

Allocations Policy

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Internal References	
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External References	
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Comments	
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ALLOCATIONS POLICY

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Blackwood Homes & Care aims to provide good quality, accessible and affordable housing to disabled¹ people and others, with support where needed. We seek to meet diverse needs, and enable independent living, in inclusive neighbourhoods where people want to live and remain.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles and standards that we aim to follow, and our approach to making best use of the available stock by allocating the right size and type of property to those most in need.
- 1.3 Blackwood will comply with relevant legislation and good practice guidance, in particular the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and 2014.

2. Responsibility

- 2.1 Board and its Committees have delegated responsibility for setting, reviewing and monitoring policy implementation and performance in the form of key performance indicators.
- 2.2 Housing Teams will be responsible for policy implementation and the development of clear and consistent procedures to support this.

3. Principles and Scope of the Policy

- 3.1 Blackwood Homes & Care works in accordance with organisational values of helping people to live their lives to the full, through providing high quality, seamless housing, care and support. Our Allocations Policy is critical in delivering our Housing Strategy, by offering suitable housing, taking account of reasonable preference, to people with a range of housing needs, including disabled people and older people.
- 3.2 We operate in all the mainland local authority areas in Scotland. A high proportion of our housing stock is purpose built and adapted for those with physical disabilities. Some housing is linked with care and support provided by Blackwood or other partner care and support providers. Our new innovative homes are built to our unique design guide and provide homes for those with disabilities.

¹ When we say 'disabled people' we mean people with physical impairments, learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, mental ill health, sensory impairments, and any other long term or chronic conditions which result in housing need and disadvantage. We also include in this definition, families with a disabled household member.

- 3.4 We aim to offer open and equal access to our housing and to allocate properties based only on housing need or housing, care and support needs. We aim to promote equal opportunities and welcome applications from all people regardless of sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, nationality or social origin, religious or political beliefs. We are committed to embracing and valuing diversity amongst the neighbourhoods in which we work.
- 3.5 We aim to be fair, consistent, efficient and open in allocating properties to tenants, minimising periods where a property is empty. A group priority system is used as a way of objectively assessing housing need, recognising the needs of disabled people and the changing needs of tenants. It aims to reflect our philosophy of promoting independence and choice, innovative housing design and offering or enabling care and support where this is needed.
- 3.6 We will encourage stable, sustainable neighbourhoods where tenants enjoy living in their homes. We aim to achieve this by enabling applicants to choose where they live, whilst offering housing that is well matched to their needs and preferences.
- 3.7 We will provide good quality support, information and advice about taking a tenancy so that applicants can make an informed choice and participate in an accessible, straightforward allocations process.
- 3.8 We seek to work with other agencies to enable access to our housing, using formal and informal partnerships where appropriate. This may involve nominations agreements, participation in common housing registers, Choice base lettings, referral arrangements, management agreements and leases.
- 3.9 We will maintain a transparent audit trail of how and why an allocation was made. Our procedures will contain checks and balances to minimise the possibility of inconsistency or discrimination. Through annual reports of performance and activities, and involving stakeholders in periodic reviews of the policy, we aim to be accountable to applicants, tenants and partner agencies.
- 3.10 Employees will respect the confidentiality of personal information at all times. We will only discuss details of an application with third parties with the applicant's consent. We aim to take up tenancy references, where possible, with current and previous landlords.
- 3.11 This policy relates to the allocation of all properties where a tenancy is offered. It does not apply to allocation of property under home ownership initiatives, leases or to occupancy agreements in registered care homes. These are subject to separate legal, contractual, funding and regulatory frameworks.

4. Operational Framework

4.1 Applying for a house

- 4.1.1 Any person aged 16 or over can make an application for housing at any time and is entitled to be admitted to the housing list.
- 4.1.2 We seek to work with other relevant agencies and groups to raise awareness of the types of housing we provide. We aim to encourage applications through widely available information, in a range of formats and key minority languages when requested. We will ask applicants to provide gender, disability and ethnic origin details to help us with monitoring the effectiveness of the policy in achieving equal opportunities and taking action to improve this.
- 4.1.3 We will make it easy to apply, using a clear and accessible application form which is available on-line or in a paper format where required. We will gather sufficient information to make a fair assessment of housing and support needs where appropriate. We aim to process applications quickly, keep applicants informed about progress and prospects of housing, and to signpost applicants to information about other housing options.
- 4.1.4 We aim to enable access to appropriate client groups by seeking nominations for a proportion of lets in our accessible wheelchair adapted properties.
- 4.1.5 In exceptional circumstances we may consider an application from a young person under the age of 16, where Blackwood is a partner with social work in planning for a young person leaving care.
- 4.1.6 We will primarily use a nominations agreement for the allocations of our new Blackwood Homes through explicit arrangements with the local Housing and Social Care Partnership and set out in the scheme agreement drawn up at the design stage.
- 4.1.7 For our pre-2016 wheelchair accessible or adapted housing stock we will allocate these properties to reflect local arrangements, either using our own housing register or via the Common Housing Register, or via nominations arrangements with the local authority if these exist.
- 4.1.8 For our general needs stock, we will continue to use our own housing register or allocate through a common housing register and choice base lettings if this is an option. We will work in accordance with the rules of each Common Housing Register.

4.2 Housing Register

- 4.2.1 Completed and processed applications will be held within a single system. This aims to ensure that any applicant who has been accepted onto the register can be considered for any vacant property that matches their housing needs. Blackwood's house types and 'match' criteria are detailed at Appendix 1. Applicants do not need to be registered for a specific period of time before they can be considered for a property.
- 4.2.2 We aim to keep the housing register up to date and will review applications annually using a simple renewal process. If applicants fail to renew their application within 3 months and after **one** reminder (including attempted email and telephone contact), then their application may be cancelled and removed from the register, recording the reason for cancellation.
- 4.3 **Assessment of Housing Needs**
- 4.3.1 The housing needs of each application will be assessed in accordance with a schedule of housing priority, detailed in Appendix 2.
- 4.3.2 The group system will consider housing needs under 3 main groups, which incorporates the reasonable preference categories under the Housing (Scotland) 2014 Act
- People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs
 - Social housing tenants who are under-occupation;
 - People living under unsatisfactory housing conditions and who have unmet housing needs;
- 4.3.3 We believe that everyone has the right to live their life free of harassment, domestic abuse, violence and abuse, and recognise this within the schedule of housing priority.
- 4.3.4 The high demand for particular property types and areas means that applicants in lower priority groups could have little chance of rehousing. We aim to overcome this by operating a quota system of allocations for each priority group across each region on an annual basis. The high group will be offered a maximum of 70% of empty properties; medium group 20% of empty properties and low group 10% of the annual empty properties.
- 4.3.5 If there are applicants in the same priority group for a particular empty property, priority will be given to the applicant with the earliest application date. We will encourage applicants to keep Blackwood advised of any change in circumstances as this could affect the priority group they will be assigned. If Blackwood has evidence that an applicant has intentionally changed their circumstances in order to obtain greater priority, the application could be suspended.

4.3.6 If an allocation is made based on contrived circumstances, false or misleading information Blackwood will consider any appropriate grounds for taking action to repossess the property.

4.3.7 Allocations will be made to make best use of our housing stock in terms of type, size and adaptations and/or specialist equipment already installed in a property.

4.4 **Housing with Care and Support**

4.4.1 Blackwood is committed to enabling disabled people to live full lives in ordinary housing and communities, with support where this is needed. Certain properties available for allocation are described as 'Housing with Care & Support' as set out below.

4.4.1.1 **Housing with low level housing support**

The housing is provided by Blackwood and tenants pay the rent as normal. Any housing support is funded by the local authority to help the tenant maintain the tenancy.

4.4.1.2 **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

A house in multiple occupation is where there are three or more unrelated adults living in the same property. There is usually care provided to all the occupants from one care provider, not necessarily Blackwood.

4.4.1.3 **Housing with Personal Care & Support**

Our new uniquely designed homes are rented by the tenant and any personal care and support is funded directly by the tenant or the local authority.

We will aim to prioritise applications for housing from:

- people moving out of hospital or residential care;
- disabled people moving on from residential schools or colleges;
- disabled people wishing to move to their own home from family or shared accommodation, in a planned way (so preventing future crisis intervention);
- people needing to move to improve or receive support with mental ill health;
- other situations agreed as a priority with the local authority;
- disabled people and existing Blackwood tenants who need to move to appropriately sized property, as defined by the government in the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

4.5 **Cancellation of applications**

4.5.1 Applications will be cancelled where:

- The applicant has died;
- The applicant has withdrawn their application;
- The applicant has failed to renew their application when invited to do so;
- Where the applicant has been satisfactorily rehoused and does not wish their application to be re-assessed in light of their changed circumstances.

4.5.2 Blackwood will seek tenancy references from current and previous landlords up to three years prior to the application date, where possible. Where an unsatisfactory report is obtained, we reserve the right to suspend the application, subject to review. Refusal to give permission to contact a current or previous landlord may be considered grounds for suspending the application. However, we will be sensitive to individual circumstances where an approach to a private landlord could jeopardise an existing tenancy.

4.6 **Suspension of applications**

Blackwood may suspend new applications in defined circumstances where there is evidence to support the suspension:

4.6.1 **Anti-social behaviour**

4.6.1.1 Where a person listed on the application has acted in an anti-social manner in relation to another person residing in, visiting or otherwise engaged in unlawful activity in the locality of the house occupied by the person; or pursued a course of conduct amounting to harassment or otherwise anti-social conduct to another person or to an employee of the social landlord in the courses of making the application.

4.6.1.2 Before suspending an applicant, Blackwood will assess the nature, frequency and length of the conduct, the extent to which the conduct arises because of acts or omissions of other people other than the tenant, the effect the conduct is having on other people and any action taken by the current landlord to address the conduct.

4.6.2 **Previous convictions**

Blackwood may impose a suspension where a person on the application has been convicted of using a house or allowing it to be used for an illegal or immoral purpose or an offence punishable by imprisonment which was committed in or in the locality of the house occupied by the person; or an order for recovery of possession has been made against the person in a court in Scotland, England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

4.6.3 **Abandoning or neglecting a property**

Blackwood may impose a suspension where a person on the application has had a property repossessed by a social landlord in Scotland because the property has been abandoned or because of the deterioration of the property or furniture.

4.6.4 **Arrears**

The applicant has housing related debts relating to a current or previous tenancy in excess of one month's rent or more **and** an arrangement to clear the debt has not been adhered to for a period of at least 3 months. This includes debt which may have been written off in previous years.

4.6.5 **False Information**

False or misleading information has knowingly or recklessly been provided by the applicant on the application form

4.6.6 **Period of suspension**

4.6.6.1 Suspensions will be for a period of between 3 – 12 months, and subject to 3-monthly review or at the reasonable request of the applicant. Applicants will be notified of suspension from the register along with the reasons for this and how long it will last. We will also provide information on the right to appeal against this action.

4.6.6.2 Where there is or has been an anti-social behaviour order issued, and there is evidence that the applicant is taking action to alter their behaviour Blackwood may consider granting a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. This will be subject to Blackwood being satisfied that adequate support can be provided, either by Blackwood or another specialist agency.

4.6.6.3 Applications received via Section 5 referral or nomination from the Local Authority due to a homelessness assessment cannot be suspended because of rent arrears or anti social behaviour.

4.7 **Working in Partnership**

As a national housing provider, we will aim to work in partnership with others to meet the identified housing needs in local authority areas. We will do this through a number of routes as set out below.

4.7.1 **Nominations Arrangements**

We will seek to enter into Nomination Agreements with the Health and Social Care Partnerships in whose areas we operate for our wheelchair accessible housing and in particular our new Blackwood Houses to ensure that those with a disability and housing need get access to these homes.

4.7.2 **Section 5 protocols**

We will comply with Section 5 Referrals where required for our main stream stock but retain the right to allocate from our own register or referrals from other specialist agencies to ensure that the best use of our wheelchair accessible housing stock is achieved.

4.7.3 **Common Housing Registers and Mobility Schemes**

We may take part in common housing registers, mobility and similar schemes where appropriate and where we are satisfied that this will not undermine our other principles in relation to equality of access and fair assessment.

4.7.4 **Nominations and referrals from specialist agencies**

To maximise access and best use of our wheelchair accessible housing we may seek nominations or referrals with Disabled Persons Housing Services, Housing Options Scotland and local agencies.

4.7.5 **National Accommodation Strategy for Sex and/or Violent Offenders and Multi-Agency Public Protection Agencies**

Sex offenders and other offenders are entitled to apply for housing. We recognise the duty of RSLs to co-operate in the accommodation of registered sex offenders and aim to collaborate as required with statutory bodies in relation to risk assessment and management. Bearing in mind our responsibilities to tenants and our aim of creating safe and sustainable neighbourhoods that include disabled people, we will carry out our own detailed risk assessment in these cases. Where we assess that there is a threat to individuals and the community we reserve the right to suspend the application in line with Section 4.6.

- 4.7.6 Blackwood will, as far as possible, apply the same approach to assessment of an applicant's housing needs and circumstances, and matching of an applicant to a property, in the case of nominations and direct applicants.

4.8 **Allocations Process and Routes**

- 4.8.1 When a vacancy arises, the appropriate priority group will be considered, depending on the quota requirements and an offer of housing will normally be made to the applicant who has the earliest application date within that priority group, who is seeking property in that area and whose needs best match the type and size of the housing which is available, and the pre-existing adaptations.

- 4.8.2 Prior to an offer being made, a home visit will be carried out, where practicable, to verify the applicant's current housing circumstances and obtain any additional information. If this leads to a change in priority group, the applicant will be advised of this.

- 4.8.3 We aim to enable applicants to make informed choices. We will provide good general information about our developments, properties, services, rent and other charges, including support charges, and housing benefits payable in advance of any offer being made. We aim to provide useful and accurate information when an offer is made.

- 4.8.4 To maintain a balance between types of lets and increase access by those who tend to be at particular disadvantage in accessing suitable housing, we will set broad annual targets for quotas of allocations to be made through different routes e.g. nominations and transfers and our own housing list. We aim to review these annually in assessing the effectiveness of the priority groups and quota schemes in meeting the policy aims and principles.

4.8.5 Where a vacancy arises in a property which is the subject of a management agreement with a support provider, the support provider will be asked to nominate one or more applicants. This will be based on their assessment of circumstances and confirmation of the availability of care or support funding. Housing management will make the final decision on any allocation.

4.8.6 Blackwood wants to promote choice and will not penalise applicants where an offer of housing is refused. Where an applicant has refused three offers we will, together with the applicant, actively review their housing preferences and reserve the right to suspend their application during this review period.

4.9 **Transfers**

4.9.1 Any Blackwood tenant may apply for a transfer, regardless of their length of tenancy. Transfer applications will be assessed and prioritised in the same way as other applications.

4.9.2 We want existing tenants to remain with us and to be responsive to tenants' changing needs and aspirations. We recognise that disabled people or their families can have great difficulty finding suitable alternative accommodation if their circumstances change. Similarly, we are acutely aware of the shortage of suitable wheelchair accessible affordable housing. Where a tenant no longer needs an accessible property, we will assist them to move to maximise use of this stock, as set out in our tenancy agreement.

4.9.3 We will set a broad annual target for allocations to transfer applicants, and give priority to:

- Applicants occupying wheelchair accessible property where there is no longer a wheelchair user in the household.
- Applicants occupying larger housing than they require
- Applicants needing larger housing to live with a partner, to accommodate a carer, or for an additional child.
- Applicants experiencing any form of serious harassment, domestic abuse or other forms of abuse.
- Applicants needing to move to access greater support.

4.9.4 In general, transfer applicants will:

- be subject to the same conditions of suspension and cancellation as any other application in relation to rental or service charge debts or anti-social behaviour;
- be suspended where there is an ongoing tenancy related legal action;
- prior to an offer, have their existing home inspected for confirmation that the tenant has fulfilled their tenancy obligations in maintaining the property in a

lettable condition. Failure to do so may result in any application being suspended.

4.10 **Mutual Exchange and Mobility Schemes**

4.10.1 Blackwood tenants can apply for a mutual exchange with another Blackwood tenant or with the tenant of another Registered Social Landlord.

4.10.2 Permission to exchange will normally be granted providing certain conditions are satisfied:

- Both applicants need to complete Blackwood's usual application form;
- The other landlord agrees to the exchange;
- The exchange partner satisfies the eligibility criteria for the size and type of housing they would move into;
- Both tenants have a satisfactory rent payment record, have maintained any repayment plan for 13 weeks and there have been no other material breaches of the respective tenancy conditions in the previous 2 years;
- Blackwood suffers no rent loss as a result of the exchange.

4.10.3 We aim to ensure that tenants are aware of Homeswapper or equivalent Mutual Exchange and Mobility Schemes which help people to move either locally or nationally, providing information through the Tenants newsletter and factsheets.

4.11 **Local Lettings/Allocations Plans**

4.11.1 From time to time a local area or development may experience difficulties or plans that affect the wellbeing of the tenants and the neighbourhood. Some examples are:

- an over concentration of households with similar particular needs;
- anti-social behaviour;
- low demand for the area or certain house types;
- major redevelopment or regeneration.

4.11.2 If the allocations policy is not helping or is getting in the way of managing or improving the situation, Blackwood can decide on a different allocations policy just for this local area. Before it can do this, it will have to set out very clearly:

- The changes or improvements it wants to achieve in the community (the objectives of the local lettings plan);
- How a local allocations policy will help this to happen;
- How long the local policy should be applied before it is reviewed;
- Detailed plans for involving tenants and communicating with them.

This local lettings plan will need to be approved by the Services Committee. Where there is an urgent need to act, the Housing and Care Director has delegated

authority to approve a local lettings plan, subsequently reporting this to the Committee.

4.12 **Special circumstances and cases**

4.12.1 The allocations policy seeks to meet the greatest housing need. In some cases, support or intensive housing management may be needed to enable the applicant to sustain the tenancy. Blackwood will take this into account in making an allocation decision, together with the impact of the allocation in creating or maintaining a sustainable community.

4.12.2 While properties will normally be offered to the person in the appropriate priority group and who has been on the register the longest, we reserve the right to give priority to an applicant in another priority group or who has not been the longest on the register where:

- A clear lifestyle clash would be avoided;
- There is an over concentration of vulnerable people;
- The allocation would allow a person to access greater support or care.

4.12.3 Where an applicant within the appropriate group or who has not been on the register the longest is not made an offer, this must be recorded along with the reason for the decision and must be approved by the Housing Team Leader. The bypassed applicant(s) should be offered an appropriate property at the next opportunity.

4.12.4 A priority groups system cannot capture all housing needs situations and very occasionally situations may arise where the applicant is in substantial housing need and the priority system does not allow for the specific circumstances. The Housing and Care Director has delegated authority to award priority for 'exceptional circumstances' subsequently reporting these to the Services Committee. The detailed consideration of the circumstances should be fully documented to enable subsequent amendment of the priority group schedule if indicated.

4.12.5 We will not use transfers as a way of addressing minor tenancy disputes. However, where there is evidence of harassment or violence (or other exceptional circumstances), the Housing Team Leader or Housing and Care Director have authority to approve a transfer, having considered the circumstances and documentary evidence.

4.13 **Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy**

4.13.1 In relation to the allocation of all properties, Blackwood will continue to work in accordance with the SHR Framework and model Entitlements Payments and Benefits policy, to ensure transparency and fairness in allocations.

4.13.2 In line with Blackwood's EPB Policy, the Housing and Care Director must approve any allocation, where an allocation is proposed to someone who is a Member of the same household or a Partner, Friend or Relative of a current employee or Board Member.

4.14 **Appeals**

- 4.14.1 Any applicant who is dissatisfied with the way their application has been assessed, reviewed, suspended or any other decision taken in relation to their application, can ask the Housing Team Leader to review the decision. Should the applicant be dissatisfied with the response, the applicant will be advised to complain using Blackwood's formal Complaints Policy.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1 The Housing and Care Director will provide information on agreed measures and targets to the Audit & Performance Committee on a regular basis to enable monitoring of performance and to draw the Committee's attention to any areas of concern indicating a need for a change or review of the policy. Appendix 4 details the Key Performance Indicators.
- 5.2 This will include reports on equal opportunities data collected from all applicants, which may be used to inform strategies for increasing access to the housing list and addressing unmet needs through business development.

6. Review

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier as required.

APPENDIX 1 – HOUSING PRIORITY SCHEDULE

A Housing Type Definition

- **General Needs Flat or House:** These properties can be let to anyone aged 16 and over.
- **Ground floor accessible flats, flats accessed by a lift or single storey accessible houses:** Priority shall be given for this type of housing to households which include a person with mobility problems or a health condition which means they find stairs difficult or dangerous. Some properties may have been built or adapted to barrier free standard. Some properties may include an alarm call system and some communal facilities e.g. laundry.
- **Wheelchair Accessible housing in pre-2017 stock:** This is purpose built or adapted property designed for use by someone who uses a wheelchair. Priority will *always* be given to an applicant whose household includes a wheelchair user.
- Where there is no demand for the property type from priority groups as described above, allocation will be made on a simple 'housing needs' basis and in accordance with the provisions of the allocations policy.
- Consideration will also be given to making best use of existing adaptations.
- Blackwood can provide care and support at some developments across Scotland.

Blackwood House: Stock built to our Blackwood house design will be let via the scheme arrangement agreed between Blackwood and the Health and Social Care Partnership drawn up at design stage.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Blackwood has a small number of houses in multiple occupation. These properties are **not** included in this allocations policy.

Shared Ownership Properties

Blackwood has a small number of shared ownership properties. These properties are **not** included in this allocations policy. Please refer to the Shared Ownership Buy Back policy for information on access to this accommodation.

APPENDIX 2 – THE PRIORITY SYSTEM

We operate a group priority system for the allocation of all our properties. The appropriate priority group will be assessed according to the applicant's current housing circumstances. When allocating a property, we will consider 4 factors:

- Eligibility and 'match' for the type of property available
- The size of property needed to accommodate the applicant's household and needs
- The appropriateness of existing adaptations
- Housing priority group

Matching Applicants to Property

This will be based on the type, size and property features of the accommodation. Suitability for different property types and sizes is determined by information provided by the applicant about:

- The size of their household i.e. how many people will live in the house
- The gender, relationships and age of those to be housed
- Space needed for support and supporters or carers
- Mobility, wheelchair use, support and other needs affecting the type of property and services required
- Location or development choices.

In matching applicants to property, we will try to accommodate predicted future needs where possible, if where there is no higher priority applicant whose immediate needs better match the property.

Size of Property

We will allocate property on the basis that each person within the household should have their own single bedroom except:

- a couple living as partners sharing a double room;
- two children sharing a double room under the age of 8;
- two children of the same sex sharing a double room under the age of 16 where the age gap is less than 6 years.

Where one or two partners in a couple are disabled, or where a child is disabled, and where separate bedrooms are required but not available in their existing accommodation, this will be treated as overcrowding.

Where an additional bedroom is needed to accommodate a carer, personal assistant, support tenant or other person providing regular sleepover support or to accommodate the particular needs of a disabled person, lack of this space is considered overcrowding.

Applicants will be advised that any allocation in accordance with the Blackwood size criteria (above) may not meet the size criteria as set by the government in relation to eligibility for housing benefit. Applicants will be asked to make an informed decision on whether they accept an offer of a property which is larger than their "needs" as defined by legislation and the impact this may have on any welfare benefits.

Where a divorced or separated parent has joint custody or regular access to children of more than two nights a week, the children will be classed as permanent members of the household by Blackwood for the purpose of assessing priority group. However, no overcrowding priority will be awarded. Applicants will be advised that, for benefit purposes, the legislative position is different and applicants will be asked to make an informed decision on whether they accept an offer of a property which is larger than their "needs" as defined by legislation.

We may require documentary evidence to support consideration for additional bedrooms.

Housing Needs Priority Schedule

The housing circumstances of applicants will be assessed and each applicant will be placed in one of the following groups. If an applicant has more than one housing need, they will be placed in the priority group of their highest need.

Applicants will be ranked in date order of application within each Priority Group.

ALLOCATIONS TARGETS

While using the Priority schedule to prioritise applications, we will actively seek nominations from other sources to maximise access. We will aim to seek allocations and allocate properties from the different routes as follows:

Source	% of vacancies
Nominations from Local Authority or HSCPs includes s5 referrals,	50%
Waiting List	25%
Internal transfers	25%

Priority Banding	Who will be considered	Criteria
High	Housing Circumstances Category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory Homeless- including residences in statutory homeless temporary accommodation including hostels. 	Must be assessed by Local Authority as statutory homeless and provide copy of determination letter.
	Under Occupation Category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social housing tenants that are under-occupying their property by more than three bedrooms 	Must have three or more additional bedrooms that are not required by the household.
	Overcrowding Category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overcrowding by three or more bedrooms 	Three or more bedrooms short, required by household.
	Personal circumstances Category <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applicants who are living in a property designed or adapted for special needs and no occupier of the property requires those features. - Delayed discharge and unable to be discharged home from hospital or similar institution until suitable housing is secured. - Applicant or family member is suffering domestic abuse. Where an applicant or family member is suffering from severe harassment or abuse - An applicant with a disability that aspires to live independently 	<p>Applicants property must be of a specific design, layout or have adaptations more than just being a ground floor property</p> <p>Current property must have been assessed as unsuitable by involved professionals and be able to demonstrate that no other options are available that could meet your needs in that property.</p> <p>Proof/verification will be required.</p> <p>Proof/verification will be required</p> <p>Looking to move out of the parental home but as requires specific accommodation would have significantly less housing options than a generic application for housing.</p>
	Medical Category Applicants whose medical circumstances make it impossible to	As assessed by professionals involved with the household

	remain/live in their home	
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Medium	<p>Housing Circumstances Category</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impending Homelessness, where 3 months' notice or less has been given to vacate current accommodation. (Person who is in care, lodging, HM forces, refugee, bed and breakfast etc). 	Proof will be required of impending homelessness. (Notice to Quit, letter from accommodation owners, letter from solicitor etc.)
	<p>Under Occupation Category</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social housing tenants that are under-occupying their property by two bedrooms. 	Must have two additional bedrooms that are not required by the household.
	<p>Overcrowding Category</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overcrowding by two bedrooms. 	Two bedrooms short, required by household.
	<p>Personal Circumstances Category</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applicants who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions and have unmet housing need. 	In all cases must be able to demonstrate no other housing option is available that could meet your needs in current property
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Below tolerable standard 	As defined by Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and confirmed by Local Authority Environmental Health Dept
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where an applicant or family member is suffering from harassment or abuse 	Proof/verification will be required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is unable to access essential support in current property 	Must be able to demonstrate detriment of not having access to this service. Would expect corroboration from involved professionals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unable to fulfil essential caring responsibilities in current property 	Must be able to demonstrate significant caring responsibilities to someone with severe and or enduring medical need and the difficulty or inability to provide this in current accommodation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applicants who are living in a supported tenancy and no occupier or the property requires this service 	Property must have a housing support or care service attached specifically to it or the location/development and would be relet as a supported tenancy to an applicant with that

Medium		need
	- Financial Hardship, where a household monthly rental/mortgage payment exceeds 25% of monthly income	Proof/verification will be required (Payslips, bank statements, HB award)
	- A disabled person looking to relocate to retain or take up an offer of employment	Must be accompanied by evidence of offer of employment and application will be for the area of employment only. Application will be cancelled upon accepting an offer or gaining alternative accommodation and priority banding will be reviewed every 2 weeks.
	Medical Category	
	- Current property is unsuitable in relation to medical needs in terms of layout or access and is difficult to live in	As assessed by professionals involved with the household
Low	Under Occupation Category - Social housing tenants that are under-occupying their property by one bedroom.	Must have one additional bedroom that is not required by the household.
	Overcrowding Category - Overcrowding by one bedrooms.	One bedroom short, required by household.
	Personal Circumstances Category Person who is a private tenant or owner occupier	And does not have a notice to quit or being repossessed
	Medical Category Applicant who requires more suitable accommodation to relieve medical circumstances	As assessed by professionals involved with applicant

APPENDIX 3

RELEVANT LEGISLATION, GUIDANCE AND BLACKWOOD POLICIES

1. Legislation

This policy and related procedures have been developed taking into account the requirements of these pieces of legislation which directly or indirectly affect the allocation of houses in Scotland:

Housing legislation

Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

Equality legislation

Equality Act 2010
Disability Discrimination Act 2005
Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006
Human Rights Act 1998
Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
Sex Discrimination Act 1986

Other relevant legislation

Welfare Reform (Scotland) Act 2012
Property Factors (Scotland) Act 2011
Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
Anti-Social Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004
GDPR regulations 2018
Management of Offenders etc. (Scotland) Act 2005
Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981

2. Guidance

Scottish Housing Regulator

Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: A Practical Guide 2019
Our Regulatory Framework: Consent to constitutional and organisational change and disposals
Our Regulatory Framework: Intervention
Our Regulatory Framework: Inquiries and Information
Our Regulatory Framework: Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management
Our Regulatory Framework: The Register of Social Landlords
Our Regulatory Framework: Monitoring the Scottish Social Housing Charter
Our Regulatory Framework: How We Regulate

Our Regulatory Framework: About Us
Our Regulatory Framework
The Scottish Social Housing Charter – Technical Guidance for Landlords
Monitoring the Scottish Social Housing Charter - Final Indicators and Context Information

SFHA

A Housing Report for Scotland
SFHA Welfare Reform Impact Assessment Report (July 2011)
Welfare Rights Guidance
CIHS/SFHA Discussion Paper - Devolving Housing Benefit
Getting the Balance Right (Equal Opportunities)
Rent Setting Guidance
Preventing and Alleviating Homelessness
The Disability Discrimination Act
Housing for Refugees and Asylum Seekers
Right to Buy Manual
Service Charges Guidance Booklet

3. Related Blackwood strategies, policies and procedures

Allocations procedures
Anti-social behaviour Policy and procedure
Complaints Policy and procedures
Openness & Confidentiality policy
Diversity and equality strategy
Equal Opportunities Policy.
Leases and Management Agreements – policy & procedures
Rent arrears policy
Entitlements, Payments and Benefits Policy

Voids Management Policy

APPENDIX 4

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Statistical information will be recorded and reported as follows:

Monthly

Number of lets

% accessible properties let to tenants with a disability

% Tenants still in their tenancies after twelve months

Quarterly

Number of lets