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The Association will accept referrals from GCC, and reviewed quotas will be included in the annual Lettings Plan.

3.2 Housing Waiting Lists

Housing and Transfer Lists are currently held for the Arden, Darnley and Pollok areas according to the type and size of property required, and in order of priority as determined by the allocation system. The Association carries out a rolling review of our Housing Lists so that applicants have their circumstances checked and updated routinely. The lists are reviewed annually. Applicants indicating a change of circumstances will have their application form reassessed and will be advised of their new point's level. Applicants who do not return annual review forms within the specified time period will be advised that their application is no longer on the transfer and waiting list.

3.3 Transfer List

- 3.3.1 Glen Oaks Housing Association operates a Transfer List. Tenants can apply for a transfer to another Association property provided the condition of the property vacated is suitable for immediate relet.
- 3.3.2 Transfer applications will be assessed on the basis of housing need using the same criteria and points system as all other applications. A separate Transfer List will be maintained for each operational area. The Housing Technical and H&S Sub-Committee will determine the percentage of properties available for transfer applicants and will report the annual quota in the Lettings Plan.

3.4 Mutual Exchanges

Glen Oaks Housing Association encourages mutual exchanges as they can relieve pressure on the transfer list and provide an additional opportunity to tenants to move to more suitable accommodation. They also assist in making best use of the Association's housing stock.

1. A mutual exchange occurs when two tenants exchange houses with the agreement of the Landlord(s).
2. Both parties must complete an application form for a mutual exchange to be progressed.
3. A Housing Services Officer will undertake tenancy checks on the condition of the property(s) before the exchange is approved. Any repairs identified as necessary, which have been caused by the tenant's negligence, must be completed at the tenant's expense before an exchange is approved. Poor decoration is not regarded as grounds for refusing to grant an exchange, although both tenants must be prepared to accept this.
4. The Association will process a mutual exchange application in 28 working days providing all relevant information is available.
5. Exchanges are not limited to two parties and three-way exchanges can take place.
6. The Association will maintain a register for persons seeking a mutual exchange.
7. Any tenant can seek to exchange with any other tenant in the social rented sector - www.houseexchange.org.uk
8. Any local lettings initiatives apply when mutual exchanges are being considered.
9. Mutual exchange applications will be granted in all cases where they constitute a reasonable request.

10. The following are examples of where the request for an exchange would not be considered to be reasonable and where approval is unlikely to be given:
- overcrowding would result;
 - under occupancy of more than one room would result;
 - one of the houses will be affected by works due to be carried out by the landlord, e.g. demolition;
 - the exchange would breach a local letting initiative;
 - requests for exchanges as a result of financial inducement on the part of either of the applicants (in advertisements or by any other means) or where there are grounds to believe that either party has attempted to mislead the other. Particular attention would be given to applicants who would worsen their circumstances by mutual exchange;
 - either party would be gaining access to a special needs facility (e.g. a house adapted for disabled persons) to which they are unsuited or have no need;
 - either party would be giving up a special needs facility that they require and would be moving to a less suitable house;
 - the applicant owes money to the landlord of one months rent in relation to the tenancy;
 - a “live” legal notice has been served on the applicant by the landlord.

Requests for exchanges would be considered and assessed individually on their own merits.

3.6 Special Tenancies/Special Needs

The Association has a commitment to consider the provision of housing special needs groups.

The Association will consider referrals from recognised organisations as approved by the Housing, Technical and H&S Sub-Committee.

These referrals would be for supported accommodation for people with special needs and operate outwith the general Allocations Policy.

Applicants would normally be accepted from approved specialist agencies with the nominating agency expected to provide details of support to be offered to the applicant.

We will also accept referrals from the Homelessness Partnership in respect of applicants who have significant physical disability and who require specialist wheelchair/amenity housing.

Where a current tenant requires a medical adaption the Association will require an occupational therapists report to identify the suitability of the accommodation to be adapted and any additional needs the applicant may have

Special lets made available to registered groups will be subject to regular review by the Housing, Technical and H&S Sub-Committee.