



**Drumchapel  
Housing**

Co-operative Limited

**Choice Based Letting  
Allocations policy**

Approved by Board  
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## 1. Background

Registered Social Landlords (RSL'S) in the North West of Glasgow have been working closely with Glasgow City Council in order to set up a Common Housing Register or Glasgow Housing Register (GHR).

The GHR is a computer based single housing list which participating social landlords use to register applicants for housing. It is designed to make it easier and quicker for applicants to apply for housing by completing only one application form.

The GHR participating RSLs are listed in Appendix 1 and it is proposed in the future to extend the GHR to other areas in Glasgow.

The Co-operative operates a choice based letting allocations policy which provides choice to applicants on the areas they choose to live.

## 2. Purpose of Choice Based Letting, Allocation Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone who applies for housing is treated fairly, consistently and with respect. This policy is based on the following principles:

- Fairness and accountability
- Equality, openness and transparency
- Confidentiality
- Consistency of decision making.

This policy sets out:

- How to apply for housing;
- How an application for housing will be assessed based on housing need; and
- How homes are allocated to meet the needs of housing applicants

The Local Housing Strategy for Drumchapel has been considered when writing this policy and guidance from the Scottish Government on allocations. The following links below provide some of the guidance reviewed:

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4584&p=0>

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2011/03/social-housing-allocations-a-practice-guide/documents/98f7cbb2-8894-43af-8d1a-ad4d86047915/98f7cbb2-8894-43af-8d1a-ad4d86047915/govscot%3Adocument>

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/social-housing/housing-management/>

This policy is supplemented by working procedures which will be used by staff in implementing the policy.

### 3. Policy Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To meet all relevant legal and good practice standards, for example, addressing the specific housing needs of groups set out in housing law.
- To contribute to the regeneration of Drumchapel through the provision of quality housing services at affordable rent levels which will meet the changing needs and aspirations of our customers.
- To operate a policy that is easily understood and simple to administer.
- To maximise opportunities by offering applicants comprehensive advice and information concerning their housing options.
- To avoid discrimination on grounds covered in our equality & diversity policy:
  - Age
  - Disability
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity

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- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender (referred to as “sex” in the Act)
- gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation

The Co-operative will not tolerate any sort of unfair treatment or discrimination on any grounds. In addition to the above, therefore, our zero tolerance will be broadened (but not confined) to the following:

- National origin
- Cultural background
- Ethnic origin
- Tenure
- Issues related to literacy or numeracy
- Employment status
- Domestic circumstances

Each of the above is equally important, and we will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no discrimination, whether deliberate or inadvertent, occurs.

- To establish new tenancies that are successful and sustainable.
- To process personal information confidentially to meet relevant legal obligations.
- To make best use of the housing stock and ensure a balanced community.
- To form partnerships with other housing providers to address housing need.
- To respect at all times the human rights of applicants and in particular their right in respect for a private and family life.
- To maximise income by letting empty houses quickly in accordance with timescales.
- To deal with appeals and complaints fairly and in accordance with timescales.
- To assess if policy objectives are met through our audit and performance management system.
- To review the policy every three years.

## 4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

### 4.1 Legal Framework

This policy complies with and takes account of legislative requirements. Some of these are as follows:

- Housing (Scotland) Acts – 1987; 2001; 2006 & 2010
- Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (“the GDPR”); any legislation that, in respect of the United Kingdom, replaces, or enacts into United Kingdom domestic law, the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the proposed Regulation on Privacy and Electronic Communications or any other law relating to data protection, the processing of personal data and privacy as a consequence of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981.
- Civil Partnerships Act 2004.

### 4.2. Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) & Scottish Social Housing Charter

The SHR was set up to operate as an independent regulator who is directly accountable to the Scottish Parliament.

The SHR monitors, assesses, compares and reports on social landlords’ performance of housing activities. It requires landlords to collect and provide key information on their performance in relation to achieving the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) outcomes and standards.

The following SSHC outcomes and standards are directly relevant to this choice based lettings, allocation policy:

#### **Charter Outcome 1 – Equalities**

‘Every tenant and other customer have their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services’.

## **Charter Outcome 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’.

## **Charter Outcome 4 - Quality of housing**

‘Tenants’ homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair’.

## **Charter Outcome 7, 8 and 9 - Housing Options**

‘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’.

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

## **Charter Outcome 10 - Access to Social Housing**

‘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 on their prospects for being housed’.

## **Charter Outcome - 11 Tenancy Sustainment**

‘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’.

### **4.3. Code of Conduct / Applications from staff or Board members**

As Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), we have adopted and comply with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations two models of Code of Conduct for Governing Body and staff members.

The codes were developed to provide RSLs with models they could adopt to uphold and promote the standards of behaviour and conduct expected of governing body members and staff and also support RSLs to meet our regulatory standards.

The SHR also monitors RSLs to ensure no-one receives any special treatment as a result of their connection with an RSL.

We may grant a tenancy to employees, Board members, former employees, former board members and close relatives of these. This, however, is provided the allocation has been dealt with in accordance with policy and that the person has not been involved in or any influence over the process by which the Co-operative allocated the tenancy.

## 5. Allocation Law

The purpose of this section is to explain some of the main legal provisions/rules for housing applicants. These rules cover the following matters:

- Access to the housing register
- Groups that are to be given reasonable preference when letting houses
- Factors that must be disregarded when letting houses
- Information
- Publicity
- Access to personal information

### 5.1 Access to the Housing Register

Any person who is **sixteen years** or more may apply to our housing waiting list which is the Glasgow Housing Register. **This is not, however, an automatic right to receive offers of housing.** Section 6 explains how we process and prioritise applications in line with the law and good practice.

### 5.2 Asylum Seekers and Refugees

People subject to immigration control must declare this when completing their application. Eligibility for housing will require to be assessed in terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 and asylum and immigration legislation. People may remain on the housing list but will be asked to provide evidence of their immigration status before we can confirm if they are eligible for an offer of housing.

### 5.3 Mutual Exchanges

Scottish Secure Tenants have a legal right to exchange their homes with other Scottish Secure Tenants. Landlords can only refuse permission if it is reasonable to do so. The Co-operative operates a separate tenancy changes policy.

## 5.4 Reasonable Preference Groups

The law requires us to give reasonable preference to certain groups when letting houses. The groups to which we must give reasonable preference when letting houses are:

- Homeless people and those threatened with homelessness
- People who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- People living in housing below the statutory tolerable standard
- People living in overcrowded houses or large families
- People living in under-occupied properties from 1 May 2019

## 5.5 Factors not taken into account when allocating housing

- Length of time applicants have lived in the area
- Housing debt relating to a tenancy for which the applicant was not the tenant
- Housing debt now repaid
- Any non-housing debt such as council tax
- Age of applicants unless under the age of 16 or we have specifically designed or adapted a property for people of a certain age
- Applicants income or property, including income or property owned by other household members
- Housing debt outstanding: Less than the equivalent of one month's rent charge is not taken into account

Over one month's rent outstanding:

- Applicants must make a suitable repayment arrangement
- Make payments for at least 3 months
- Continue to make payments

## 5.6. Information

We can make available a summary of this policy. Applicants can also obtain a full copy on request.

The summary and full copy are provided free of charge and can be made available in alternative formats.

## 5.7. Publicity

We must publish details in a variety of formats of how we assess priority. We can facilitate this by Happy to Translate, Global Languages, Read IT and Speak IT on our website pages. These rules cover all applicants on our housing register, including existing tenants who wish to transfer to alternative accommodation. We publish details via our newsletters, website and office reception.

## 5.8. Access to personal information

Applicants have rights to access personal information in two ways. Firstly, an applicant is entitled to view information supplied in connection with their application.

This right is set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, 2001 and 2010.

Secondly, an applicant may access personal information as determined by rights of access under the GDPR, this is commonly known as a Subject Access Request.

If you wish to request access to your personal information, please refer to our Fair Processing Notice that explains how to make a request. We will provide the information request within one month.

## 6. The Application Process

This section explains the stages and rules concerning the allocation process.

### 6.1 Admission to the housing register

Applicants must complete an online application via the Glasgow Housing Register (GHR) and select the RSL in the area/s they want to be considered for rehousing.

Applicants who do not have online access can be assisted by the Co-operative's staff in completing an online application form.

We can also carry out home visits to assist infirm, housebound or disabled applicants to complete their forms within a reasonable proximity, on request.

All applicants applying through the GHR are given a unique number and can log in at any time to view or make changes to their application form.

In line with our equality commitments, this form can be made available in different languages and in alternative formats.

If required, we may provide support services including interpreters for hearing impaired applicants or people who do not speak English. Support for people with learning difficulties or who may need support to complete applications is provided by partnership working with Scottish Association for Mental Health.

In addition, applications can be made via formal referrals by agencies that have an agreement in place with any of the participating landlords.

An example of this being Glasgow City Council Homeless Service (also known as a Section 5 Homeless Referral).

If GHR is suspended applicants can apply for housing directly with the Co-operative.

Our target for assessing completed application forms is 7 days, from the date all information/relevant proofs received. Applicants are sent written confirmation of their priority awards.

Applications will only be fully processed to the 'live and eligible' status when a completed Share Certificate Application is returned, the Co-operative is a fully mutual organisation therefore all prospective members are required to have Board approval prior to be added to the Housing Register.

If further information is required following an application submission the applicant will be contacted directly about this. The application may however still be processed on the information provided.

Applicants are responsible for advising of any changes to their housing circumstances.

Applicants can contact housing staff during office hours to discuss their application details.

## **6.2. Verifying an applicant's circumstances**

To enable the correct housing need assessment to be made, we generally require applicants to provide information to verify their circumstances.

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Examples of the verification required include the following (Please note that this list is not exhaustive):

Circumstance	Verification Required
All applicants / joint applicants	Proof of identity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of Current Address (2 items)</li> <li>• Photographic ID</li> </ul>
All household members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of current address if over 16 yrs. (1 item)</li> <li>• Proof of Identification e.g. passport, birth certificate, driving licence</li> </ul>
Homeless or threatened with homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment undertaken by Glasgow City Council and copy of Housing Options Plan</li> </ul>
Asked to leave current accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy of valid Notice to Quit</li> </ul>
In need of rehousing as health affected by current housing circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to date relevant medical documentation</li> <li>• Medical form completed</li> <li>• Other supporting information</li> </ul>
Residency	Proof of residency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank Statement</li> <li>• Driving Licence</li> <li>• Tenancy Agreement</li> </ul>
Access to children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from child's other parent</li> <li>• Letter from solicitor</li> </ul>
Experiencing harassment	Corroborating evidence from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Landlord</li> <li>• Support agencies</li> </ul>
Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAT B1 form or similar showing expected due date</li> </ul>
Owner Occupiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proof of intent to sell</li> </ul>

In line with our equality commitments, we may provide support services including interpreters for hearing impaired applicants or people who do not speak English. Support for people with learning difficulties or who may need support to complete applications, etc. To help combat this, the Co-operative will provide information to customers in any formats as required. Formats may include:

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- Large print
- Audio CD/DVD
- Translations into community languages
- Use of language or sign interpreters
- Braille

All costs in relation to this will be borne by the Co-operative.

### 6.3 Applying for a joint tenancy

Applicants, including existing tenants, may apply to have a joint tenancy with someone who is staying (or intending to stay) with them.

We encourage joint applicants – of the same or opposite sex – to apply for joint tenancies to ensure the same legal rights.

### 6.4 Information and Processing Applications

We recognise the confidentiality of information gathered as part of the allocations process and all applicants will be informed clearly of the way in which the information provided will be used. Applicant information will only be used for the assessment of housing need, including the request for tenancy references from current and / or previous landlords.

We handle all personal information in line with our GDPR Privacy Policy and further information on how we process your personal information can be found in our Fair Processing Notice.

### 6.5 Tenancy Checks

We may carry out tenancy checks/ask for references from any landlord or mortgage lender to confirm housing and tenancy details. We will request the applicant's consent to do this.

We will check an applicant's current housing circumstances before making an offer of housing. This is good practice to ensure that information is recorded accurately and enables suitable offers of housing to be made. For instance, we may telephone applicants to confirm details are as recorded on their application form.

## 6.6 Home Visits

We may also carry out home visits to verify application details, to provide information relating to tenancies and also to consider any support requirements of the applicant.

A home visit is of particular importance if no references are available confirming household details. For example, at the home visit, application details may have changed and an offer may no longer be appropriate.

## 6.7 False / Misleading Information

If we believe an applicant has intentionally changed their circumstances in order to secure a higher position on the housing register, we may assess this application as if this change in circumstances had not occurred and if appropriate suspend the application for up to 6 months.

If an applicant is re-housed based on false information that an applicant has made knowingly, we are entitled to take legal action to recover the tenancy.

## 6.8. Suspension from the Housing Register

A suspension happens when an applicant has been assessed for and accepted onto a housing register / list but is not eligible for an offer of housing until either a certain period has elapsed, their conduct has changed or a change in circumstances has occurred.

We can suspend applicants for unpaid rent or other monies owed which relates to a current or previous tenancy, for example:

- Outstanding rechargeable repairs. For example, if a tenant has lost their keys and we have changed the locks.
- The cost of cleaning a house if you leave furniture or rubbish behind when you move out.
- Legal costs if we have taken an applicant to court.

If an applicant owes money for unpaid rent we will suspend if:

- More than one month's rent is owed and there is no agreed arrangement to repay it; or

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- The applicant owes more than a month's rent, an agreed arrangement is in place to pay it, but has not been kept for a consecutive three months.

We can also suspend applicants due to anti-social behaviour, for example:

- The applicant has been given a final warning for anti-social behaviour in the last six months.
- The applicant has been given a "Notice of Proceedings" for antisocial behaviour in the last six months.
- The applicant or someone that lives with them has been given an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) or an interim ASBO (the ASBO must be removed by the Sheriff Court before we can end a suspension)
- The applicant has a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy because of anti-social behaviour.
- The applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years.
- The applicant has been violent or aggressive towards staff.

We will consider each suspension for anti-social behaviour on a case by case basis and base our decision making on the individual circumstances involved. We can also suspend applications due to other types of breaches of their tenancy agreement, for example:

- The applicant has been given a Notice of Proceedings for breaking the rules of the tenancy agreement in the last six months
- The applicant has been evicted for a breach of a tenancy in the last three years

When we suspend an application, we will write and explain why, how long the suspension is for and what needs to be done to remove the suspension. We will also write to the applicant when we have removed the suspension.

### 6.9 Reviewing Applications

Regular reviews of the Housing Register will be carried out. Applicants can however review and update their application at any time. It is important that applications are kept up to date with accurate information so that appropriate offers of housing can be made. Proof of any change in housing / personal circumstances will be required.

If no response is received after a standard review and reminder letter, applicants are removed from the Housing Register. We will write to the applicant to explain why we have removed them from the Housing Register.

## 6.10 Removal of Applications

An application can be removed from the Housing Register under the following circumstances:

- The applicant is housed by any of the participating landlords and confirms they wish their housing application cancelled
- The applicant has requested removal – if this request is made verbally and not in writing, the organisation will then confirm the request by letter.
- The applicant fails to respond to a periodic review within a reasonable timescale (send review letter and 28 days later send reminder letter before removal of application)
- The applicant is deceased

## 6.11 Applicant Choice/Selection

We operate a choice based system of allocation which will allow applications who are on the housing register to choose the houses for which they wish to be considered. However, in selecting who will be given the offer of a house, the Co-operative will take account of a household's needs.

The Co-operative maintains a lettings database which will provide brief details of all the houses which are coming up for let. The Co-operative will also prepare a property schedule for each property on the database which will include the following details:

- ▶ type of property (e.g. flat, semi-detached, terraced etc.)
- ▶ size of property
- ▶ type of central heating
- ▶ type of windows (single/double glazed)
- ▶ access to gardens

The database and the property schedule will also include closing dates by which people must apply for the houses on offer and any restrictions with regard to the use of "priority tickets".

People whose names appear on the Housing Register will be able to register an interest in any house that is on offer, providing that the house is big enough to

accommodate their household group. They may register an interest in more than one house at the same time.

## 6.12 Offers of Housing

In selecting who will be given the offer of a house, we will take account of a household's needs. We maintain a lettings database (SDM) which will provide brief details of all the houses which are coming up for let. We will also advertise available properties for let on our website and Facebook page. We will also maintain a list of applicants who prefer to receive available properties by post. The adverts will include the following details:

- ▶ type of property (e.g. flat, semi-detached, terraced etc.)
- ▶ size of property
- ▶ type of central heating
- ▶ type of windows (single/double glazed)
- ▶ access to gardens

The adverts will also include closing dates by which people must apply for the houses on offer and any restrictions with regard to the use of "priority tickets".

People whose names appear on the Housing Register will be able to register an interest in any house that is on offer, providing that the house is big enough to accommodate their household group. They may register an interest in more than one house at the same time.

At the closing date, the Co-operative will consider all the applications it has received for each of the houses on offer. It will then decide who will be given the offer of house based on the criteria set out in the table below:

Criterion	Assessment Process
Homeless Priority 1	Applicants will have their status assessed by the appropriate local authority. In order to be awarded a Priority 1 ticket, the applicant should provide confirmation of their status by means of a letter from their local authority. Persons who are referred to Drumchapel Housing Co-operative by Glasgow City Council, in terms of Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 as being in priority need, will automatically be granted Priority 1 status.

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<p>Below Tolerable Standard</p> <p>Priority 1</p>	<p>Applicants will provide details of their current accommodation. If the applicant self certifies that their current home does not meet the tolerable standard then they will be awarded a priority ticket. However, before a tenancy agreement is signed, the Co-operative will visit the applicant's home to check that the self certification was accurate. If the property is not below tolerable standard, the priority will be removed immediately.</p>
<p>Medical</p> <p>Priority 2</p>	<p>If an applicant wishes considered for priority based on medical grounds, they will require to self certify that their medical condition (or the medical condition of someone in their household) has resulted in mobility problems that would be eased if they were to move to a different type of house. The applicant will need a letter from their doctor to confirm that their medical condition has resulted in mobility problems and providing information on the applicant's housing requirements in light of the medical condition.</p> <p>Only certain properties will be designated as being suitable for persons who have a medical priority.</p>
<p>Overcrowding/ Under-Occupation</p> <p>Priority 3</p>	<p>Applicants will provide the Co-operative with details of their current housing arrangements together with details of the persons sharing that accommodation. Applicants who self certify that they are living in overcrowded or under-occupied conditions will be awarded a Priority 3 ticket. Prior to concluding a tenancy agreement, the Co-operative will carry out any checks it believes are necessary in order to confirm that the self certification was accurate.</p>

As mentioned previously, admission to the housing register/list does not mean that we will always be able to make an offer of housing. Whether an applicant receives an offer of housing will depend on:

- An applicant's housing need;
- The numbers and circumstances of other people registering an interest in a given property;
- The number of properties that become available; and

Offers of housing are based on the applicant's housing needs and preferences after confirming details on their application form. This is good practice as it aims to reduce inappropriate offers.

We will also not offer properties which do not suit an applicant's housing requirements for example we will not offer a top floor property where mobility requirements have been identified.

The Co-operative will provide advice and information on realistic preferences, as demand generally exceeds supply in certain areas / property types.

In cases where an applicant refuses a number of reasonable offers (i.e. meeting the assessed needs and preferences of the applicant) we reserve the right to re-interview and re-assess the application.

If we decide to offer an applicant a property this will be a written formal offer of housing. We may telephone to tell applicants' we have an offer, but we will always confirm any offer in writing.

## **6.13 Tenants' Rights and Responsibilities**

We provide information on tenant rights and responsibilities at various stages of the application process. These are also explained in detail when applicants sign their tenancy agreement.

## **6.14 Tenancies**

We provide applicants who accept an offer of housing a Scottish Secure Tenancy in accordance with our legal obligations.

In a limited number of instances, we may offer applicants a short Scottish secure tenancy. This has limited security of tenure.

Examples of grounds for a short Scottish secure tenancy agreement include:

An applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the last three years.

A tenant (or a member of their family) is subject to an anti-social behaviour order. The accommodation is let on a temporary basis for certain reasons.

## **7.0 House Size**

The size of property for which applicants may be considered is noted below:

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Apartment size	2 Apt (1 bedroom)	3 Apt (2 bedroom)	4 Apt (3 Bedroom)	5 Apt (4 bedroom)
Single Person	✓	*		
Couple	✓	*		
Parent(s) with 1 child		✓		
Parent(s) with 2 children under 16 of same gender		✓		
Parents(s) with 1 girl and boy both under 10 years		✓		
Parent(s) with 2 children of same gender where 1 is 16 years or older			✓	
Parent(s) with 1 girl & 1 boy where oldest is over 10 years			✓	
Parent(s) with 5 children aged between 0 and 16				✓

\* At the discretion of the landlord.

6 apartments and above, where available, are let at the discretion of the landlord.

All applicants will be placed on the housing list for the size of property required based on their current household composition.

In particular circumstances you may be able to obtain a property of a different size. See below for more information.

## Overcrowding assessments

Overcrowding assessments include people who normally live in the property but who are temporarily absent. This could include family members working away from home for a short period and students.

## 8.0 Our Allocation System

This section explains the type of allocation system we have adopted to ensure that we meet our policy objectives effectively.

### 8.1 Priority award system

In order to provide a fair system, this policy prioritises applicants on the Housing Register according to their housing need. To do this we operate a priority award system. This means that applicants are awarded a priority ticket dependent on their housing need.

### 8.2 Advantages of awarding priority tickets

- Housing needs specified in law are addressed (the reasonable preference groups), as well as other housing needs
- Facilitates monitoring of allocation practice, in particular how effectively we are meeting our legal responsibilities
- Ensures accurate identification of housing needs and allows us to respond quickly to changing patterns of need
- Provides for a wide range of housing needs to be tackled thereby promoting our objective of creating sustainable communities

### 8.3 Applicants with the same priority ticket

If there is more than one applicant with the same level of priority ticket, or if there is no one using a priority ticket, then the offer will go to the applicant who has the earliest date of registration on the Co-operative's Housing Register.

### 8.4 Leaving Armed Forces

Scottish Government guidance will be referred to and adhered to when considering all applications received from people leaving the armed forces.

## 8.5 Travelling People

Applications from travellers or other applicants living in a caravan are awarded a priority ticket based on their actual housing conditions.

Applications from travelling people who have nowhere to pitch their caravan would be referred to Glasgow City Council's homeless service.

## 8.6 High Risk Offenders

Persons currently on the sex offenders register and other high risk offenders are subject to the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

These arrangements require that agencies including the Police, Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords, Health Boards and the Scottish Prison Service work together to assess and manage risks posed by such offenders.

Multi agency scrutiny of assessed risk will therefore be the paramount factor in determining whether an allocation may be considered.

## 9.0 Our Application Groups

This Choice Based Letting policy has 3 groups:

**Group 1** - **Homeless Persons** (Section 5 referral as defined by current legislation)

**Group 2** - **Standard Applications**

**Group 3** - **Internal Transfers / Aspirational**

Applicants will be placed in the application group reflecting their housing need.

### 9.1 Group 1 – Homelessness Applications

We recognise our policy objective to assist in the prevention and resolution of homelessness.

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All applicants who have a Resettlement Plan from Glasgow City Council's Homeless Casework Team and the landlord has accepted as a Section 5 homeless referral will be placed in Group 1.

Homelessness will be confirmed at the time of offer. If homelessness is not confirmed any offer of housing may be withdrawn.

Only accepted section 5 homeless referrals are placed within this group.

If a suitable property is available at the time of or within 6 weeks of receipt of the Section 5 referral, applicants will be made one reasonable offer of accommodation.

If this offer is refused, this will normally result in the applicant being removed from the Homelessness Group.

### 9.2 Group 2 – Standard Applications

The majority of applicants will fall into this group as it includes applicants who do not have a tenancy with the Co-operative.

### 9.3 Group 3 - Internal Transfers/Aspirational Applications

From 1 May 2019 only applicants who are tenants of the Co-operative and who have been a tenant for five years or more will be placed in this group from 1 May 2019. Non tenant applicants who are eligible prior to 30 April 2019 will still be eligible to apply for these properties after 1 May 2019.

An internal transfer / aspirational group is important to meet policy objectives for the following reasons:

It promotes households to move to other accommodation, in turn releasing stock for other applicants

It addresses the preferences of existing tenants and is important in establishing communities which are popular and sustainable. This category also includes 'aspirational transfers' which relates to existing Co-operative tenants who wish to move for reasons other than housing need. This is further explained as follows:

The Co-operative recognises that some existing tenants may wish to apply for moves to what they regard as better quality houses (for example, new build and/or main door properties). Such tenants may not qualify for priority tickets and

therefore would be extremely unlikely to obtain a move to a very popular house type. In order to ensure that people who are adequately housed can still exercise choice, the Co-operative will identify a number of houses during each year which will be offered on the basis that no priority tickets can be used. This will include new build first time lets.

The number of houses identified for this initiative will not exceed 25% of the total number of houses which were offered for let or relet in the previous financial year.

All properties advertised as aspirational let's will be advertised in exactly the same way as other properties which are available for let. However, these properties will only be advertised to existing tenants and will be clearly marked as being part of this initiative and applicants will be advised that they cannot use priority tickets to support their application for these properties.

Properties advertised as aspirational let's will be allocated on the basis of the earliest registration.

The Co-operative recognises that in offering applicants on the Housing Register maximum choice, in exceptional circumstances this may not always be practicable, such as the first lets in a new build scheme as demand for this type of property would outstrip supply, new build first let's will be allocated on the basis of the earliest registration date.

All properties included in a first let in a new build scheme will be advertised in exactly the same way as other properties which are available for let. However, these properties will be clearly marked as 'new build, first let and applicants will be advised they cannot use priority tickets to support their application for these properties.

## 10.0 Priority Ticket Categories

This policy has the following priority tickets:

**Priority 1** - Homeless Persons (as defined by current legislation)

**Priority 1A** - Below tolerable standard

**Priority 2** - Medical

**Priority 3** - Overcrowding/Under-occupation

**Discretionary** - The Co-operative may award a priority ticket, at an appropriate level, to deal with special cases. In some cases Board approval may be required.

Applicants will be placed in the highest priority reflecting their housing need.

## 10.1 Priority 1 – Homelessness

We recognise our policy objective to assist in the prevention and resolution of homelessness.

A priority ticket will be awarded to applicants who:

- Have a Resettlement Plan from Glasgow City Council's Homeless Casework Team and the landlord has accepted as a Section 5 homeless referral will be awarded a priority 1.
- Homelessness will be confirmed at the time of offer. If homelessness is not confirmed any offer of housing may be withdrawn.

Only accepted section 5 homeless referrals are placed within this group.

***If a suitable property is available at the time of or within 6 weeks of receipt of the Section 5 referral, applicants will be made one reasonable offer of accommodation.***

***If this offer is refused, this will normally result in the applicant being removed from the Homelessness Group.***

## 10.2 Priority 1A – Below tolerable standard

A priority ticket will be awarded to applicants who:

- are living in properties which are below the tolerable standard, or which have been scheduled for demolition by the Co-operative

## 10.3 Priority 2 - Medical

A priority ticket will be awarded to applicants/or persons in their household who:

- Have a medical condition, the symptoms of which will be alleviated by a move to a different house type. It should be noted that a priority ticket

## Allocations policy

awarded on the basis of medical grounds will only be taken into consideration if the house type on offer meets the applicant's medical requirements and the Co-operative has limited the award of medical priority to those who have a medical condition which results in mobility problems.

### 10.4 Priority 3 – Overcrowding/Under-occupation

A priority ticket will be awarded for **overcrowding** to applicants if:

- There are insufficient bed spaces for the number of people occupying the house
- there are insufficient bedrooms to allow all persons over 16 years of age (who are not co-habiting partners) to have their own room
- There is a child over 10 years of age who has to share a room with another child who is not of the same sex
- When awarding a priority ticket to applicants in this category, we use the occupancy standard below.
- This standard is used to calculate if overcrowding (or under-occupation) exists.
- Occupancy standard:

Household size	Bedrooms required
Single person	One
Each adult couple	One
A disabled child who cannot share a bedroom because of their disability	One
Two children of the same sex under 16	One
Two children under 10 regardless of their sex	One

- We may take into account separated parents with shared access to children and award an additional bedroom regardless of how many children the applicant has access to.

A priority 3 ticket will be awarded for **under-occupation** to applicants from 1 May 2019 if:

- Reducing under-occupation helps us to make best use of our housing stock. (Tenants may wish to move to smaller houses as their present home is too large.)

- Applicants who meet this criteria would be awarded a priority ticket only if under-occupation is reduced.
- Only tenants (including private rented sector tenants) will qualify for under-occupation points. No points will be awarded to owner occupiers.
- Internal applicants will be prioritised

## 10.5 Discretionary Priority:

The Co-operative may award a priority ticket to deal with special cases noted at Section 10.6. In some of these cases, Board approval may be required. The award of a discretionary priority ticket will not supersede a Priority 1, 1A, 2 or 3 ticket when selecting applicant at closing date of registration.

## 10.6 Considerations

### a) Properties subject to demolition or re-generation

This applies to applicants whose properties are subject to demolition or regeneration due to action taken by their own landlord and who require permanent re-housing.

We will consider on case by case basis requests by local landlords to assist their clearance programmes.

### b) People re-housed through care and support initiatives

This applies to applicants who need to be housed as part of community care initiatives and are referred through Social Work or other support agencies.

Examples of such groups are:

- Young people looked after and accommodated by Glasgow City Council
- Residents of hospitals and other institutions who are returning to the community
- Residents in supported accommodation now ready to move to other accommodation

## c) **People subjected to domestic abuse, harassment**

This applies to applicants who need to be rehoused as a consequence of harassment or domestic abuse. The types of abuse and harassment we consider include:

- Domestic abuse
- Racial harassment
- Religious or sectarian harassment
- Homophobic harassment
- Transphobic harassment
- Harassment of disabled people, including those with a learning disability

DHC feels that the victim of abuse should not be penalised all applicants should be made aware of their right to stay in their own home safely or seek alternative accommodation. If they elect to stay in their homes, they will be referred (if they consent) to a relevant organisation for assistance / support).

### **Needs not covered by policy**

We apply this section of the policy only in **exceptional** circumstances if our present policy does not address the housing need in question. If this applies, we will award points only after each case has been fully investigated and evidence gathered.

In order to ensure accountability, each case must be approved by a senior member of staff. The priority award will be withdrawn if the particular need is resolved before an offer is made.

## d) **Private sector accommodation with limited security**

This applies to private rented sector accommodation that is ending due to actions by the landlord or agency to seek recovery of repossession. For instance, this might apply in cases where the landlord is terminating either an assured or a short assured tenancy through the correct legal procedures.

A priority award in this category may also be awarded to owners whose home is threatened because of mortgage default. This may happen if owners cannot afford to maintain mortgage payments and lenders have taken court action to recover the property for sale. Priority is awarded once the owner has a date to leave accommodation.

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In processing applications, we carry out checks as required to confirm details.

## e) **Tied accommodation**

This applies to applicants living in accommodation as part of their employment duties. A priority ticket is awarded under this category when the accommodation is ending due to termination of employment. Priority ticket is awarded six months before the person leaves employment.

## f) **Armed forces personnel**

This applies to Armed Forces personnel who occupy service accommodation and want to be re-housed in our community. We encourage applicants to apply as soon as possible before discharge. Applicants are required to provide a copy of their certificate of discharge. A priority ticket is awarded six months before the person leaves the services.

## g) **Relationship Breakdown**

This applies to partners in a relationship breakdown who now want to live separately. As applicants for housing, they now form a separate household. It should be noted that the current landlord has no obligation to provide housing for applicants in this category.

## h) **Shared amenities**

Applicants who are living with other households if they share key amenities. The amenities for which points are awarded are kitchen, bathroom or toilet. Applicants need to only be sharing one of these amenities to qualify for the points.

Applicants who sublet part of their home or take in lodgers do not qualify for this priority.

## i) **No fixed address**

Applicants with no fixed address are in this group. For clarity, this would cover those applicants whose applications are registered c/o a Government agency such as the Job Centre or Social Work Departments.

## j) Care & Support

Where a person requires support from a friend or relative and the applicant is either the carer or the person requiring support, a priority ticket will be awarded.

Each application will be assessed on its individual circumstances and a number of factors may be taken into account:

- The current distance between the two individuals involved and whether there are other carers
- The dependency of one person on the other any associated health/emotional problems
- The type and frequency of care being provided
- The recommendations of health/social work professionals in relation to care and support.

There requires to be a fully justifiable reason for the support need and further evidence may be required before a priority ticket in this category is awarded.

## k) Employment

Applicants who live outwith the Drumchapel area who work or are due to take up permanent employment in the Drumchapel area will be awarded a discretionary priority ticket. The onus is on the applicant to provide verification from their employer of their employment and place of work before a priority ticket is awarded. A priority ticket will not be awarded without sufficient supporting evidence.

## l) Children/Elderly at height

Applicants will be awarded a priority ticket in this category in the following circumstances:

- Applicants with a child or children under 10 years living in multi-storey accommodation.
- Elderly applicants, defined as those people who are 60 or over, living on the third floor or above and wish to move to a lower level property.

## 11.0. Appeals and Complaints

### 11.1 Appeals

An appeal can be made if an applicant is unhappy with a decision we have made, for example:

- The group or priority awarded;
- A decision to suspend from receiving offers;
- A decision to cancel an application; or
- Any decision made which the applicant believes has not been dealt with in accordance with this Policy

An applicant should appeal in writing to the Co-operative.

### 11.2 Complaints

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the level of service they have received e.g. published service standards not being met, a complaint should be made to the Co-operative who will respond in accordance with their complaints policy and procedures. Should an applicant remain dissatisfied having exhausted the organisation's internal complaints procedures the applicant can complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

## 12.0. Equality and Diversity

Our core values include providing a fair and equal service for all housing applicants and we will ensure that in applying this policy we will not discriminate against any individual, household or group on any of the grounds detailed in our Equality and Diversity Policy.

The following are some examples of how we will achieve this:

- Publication of this choice based allocation policy in other formats and different languages, on request (with any reasonable costs borne by the Co-operative)
- Ensuring our allocation documentation is produced in plain language
- Promoting awareness of this choice based allocation policy to a diverse range of groups
- Providing interpreting services, on request
- Consulting with national bodies, as required, to promote good practice

## Allocations policy

- In line with our equality commitments, this form can be made available in different languages and in alternative formats.
- Support for people with learning difficulties (or other support needs) or who may need support to complete applications by adjusting the way that we communicate, including adapting written communications, making arrangements for meetings, sign-posting to support agencies / advocates, etc.

### 13.0. Training and Development

Training is an important element in ensuring that the common allocation policy is implemented and monitored effectively. The training requirements of Management Board and staff will therefore be regularly assessed to ensure that they have the skills to effectively implement and monitor this policy.

This includes training on:

- Allocation law and practice
- Allocation policy and procedures
- Information technology systems
- Other relevant legislation such as equality law

We will monitor training through our training plans and annual staff appraisals and link to personal development needs.

### 14.0. Auditing and Monitoring Performance

#### 14.1 Auditing Performance

We will ensure that proper mechanisms are in place to allow individual allocations to be audited.

#### 14.2 Monitoring performance

Monitoring the implementation of this policy is an important part of quality assurance and to measure if we are meeting our stated aims and objectives. It is also essential to ensure that allocation practices are subject to continuous improvement.

We will monitor performance in the following areas:

## Allocations policy

- The number of new applications received, including whether or not they are processed within targets
- The number of applications suspended and cancelled.
- The number of applications reviewed and removed as part of the review process
- The numbers of applicants in each group.
- Household type and equality information
- The number and percentage of lets against targets
- Numbers and reasons for refusal of offers.
- Appeals and complaints information.

Information on allocation trends is presented to the Management Board on a regular basis.

As part of our Equalities policy we have an Equalities Action Plan where incidences are recorded and monitored by the Management Board.

### 15.0. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation or monitoring/reporting reveals that a change is required sooner.

Procedures and working methods may be altered more frequently where this is needed.

Policy review will involve consultation with our tenants, applicants and any other relevant stakeholders.

We will take account of any views, representations or tenant survey outcomes in revising our policy and service provision to assist in the development of effective service delivery. Including traditionally excluded groups and groups representing protected characteristics

## Appendix 1

### List of Glasgow Housing Register Participating RSLs

Cadder Housing Association  
Cernach Housing Association  
Charing Cross Housing Association  
Drumchapel Housing Co-operative  
Glasgow West Housing Association  
Kendoon Housing Association  
Kingsridge Cleddans Housing Association  
Maryhill Housing Association  
NG Homes  
Partick Housing Association  
Pineview Housing Association  
Sanctuary Scotland Housing Association and  
Yorkhill Housing Association