

# ALLOCATIONS POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2024



**LANARKSHIRE**  
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD



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## **ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

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(\*Note Lanarkshire Housing Association hereinafter referred to as LHA)

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## **ALLOCATION POLICY**

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### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This policy sets out the standards and general guidance that Lanarkshire Housing Association (LHA) follows to ensure that:

- There is a fair and open access to our housing and assessment process
- Our properties are allocated in a way that give reasonable preference to those most in housing need
- We make best use of our housing stock
- We contribute to the provision of balanced and sustainable communities

This policy complies with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and is supported by a range of detailed procedures covering the initial assessment, succession, mutual exchanges and tenancy transfer etc.

### **2.0 SCOPE**

This policy covers the rights of LHA tenants, recipients of a service from LHA, our employees and anyone who delivers a service on our behalf.

### **3.0 GENERAL**

Our overall aim is to address housing need in the areas we operate. This policy sets out how we do this and the way that we decide on housing priorities. In doing this we take account of local Lanarkshire pressures, whilst also complying with relevant legislation and guidance. Our policy also enables us to fulfil our duty to publish the methods of allocation that we use.

#### **3.1 Aims and Objectives**

Our specific policy objectives include working with Local Authorities and other partners through a Common Housing Register (CHR) system to allocate housing in a way that:

- Gives preference to applicants in greatest housing need
- Positively contributes to the prevention and resolution of homelessness
- Simplifies access to housing and maximises housing choice

- Addresses changing housing and support needs
- Strives to create balanced and sustainable communities
- Is transparent and accountable

Our Allocations Policy also contributes to the achievement of several key strategic housing outcomes of the North Lanarkshire Council Local Housing Strategy 2021-2026.

Specifically: -

- Outcome 2: Our communities are vibrant, attractive, and sustainable
- Outcome 3: We prevent and resolve homelessness effectively
- Outcome 4: We have a range of housing options and supports which promote independence, health, and wellbeing
- Strategic Housing Outcome 7: We contribute to improving the quality and accessibility of the private rented sector.

### 3.2 The Scottish Housing Social Charter (the Charter)

- Equality - Outcome 1: Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing services
- Communication - Outcome 2: 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
- Participation - Outcome 3: Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with
- Housing options - Outcome 7: People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them
- Outcome 8: Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options
- Outcome 9: People at risk of losing their home get advice on preventing homelessness
- Tenancy sustainment - Outcome 11: 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

- Homeless people - Outcome 12: Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice, are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

### 3.3 Legislation and Best Practice

This policy recognises the best-practice information that the Housing Regulator, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, the Chartered Institute of Housing, Housemark and the Scottish Housing Network have produced/shared. By following this best-practice information, we have made sure we have created a policy that is fair. It also meets the legal requirements of the following laws.

- Equality Act 2010
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: The Scottish Government Practice Guide, (February 2019)
- The Civil Partnerships Act 2005
- The Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Access to Personal Information (Housing) (Scotland) Regulations 1993
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- The Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975

### 3.4 Equality and Human Rights

These concepts have been embedded into our policy, to ensure compliance with relevant equality and human rights duties. We promote equal opportunities in the allocation of our properties, avoid discrimination on any grounds (including the Protected Characteristics) and assist in the protection of people's rights to adequate housing.

We will provide all information in relation to this policy in accessible formats, with translation and interpreting services available on request.

### 3.5 Holding Applicants Information

When an applicant signs a Common Housing Register (CHR) application they agree to their information being held and used for the purpose of administering their housing application and tenancy. As part of this process, we will always comply with data protection legislation and are fully committed to the secure and safe management of data held by us.

## 4.0 APPLYING FOR HOUSING

### 4.1 Who can apply for housing?

If you are aged 16 or over, you have the right to apply for housing and have your housing needs properly assessed. We will never tell you not to apply for housing. However, it is important to remember that applying does not mean we will offer you housing.

We will give you advice about your housing options and your chances of being offered housing.

### 4.2 How to apply

You can apply for housing in a number of different ways:

- By sending us an application form you must do this even if you are already our tenant and you are applying to transfer to another property
- You can get a housing application form from our office. You can ask for a form, contact us by phone, in writing or by e-mail and we will arrange for a form to be posted to you. You can also access application forms for North and South Lanarkshire on our website at [www.lanarkshireha.com](http://www.lanarkshireha.com)
- The application form asks for your personal information and asks about your current housing situation, as well as where you would like to live and what type of housing you want to live in (such as a house with a garden or a flat).

- If you need help completing the form or need parts of the form translated into a different language or format, please let us know when you contact us
- Mutual exchanges - If you rent your home from us, another local authority or a registered social landlord and you would like to swap with another tenant from any of these landlords, you can apply to exchange your home. The process of swapping your home with another tenant is called Mutual Exchange. If you would be interested in moving house through this process, please contact us and we will discuss in more detail with you
- Referrals - We work with other services and agencies such as social work and health services, to make sure that housing needs are linked to your wider needs (for example, if moving would benefit your health or if it would improve your situation as a result of your health). Other agencies and Council services sometimes refer people to us for housing.

#### 4.3 What we do not take account of when applying for Housing

We will not take account of any of the following when we allocate our housing:

- Whether you live in the area you want housing in
- The length of time you have lived in the area
- Any debts that are not related to your current or former tenancy (Council or registered social landlord tenancies)
- Any debts you have already repaid
- Debts related to your tenancy if: they are less than one-twelfth of the yearly amount of rent you pay; or you have already arranged a repayment plan and kept to it for at least three months and you are keeping to the repayment plan
- You and your family's income (including any benefits you receive).
- The value of any property you or your family own
- Your age, as long as you are over the age of 16 and the home you want to move to has not been designed or adapted for elderly people to live in.

#### 4.4 References

When you apply, we will ask you for the contact details of any landlords you have had over the past five years. We will contact your current or former landlord/s before we offer you a property and ask them to complete a tenancy reference form.

If your landlord tells us, you owe them rent, have behaved antisocially, or have broken your tenancy agreement with them we may suspend you from our housing list.

#### 4.5 Supporting information

For us to properly assess your housing circumstances, we will need proof of your current circumstances. Where appropriate and possible we will request confirmation of your circumstances direct from the third party who can provide this, however sometimes we may ask you to supply this information.

We understand that sometimes the information we need may be personal and sensitive.

Circumstances	Evidence required
Whatever your circumstances	Two forms of identity. For example, we will accept a driving license, a passport, an ID card that you were given when you started your job or your National Insurance card. If you do not have any of these but you have a different form of ID, please contact us to see if we can accept it.
If you are homeless or could soon become homeless	None - NLC will assess you through their homeless assessment to see if you meet the unintentionally homeless criteria as described in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended
If you are leaving the armed forces or have been issued with legal documents to leave your current accommodation within two months	You will need to provide your discharge papers, a valid AT6 or other legal document confirming your date to leave. When providing this information, it must be the original documentation that is provided as copies of documents will not be accepted.
If you need rehousing because your health is affected by your current housing	You will need to complete a health and housing needs form which will be assessed. If more information is required about your health, then we may contact your GP, consultant, other medical advisor or other people who may have information about your circumstances. We will only do this with your permission.
If you need a bigger home because you have access to your child, and they want to stay overnight	The birth certificate of the child/children you have access to and a letter from your child's other parent, or a letter from a lawyer explaining your access rights to your child or children



You need to be near services you need	A letter from the service you use, such as a school or medical centre, explaining your reason for moving and that you need to live near this service
If you need to provide or receive support.	A letter from the person receiving or providing support, explaining your reason for moving and that you need to be near them.
If you need to be closer to your place of work.	A letter from your employer explaining your reason for moving and that you need to be near your place of work

#### 4.6 Keeping Applicants Informed

After applying, we will ensure that applicants are kept informed about what happens next. To do this, we will process applications as quickly as possible and inform you of your individual reference number.

### 5.0 THE COMMON HOUSING REGISTER (CHR)

We are partners in the North Lanarkshire CHR Register which has been developed with other registered social landlords in the North Lanarkshire area. By doing this, we have tried to make it easier for you to apply for housing in North Lanarkshire and to make sure all partners give you good, accurate advice and information about your housing options.

Partners in the CHR use the same point framework, which means regardless of where you apply your application will be assessed and given the same points meaning only one landlord needs to carry out a full assessment of your application and housing needs.

In South Lanarkshire, LHA is not a HomeFinder partner. We have a small number of properties in this area and a 100% nomination agreement in place with them.

#### 5.1 Where you want to live

We will try to match you with a home in the area you want. When you apply, you should choose as many areas as you are interested in. This may increase your chances of being offered housing. When you apply for housing, we will give you advice about the priority we have given you and your chances of being housed in your preferred areas.

You may change your choice of area or type of housing you have asked for if you want to. If you want to change your choices, you can contact us by phone, letter or in person and ask them to make the change to your application. Once the change has been processed we will confirm the changes that have been made.

If we offer you housing in areas that you told us you were interested in and you refuse two offers, we will suspend your application for three months. Therefore, it is important that you make sure that you think carefully about your choices.

You may be awarded a higher level of priority points because:

- You are currently covered by an agreed protocol
- Your current property is being demolished
- You have discharge papers to leave the armed forces or have been issued with legal documents to leave your accommodation within two months
- You are subject to domestic abuse.

## 5.2 Type of housing

Normally, you can choose whatever type of house you want (such as a house or a flat), but some kinds of housing are designed for a particular group of people. For example, housing for elderly people or suitable ground floor properties for people with mobility problems (who have been assessed and awarded points through our health and housing support needs process).

If you need to move house because of a health reason, we may limit the types of housing that we offer you, so that the housing we offer you meets your health needs. You would only receive priority for moving to a property that meets your needs. We will not offer you housing that might make your housing situation worse.

## 5.3 Size of Housing

We try to make the best use of the housing available. You will be eligible for a particular size of house based on the size of your household. We will calculate your house size based on the following rules.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS
Single Person	1
Couple	1
Single parent or couple with one child	2
Single parent or couple with two children of the same sex (under 16)	2
Single parent or couple with two children under 16 but there is more than six years age difference between them	3
Single parent or couple with one or both children aged 16 or over	3
Single parent or couple with two children of the opposite sex under eight	2
Single parent or couple with two children, if one or both children are age eight or over and there is more than six years age difference between them	3
Single parent or couple with three children and two children are able to share a room (based on above)	3

Single parent or couple with three children and no children are able to share a room	4
Single parent or couple with four children and all children are able to share a room	3
Single parent or couple with four children and two children are able to share a room	4
Single parent or couple with four children and no children are able to share a room	5

#### 5.4 Local Letting Initiatives

In specific circumstances of low demand and/or high turnover, we may consider operating Local Letting Initiatives. It will be ensured that these are time limited with clear outcomes and where possible, allocations will still be made to applicants with the most priority, in accordance with our Allocations Policy.

When developing these initiatives, we may consider allowing under-occupation, letting to lower point levels, advertising & appropriate marketing techniques, as well as the offering of incentives.

## 6.0 APPLICATION PRIORITIES

Our policy for allocating housing is in line with the North Lanarkshire Common Housing Register which operates a 'groups and points' system. This means that when you apply for housing your application be put into one of three groups

- Homeless
- Transfer
- General

You will receive a certain number of points, depending on your housing circumstances.

We have quotas in place for each of the housing groups, these quotas are reviewed annually. This enables us to balance the differing housing needs of applicants.

6.1 Homeless Persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs

6.2 This group includes people who have applied for housing through a homeless assessment process, and it has been decided they are unintentionally homeless (homeless through no fault of their own) and that they need housing urgently. Assessment of all the above criteria will be conducted by North Lanarkshire Council as they have a statutory duty to homeless applicants.

### 6.3 Abuse and harassment

If you or a member of your household are being abused or harassed and it means you cannot stay in your home, you can apply to NLC for a homeless assessment. We will give you the help you need to do this (for example, we could put you in touch with independent support agencies) but we do understand that you may not want to apply through our homeless assessment process.

If you are being harassed or abused but do not want to go through a homeless assessment, there are separate procedures for assessing your needs. Our staff know and will be sensitive when they use these procedures to assess your housing needs as a result of this abuse.

### 6.4 Domestic Abuse

We also recognise that if you are subject to domestic abuse, it is important you are removed from this situation as quickly as possible. Because of this, we will make sure that you have as many options as possible for rehousing and that you are recorded on our waiting lists for as many types of housing and areas of housing as would be suitable for you.

We will treat women and men equally, whether they are in same-sex or opposite sex couples.

### 6.5 Applicants leaving the armed forces

If you apply for housing with us because you are leaving the armed forces and you are losing your accommodation, we will prioritise your application using the criteria set out in our framework on awarding points. When you receive your discharge papers, you should give us a copy of these along with your application for housing and any other evidence that we would need to allow us to assess your level of housing need.

If you are losing your accommodation within two months, we will award a higher level of priority points due to the urgency of your situation. However, in these circumstances we will not allow you to be unnecessarily restrictive in the type of housing or areas you request.

### 6.6 Transfer Applicants

Applicants who are currently LHA tenants are defined as Transfer Applicants within this policy. If you are an existing tenant, you can apply for a transfer at any time

We recognise that existing tenants' circumstances can change and you may wish or need to move to a more suitable property.

We will evaluate your housing need and aspirations in the same way that we assess applications from applicants who are not our tenants.

## 6.7 Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions and Unmet Housing Needs

This includes everyone who has not applied or who does not qualify to be included on the homeless list and who is not looking for a transfer. For example, this group could include people living in accommodation that is below tolerable standards, overcrowded conditions and people subject to harassment and abuse.

## 6.8 Exceptional Circumstances

We understand that our allocation policy cannot cover all of the circumstances that may lead to you wanting or needing to move home. You may have exceptional circumstances which we have not mentioned or included in this policy. In these circumstances, any offer of housing would be subject to approval by the Housing Services Director or Chief Executive. If we are unable to meet your needs, we will liaise closely with North Lanarkshire Council to try and achieve an appropriate solution.

## 6.9 Emergency Situations

These may sometimes occur, particularly in cases of fire or flood. In such instances, due to the urgency of the situation, we may not use our normal housing needs assessment. Authorisation in these cases will be required from the Housing Services Director.

## 7.0 THE POINTS

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

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

These categories consider the reasonable preference criteria set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended.

Category	Points Award
<b>If your housing situation is unsettled (Insecure Housing)</b>	
If your current property is being demolished	150
If you have a definite date to lose your accommodation within two months. (For example, you have discharge papers to leave the armed forces or have been issued with legal documents to leave your accommodation within two months (for example, AT6 or Eviction Notice)	150
If you do not have any accommodation available for you or if you are living in temporary housing, but you are not applying as homeless, or you have been awarded an intentionally homeless decision in terms of a homeless application you have made.	80
If you have to move out of your current accommodation within two months.	80
If you are living with people who are not going to be part of your household when you move.	30
If your housing situation is unsettled for any other reason.	10
<b>You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'Insecure housing' section.</b>	
<b>If you have already been given priority points though an agreed protocol</b>	
If you have been assessed by NLC and accepted through an agreed council protocol. (A protocol means set of rules that we and other organisations that provide support or a service for a particular group of people have agreed to follow).	150
<b>You will only receive one 'set' of points in the 'Insecure housing' section.</b>	
If you or a member of your household are being abused or harassed	
If you, or a member of your household are subject to domestic abuse or are being abused or harassed.	150
If you, or a member of your household, are being abused or harassed by people who do not live in your home (supporting information may be requested).	50
<b>If you are moving for health reasons</b>	
If you have an urgent health reason to move (for example, if you cannot leave hospital because your current property is no longer suitable for you, and it would be dangerous if you returned home).	90
If you have a serious health reason to move (for example if you cannot get to the bathroom in your property and it would not be practical for the property to be adapted).	40
If you have any other health reason to move.	10
<b>You will only receive one 'set' of points in the health section</b>	
<b>If your home has too many or too few people in it (Over or under occupancy) Points will be calculated based on the number of bedrooms (and size) and the number of people who can share. Overcrowding will not be award if it is the caused by temporary household member who will not form part of the household when you move</b>	

If there are too many people living permanently or for most of the week in your home.	50 for the first extra room you need and 10 for every other bedroom you need
If you have access to children who stay in your home overnight on a regular basis and you need extra rooms.	50
If you are overcrowded and because of this, children of the opposite sex have to share a room.	10
If there are too few people living in your home. (This only applies to council and registered social landlord tenants).	40
<b>You can receive more than one 'set' of points in the over and underoccupancy section</b>	
<b>If your home is not suitable for you to live in</b>	
If your property is significantly below the tolerable standard. (This means it falls below the standards set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended and is not in a good enough condition for you to live in (for example, if your property has no hot or cold running water, mains electricity or it is structurally unstable	50
If your family have previously lived together but now have to live apart (for example if you do not have any housing available which is large enough for you all and you have to live in different homes).	20
<b>You can receive more than one 'set' of points in the Unsuitable Housing section</b>	
<b>If you have a social reason for moving</b>	
If you want to transfer to another home (this only applies to our tenants on the transfer lists)	20
If you want to move to give or receive support	10
If you want to move to access essential services that you need	10
If you are moving to enable you to get to your place of work.	10
<b>You can receive more than one 'set' of points in the Social Reasons section</b>	

## 8.0 HOW WE ALLOCATE OUR PROPERTIES

When allocating properties, we will first determine which group the property should be offered to. We have detailed procedures to follow when they decide which group to offer a property to. This helps us to make sure that all our groups have equal access to different types of property.

We will then identify all of the applicants in this group whose needs and preferences match the property. We would then offer the property to the person with the most points. There are some exceptions to this to ensure that we make the best use of our stock.

To ensure the consistent application of the policy all allocations are verified by the Housing Manager before progressing to the next stage.

As part of the verification process, we will normally request references from your current or previous landlords, however we will only do this with your consent to ensure that we are complying with the current Data Protection rules.

We will not make you an offer of housing unless we are satisfied with the references received. If the references are unsatisfactory, then your application may be suspended as outlined in our suspension criteria.

### 8.1 Bypassing

In certain instances, we may bypass an applicant (deciding not to make an offer to the person at the top of the list) to make best use of the available housing stock. These will only be carried out in specific circumstances e.g.

- Where the property concerned is unsuitable, such as ground floor accessible or adapted and the applicant does not need these features
- Our records indicate that the applicant has already refused similar and confirmed that they are not interested in receiving a similar offer

Where bypassing is used it will be approved by the Housing Manager and records retained that outline the reason for the bypass and confirm that delegated authority consent was granted. This will allow effective monitoring of the process and ensure there is no systematic disadvantage of particular groups.

### 8.2 Protocol Arrangements

A number of protocol arrangements are in place to ensure that groups of applicants with particular housing needs (such as people leaving hospital after a long stay or young people leaving care) have these adequately addressed, with the required support in place.

Applicants, subject to protocol arrangements, will be assessed by the Local Authority.

### 8.3 Home Visits

Once we have decided who to offer the property to, we will normally contact the successful applicant to arrange to visit that person at home. We will do this to:

- check the information they gave on their application form is still correct



- provide information and advice about the allocation process, the conditions of their new tenancy (their responsibilities as a tenant and, if you are already one of our tenants, we will carry out a tenancy inspection and give advice on how to end your existing tenancy).

#### 8.4 Getting an offer of Housing

When we have matched you to a property, we will write to you to tell you this. The letter will set out clear, practical and reasonable steps for you to follow to arrange to view the property when it is available. We will also include information about rent and how to apply for assistance with housing costs.

We will also contact you to tell you about the offer. If you do not respond within three working days, we will assume you are not interested in the property, and we will withdraw the offer.

#### 8.5 Accepting an offer of Housing

After viewing the property, we have offered you, we will ask you to tell us within 24 hours if you are going to accept our offer.

If you accept our offer, we will arrange for you to sign you up. If you made a joint application, you would have a joint tenancy. All joint tenants must be present when you sign your tenancy agreement.

We will give you advice, information, and support throughout the process of applying for, viewing and accepting the property and becoming our tenant. We will clearly explain your rights and responsibilities under the tenancy agreement before you sign it.

#### 8.6 Applicant with pets

When we are considering an applicant for developments designated as 'no pets allowed', we will first make them aware of the requirement prior to the offer being made. Where the applicant has a pet, this will not be regarded as a reasonable offer in relation to the number of offers allowed.

#### 8.7 Refusing an offer of Housing

If you refuse one housing offer, we will not suspend you from our list, but we will discuss with you your reasons for refusal and review your application.

However, if you refuse two offers, we will suspend you from our housing list for three months from the date you refused our second offer. We will use this time to discuss your housing options.

In certain circumstances we may not suspend you from our housing list for refusing offers if, for example, you did not accept the offer because of your health, your circumstances changed, or you recently suffered a bereavement.

## **9.0 MANAGING THE HOUSING LIST**

### **9.1 Review of the Housing List**

To ensure that our housing lists remain up to date we check that applicants wish to remain on our list and that their circumstances are unchanged. Where there has been a change in circumstances, we will make the necessary amendments and issue an updated points award letter.

When we write to you to ask for an update, we will tell you clearly about what will happen if you do not respond. If we do remove you from the list, we will let you know in writing. If you respond within three months of being removed from the list, we will reassess you and put you back on our housing list with the appropriate points and time in need date (depending on your circumstances at the time you send us your updated details).

### **9.2 Suspension from the Housing List**

In certain circumstances we may suspend you from the housing list (reasons listed below), this means that you will not receive any offers of housing until the relevant changes have been made. Suspensions will be reviewed following a specific period of time.

If you owe your current or former landlord rent, or service charges or money for repairs to your property because of damage you caused while you were the tenant, we may suspend your application from our housing list unless:

- you have paid what you owe in full
- you owe less than or equal to one-twelfth of the yearly rent you pay
- you have arranged to pay what you owe and have kept to that arrangement for at least the last three months, and you are still keeping to this arrangement
- If you do owe rent or other charges, we may suspend your application until you meet the conditions above
- If you have behaved anti-socially
- We may suspend your application from the housing list if you, or anyone in your household have been evicted for anti-social behaviour

- If you or a member of your household have behaved anti-socially and have reached a 'Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession' stage of our antisocial behaviour procedure
- have been given an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) that is currently in force
- are waiting for a court decision on whether you will be given an ASBO
- have had a 'Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession' served on you because you have broken the conditions of your tenancy.

Anti-social behaviour includes violence, verbal abuse, harassment, vandalism, noise disturbance, arson, carrying an offensive weapon (such as a knife) or using or selling illegal drugs. We will consider each case of anti-social behaviour on an individual basis.

We will be fair when we look at whether we will suspend you. If we do suspend you, we will usually do so for six months. After this time, we will review your suspension and consider whether you will be able to keep to the conditions of your tenancy if we make you a housing offer. If we need to or if we think it is appropriate, we will help you keep to the conditions of your current tenancy by assisting you to access support. For example, we might put you in touch with an independent organisation who will give you support or assistance that you may need

If you are in breach of your current tenancy agreement, we may suspend you from the housing list until you meet the conditions of your tenancy.

If you provide false or misleading information on your application, we will usually suspend you from our housing list for six months, but we will consider your case on an individual basis.

If we give you housing as a result of information on your application that is false or misleading, we may take action to repossess the property.

If you do not give us the information we need to process your application or carry out a review, we may suspend your application until you give us the information we need. We will write to you asking for this information.

If you are an asylum seeker or are under immigration control, you can still apply for housing, but we cannot offer you permanent housing if you are still under immigration control.

If you are violent or aggressive towards our staff, we will suspend you from our housing list for at least six months or until we have reviewed your application, and it has been agreed we should lift the suspension.

If you are in prison - We will suspend your application while you are in prison as you will not be able to accept any offers.

This suspension will be removed in line with the Prison Discharge Protocol so that we can consider your application nearer the time of your release.

If you refuse two reasonable offers of housing, we will normally suspend you for three months. The suspension will apply from the date that you refused our second offer of housing. We will use this time to explore your housing needs, preferences, and options in more detail

You can also choose to have your application suspended voluntarily, for example, if you want to suspend your application until you are actually in need of rehousing, for example if you move to work abroad for a period of time. You can do this in writing or by speaking to us.

### 9.3 Removal from the Housing List

On occasion we may remove applicants from our housing list, the reasons for removal are outlined below

- If you ask to be removed from the list. You can do this in writing or by speaking to us. If you speak to us, we will confirm your request in writing and send it to you
- If you die
- If you do not respond when we ask you to send us your updated details
- You have been successfully housed

## 10.0 THE ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The role of the Management Committee is to set the Allocations Policy and monitor the progress and achievement of policy aims.

Although the Management Committee has overall responsibility for ensuring the policy is delivered, it is not involved in discussions or decisions on individual allocations, which are the responsibility of our Officers.

### 10.1 Delegated Authority

The Housing Manager is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Allocations Policy (or the Housing Services Director in their absence) and ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place to enable the day-to-day management in accordance with this policy, with further delegation of specific duties to Operations Staff.

Individual allocations will be authorised by the Housing Manager (or the Housing Services Director in their absence) with approval recorded, in accordance with our internal audit requirements.

Appeals, suspensions, bypassing, sensitive allocations and deviations from our normal housing needs assessment because of emergency situations are the responsibility of the Housing Manager (or Housing Services Director in their absence) and a record of this approval will be retained for audit purposes.

Regular reports are provided by the Housing Manager or Housing Services Director to the Housing Services Sub-Committee on the operation of all key aspects, to allow Committee to effectively monitor performance of the Allocations Policy.

#### 10.2. Allocations to Employees and Committee Members

Anyone can apply for housing, this includes our staff, Committee members or a relevant party. We will not give you preference over anyone else. Any offers of housing will be subject to approval by the Housing Services Director or Chief Executive.

Our Payments and Benefits Policy defines a 'Relevant Party' more widely and should be referred to in circumstances such as these.

### 11.0 CONSULTATION

We adopt a customer centered approach to all our activities and promote our Allocation Policy through various means. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult with applicants, tenants and external partners and stakeholders.

We will report the outcome of the consultation to the Management Committee.

### 12.0 APPEALS

Applicants will be made aware that if they are unhappy about a decision relating to their housing application or a decision to suspend their application, they have an opportunity to request an Appeal. Information on the appeals process will be included in tenancy and allocation guides.

Appeals will be considered by a senior member of staff who was not involved in the original assessment. The Housing Services Director or Chief Executive will oversee the process, with the outcome notified to applicants within 28 days of the request.

### 13.0 COMPLAINTS

Anyone wishing to make a formal complaint about the services provided should do so as per our complaint's procedure.

## **14.0 MONITORING AND REPORTING**

We will monitor the effectiveness of the Allocations Policy in achieving its objectives and provide regular reports to the Housing Services Sub-Committee.

In addition to the objectives and aims detailed within this policy, performance will also be measured and assessed against targets for the following key areas:

- Nomination Arrangements
- Relet timescales
- Void loss
- Analysis of applicants housed
- Equality monitoring
- Suspensions
- Requests for Appeals

We will review our policy every three years, unless specific circumstances relating to legislation or good practice require otherwise.

## **15.0 PUBLICISING & AVAILABILITY**

This policy is available on the LHA website. Copies are available free of charge. A summary of this policy can be made available in other formats and languages.

## **16.0 DATA PROTECTION AND GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)**

We take the issue of security and data protection very seriously and strictly adhere to guidelines published in the Data Protection Act of 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 which is applicable from the 25 May 2018, together with any domestic laws subsequently enacted.

We are notified as a Data Controller with the Office of the Information Commissioner, and we are the data controller of any personal data that you provide to us.

Any questions relating to our privacy practices should be sent to [enquiries@lanarkshireha.com](mailto:enquiries@lanarkshireha.com) or telephone 01689 269119.

## **17.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCECURES**

This policy also relates to:

- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Tenancy Management Policy and Procedures
- Allocation Procedures
- Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedures
- Recharge Policy and Procedures

## **18.0 POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislative or best practice changes require it.

## Lanarkshire Housing Association Equality Impact Assessment Tool



Name of the <b>policy / proposal</b> to be assessed	Allocations Policy	Is this a <b>new policy / proposal or a revision?</b>	Review
Person(s) responsible for the assessment	Liz White		
1. Briefly describe the <b>aims, objectives and purpose</b> of the policy / proposal	<p>This policy will ensure that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a fair and open access to our housing and assessment process</li> <li>Our properties are allocated in a way that give reasonable preference to those most in housing need</li> <li>We make best use of our housing stock</li> <li>We contribute to the provision of balanced and sustainable communities</li> <li>Is transparent and accountable</li> <li>Complies with our legislative requirements and good practice.</li> </ul>		
2. <b>Who is intended to benefit</b> from the policy / proposal? ( <i>e.g. applicants, tenants, staff, contractors</i> )	This policy covers the rights of LHA tenants, housing applicants and recipients of a service from LHA		



<p><b>3. What <b>outcomes</b> are <b>wanted</b> from this policy / proposal ? (e.g. <i>the benefits to customers</i>)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our allocation processes are fair and open and meet our legal and statutory obligations.</li> <li>• Our properties are allocated in a way that give reasonable preference to those most in housing need</li> <li>• We make best use of our housing stock</li> <li>• Our communities are balanced and sustainable</li> <li>• We meet our legal and regulatory requirements</li> <li>• Streamlined and simplified application process.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>4. Which <b>protected characteristics</b> could be <b>affected</b> by the proposal? (<i>tick all that apply</i>)</b></p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Age   X        <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability        X        Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership   X        <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy/Maternity        X        Race  X  Religion or Belief        X        Sex        X        Gender Reassignment        X        Sexual Orientation   X </p>	
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<p><b>5. If the policy / proposal is not relevant to any of the <b>protected characteristics</b> listed in part 4, state why and end the process here.</b></p> <p>n/a</p>
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	Positive impact(s)	Negative impact(s)
<p><b>6. Describe the <b>likely positive or negative impact(s)</b> the policy / proposal could have on the groups identified in part 4</b></p>	<p>Streamlined application process – quicker processing times  Consistent housing options advice across NLC</p>	

7. What **actions** are **required** to address the impacts arising from this assessment? *(This might include collecting additional data, putting monitoring in place, specific actions to mitigate negative impacts).*

- Supporting procedures require.
- Training on new policy and procedures.
- Improved Monitoring.

Signed: 

Housing Services Director 23/8/2024

Date the Equality Impact Assessment was completed:

***Please attach the completed document as an appendix to your policy / proposal report***