

PARKHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.

ALLOCATIONS POLICY

CONTENT

1.	Policy Aims and Objectives
2.	Legal and Regulatory Framework
3.	Links to Equal Opportunities and Sustainability Policies
4.	Policy Statement
5.	Points Scheme
6.	Outcomes and Target
7.	Responsibilities and Delegated Authority
8.	Review 2023 – 3 yearly

PARKHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

Allocations Policy

1. Policy Aims and Objectives

The Allocations Policy sets out the principals that Parkhead Housing Association follows in order to allocate our housing stock.

The Association aims to:

- Provide good quality affordable and secure rented accommodation to those demonstrating housing need.
- Prioritise those in housing need (reasonable preference being given to applicants occupying houses which do not meet tolerable standards; occupying overcrowded houses; are living in unsatisfactory housing in relation to access or medical condition) including those applicants referred by Glasgow City Council via the Section 5 Homeless Referral route.
- Comply with legislative and good practice requirements in regard to the assessment and allocation of housing.
- Facilitate fair and open access to the housing lists.
- Establish tenancies which are successful and encourage tenants to maintain their tenancies.
- Proactively minimise the cost of the process.
- Make the best use of stock seeking to promote sustainable communities.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Association's policy takes into account the following legislation:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by Housing (Scotland) 2001, 2010, 2014
- Equalities Act 2010
- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Management of Offenders Act 2005

Schedule 7

Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 has been repealed. At present there is a regulatory advice note issued from the Scottish Housing Regulator clarifying the regulatory expectations. Regulatory Standard 5.4 states that "Governing body members and staff declare and manage openly any conflicts of interests and ensure they do not benefit improperly from their position." Previously Schedule 7 allowed the Association to grant a tenancy to any of the following;

- Employees.
- Committee members.
- Former employees.
- Former Committee member.
- Close Relatives of any of the above.

A question is included in the housing application form to enable applicants to declare if they have any relationship with the staff or committee member. If the let is made in accordance with the above, the Policy & Performance Sub-Committee would receive a report at the next meeting advising of the let.

Social Housing Charter Outcomes

The Association also takes account of the Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes. The outcomes relevant to Allocations are:

Customer/Landlord Relationship

1. Equalities – "Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services."
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 that the landlord provides."

3. Participation – “Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlords decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.”

Access to Housing & Support – Housing Options

7. “People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.”

8. “Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.”

9. “People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.”

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 their prospects of being rehoused.”

11. Tenancy Sustainment – “Tenants get the information they need on how to access support options to help them to remain in their home and get suitable support including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.”

The Allocations Policy has been developed with due regard given to the Scottish Governments “Social Housing Allocations in Scotland: A Practice Guide” February 2019

3. Links to Equal Opportunities and Sustainability Policies

Parkhead Housing Association seeks to be an Equal Opportunities Organisation and recognises its responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010, Race Relations Act 1976 as amended 2003, the Civil Partnership Act 2004, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended 2005, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 section 106.

To help fulfil its commitment to equal opportunities the Association will collect and monitor records of the ethnic origin of all those who apply for housing and monitor ethnic origin of all those applicants re-housed.

In allocating houses the Association will seek to create and maintain sustainable communities.

The Association identifies those properties suitably located and adapted for applicants with a disability.

All Association information documents are available for translation into any other language where English is not the applicants first language.

4. Policy Statement

The Association's Housing Stock

Parkhead Housing Association manages 1643 properties with a turnover of over 100 properties per year.

The stock by size at 310319:

1 apt	2apt	3apt	4apt	5apt+	Total
8	558	775	260	42	1643

The stock by size and type is:

Size	House	Tenement	4 in a block	Maisonette	Total
1 apt	0	8	0	0	8
2 apt	20	505	33	0	558
3 apt	143	602	29	1	775
4 apt	114	141	2	3	260
5 apt	38	4	0	0	42
Total	315	1260	64	4	1643

The Association offers a housing options approach to those enquiring about housing but does recognise that not all applicants will utilise this process.

Housing Options is a holistic approach looking at wider housing destinations and considering all of the applicants circumstances.

Access to housing

In accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended by Section 9 of the 2001 Act and 2014 Act), the Association will not exclude any applicants from applying for housing.

The Association will ensure that access to the housing waiting list is open to all applicants aged 16 years and over.

However although all applicants will be placed on the waiting list, the Association receives many more applicants for housing than the number of houses that become available for let.

The Association will strive to provide applicants with up to date advice re housing prospects and, where appropriate, discuss other housing options.

Assessment

The Association operates a priorities and points system of allocations based on housing need.

Assessment is carried out by allocating points based on the applicant's;

- Housing need
- Social need
- Medical need

As described in the applicant's application form.

Admission to the waiting list does not mean an applicant will be allocated a house and this will be explained to applicants at the point of admission.

The decision on who is allocated a house and when will be determined by;

- The priority given to the circumstances of the applicant (i.e. the number of points an applicant is awarded).
- Availability dependant on turnover.

- Any Parkhead Housing Association Board decision to prioritise a particular group of tenants / applicants
- On new build the association will seek to let 33% to homeless applicants
- Typically the Association will aim to balance its annual lets as follows;

Source	%
Transfers	30
Waiting list	40
GCC section 5 homeless	30 (with annual review looking towards achieving up to 50%)

Transfers

Tenants of Parkhead Housing Association can apply for a transfer provided they meet the following criteria:

- There is no more than one month's rent outstanding prior to transfer and an arrangement to clear it is in place at point of offer.
- Any outstanding recharges do not exceed the equivalent of one month's rent with a satisfactory arrangement to clear in place prior to offer.
- There are no ongoing actions re anti social behaviour, specifically a live notice; a recent Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) or Unacceptable Behaviour Notice (UBN), a live Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO).

Tenants who have been allocated the correct size of house for their needs but who later require a larger house may only claim overcrowding for additional members of the household who are either dependant attained the age of 16 years old. The exception to this are

- 1) where the tenant moves in a partner and their current accommodation is for a single person.
- 2) where a carer is required and is moving in.

5. The Points Scheme

Section 5 homeless applicants are on a separate priority list.

The priority awarded to an applicant is dependant upon the number of points that the application attracts in terms of the points scheme as detailed below: -

Security of Accommodation

1. Applicants sharing facilities in multi occupied or hostel accommodation or of no fixed abode or in temporary furnished supported accommodation.(Our advice to such applicants would be also to seek a section 5 referral) 100

2. Applicants about to be made homeless and where legal proof can be provided of a date to leave.(This includes all Private Rented Sector applicants due to insecurity of tenure) 100

This will escalate at the actual point of becoming homeless (at a maximum of 8 weeks prior and where evidence of current Notice to Quit provided) 130

3. Applicants staying care of another household and sharing/lacking amenities. No additional overcrowding points will be awarded where applicants are staying c/o. 110

Lacking Amenities & Living in a property that does not meet the tolerable standard

These points are only awarded where the applicant is currently a householder or tenant:

1. Without a separate kitchen 30

2. Without either a bath or shower 40

3. Without a hot water supply 20

Where there is a change of tenancy within the private rented sector after 1st April 2020, the property will be required to be at least EPC E. All private rented sector properties will need to be EPC E by end of March 2022. If not, award 30 points (applies from specific dates)

Overcrowding

1. For each additional bedroom required. 40

2. Where the applicant is an Association tenant – for each bedspace short e.g. 2 children aged 9 or under sharing a single bedroom. 30

Points for overcrowding will be based on the following criteria: -

- Applicants and partner to occupy one bedroom. With the exception of couples or children aged 9 or under, persons of different sex shall not share a bedroom.
- Any members of the household aged 15 years, or over, require a separate bedroom.
- Normally there should be no more than two occupants in any bedroom. (excluding newly born)
- Where overcrowding will occur as a result of pregnancy a medical certificate will be required and points awarded 12 weeks prior to the date of confinement.

Under occupation

For each bedroom surplus to requirements (not applicable to owner occupiers or those renting privately) . 40

For Parkhead Housing Association tenants who are residing in 4 apartments & 5 apartments we will award 50 points per bedroom for under occupying.

Separated Households

Applicants whose households are forced to live apart. 20

Owner Occupiers

Owners seeking a move to PHA stock will only be pointed at the time PHA receive proof positive of house sale or repossession and the points / priority will only be applied at date of sale / repossession.

Medical Factors

The award of medical points based on medical categories of Physical A and B, and Mental Health A and B, plus category C, seeks to allow applicants to access housing which is more suited to their medical condition. At all times the award should be made in the context of it improving the quality of life of the applicant by accessing more suitable housing.

The key consideration in the award of medical points is not the medical condition itself but whether the medical condition will be wholly or partly alleviated by rehousing. So the key test in the award of medical points is that the tenant or member of the household has a serious medical condition or disability and the present housing is unsuitable.

A separate medical self-assessment form should be completed for each household member to be considered for medical points and submitted at the time of the application for re-housing or when medical problem arises.

The Association may ask you to provide supplementary information where appropriate. However conscious of the current stand by GP practices in Glasgow as articulated by the Glasgow Local Medical Committee (GMLC) we will seek so far as is possible to avoid any GP involvement. Wherever possible and appropriate we will seek evidence and expert opinion from such as OT, CPN and proof of benefit awards. Further any appointment letters (ongoing) or reports from such as hospital outpatient clinics will be useful in determining medical awards. The Association will reserve the right to seek medical advice / proof in exceptional cases.

An applicant or member of their household may be awarded medical points based on the person with the greatest need.

Only 1 medical award can be claimed per application.

Physical Category A

Applicants will be largely housebound in their existing accommodation suffering a severe health and/or mobility problem. 100

The default position is that all applicants wishing to claim medical points in this category will only be queued for ground floor property and will not be queued for any property with internal stairs. However the presence of a stairlift and / or ground floor sleeping and bathroom facilities can be taken into account.

Physical Category B

Applicants will have moderate health and or mobility problems which is adversely affected by current housing. 50

All applicants wishing to claim medical points in this category with a mobility problem will be offered accommodation at a maximum of first floor level and all on one floor. However again the presence of a stairlift and / or ground floor sleeping and bathroom facilities can be taken into account as can a significant reduction in the number of stairs which the occupant would require to manage compared to current accommodation.

Mental Health Category A

Applicants will have severe mental health problems. 100

There will be no restrictions placed on house types queued for.

Mental Health Category B

Applicants will have moderate mental health problems. 50

Medical Category C

Applicants will require sole use of a bedroom due to a medical condition and that cannot be facilitated by existing accommodation. 40

Social Factors

Social factors will be taken into account where it can be shown 200
that alternative accommodation could alleviate the circumstances or
improve the quality of life of the applicant or members of the family,
e.g. person experiencing racial harassment or domestic violence

Cases under this section will be dealt with sensitively and on its own merits
based on the evidence it is possible to gather e.g. Police, Social Work
Services, Doctor, Education Services, Hospital Consultant.

Evidence to support the social factors will be collated by the Operational
Team and the recommendation to award the 200 points will be made by the
Housing Officer for ratification by the Housing Manager and Director of
Operations and reported to the next Operations Sub Committee.

One offer of accommodation will be made and if this is refused the social
points will be removed unless exceptional circumstances make that offer
inappropriate. An absolute of two offers will be made.

For current Association tenants the offer of accommodation will be based on
equivalent demand.

Internal Transfers

1. If a tenant currently lives in a non-new build property but 2
wishes to move to a new build property, for every year of the
tenancy in the present accommodation.
2. If tenant is in a bedsit type accommodation and seeking a separate 40
bedroom (1 apartment)

Support

When re-housing within the area, would allow the applicant to give 20
support to / or receive support from tenant/resident already living within
Parkhead area.

In cases of: long term illness, disability frailty,
socially isolated (including moving to Retirement Housing).

Employment

PHA understands moving to Parkhead for employment purposes can assist
applicants access suitable affordable housing. It can also help us ensure that
the Parkhead community has a balance of working and non-working
households.

If an applicant is moving to access employment within the Parkhead area we
will award 20 additional points.

Priority of Applicants

Where two or more applicants have the same number of points the following criteria will decide who has the highest priority;

1. The length of time the applicant has been in known housing need.
2. The size and suitability (including medical) of the property in relation to the needs of the applicant and the applicant's household.
3. The best use of stock in relation to promoting a balanced and stable community within the Parkhead area.
4. The stated preferences are the requirement of the applicant.

Suspension of an application

Suspension of an applicant will follow the statutory grounds set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. Suspension of applicants will be 12 months and if the applicant wishes to appeal the decision to put in writing the reasons to the Housing Manager. This is a separate process from the Association's Complaints Policy/Procedure.

We will look at other cases (not statutory grounds) on an individual basis and determine whether it is reasonable to suspend that applicant. The Association may suspend an applicant for any of the following reasons;

1. The applicant knowingly supplied false information either on their application or at subsequent interviews. If this becomes apparent after a tenancy is granted the Association may serve a Notice of Proceedings with a view to recovery of possession.
2. Repeated failure to respond to Association communications. The application will be reinstated after contact from the applicant.
3. Failure to advise the Association of any change in family circumstances or change of address. In this case a new application form would have to be completed.
4. Where two offers of accommodation have been refused by a waiting list applicant the application will be suspended for 12 months and the applicant will require to advise the Association of their desire to remain on our list after the 12 month period.
5. Following receipt of an unsatisfactory tenancy reference and where the issues remain unresolved.

Relationship breakdown

In cases of relationship breakdown within an Association tenancy the Association will give consideration to the granting of an additional tenancy to the partner moving out. In cases where children are involved the matrimonial home will remain with the party granted custody of the children.

The Association will not consider any cases for housing until both parties have been interviewed and the party that no longer wishes to remain in the matrimonial home has completed an application form.

One offer of equivalent accommodation will be made and if refused the applicant will be placed on the waiting list.

Custody

The Association may consider applicants to queue for a larger house on the basis of shared/joint custody of children or on the basis of overnight access to the children.

As a right where there is legal custody awarded and proof of this is seen then the applicant may queue for and be awarded (if appropriate) overcrowding points for a larger house.

Where the custody / access arrangement is voluntary the default position would be to refuse to queue for a larger house and with overcrowding points however the Housing Manager has discretion to allow this on a case by case basis.

The Association understands the difficulties this poses and each individual case will be taken on its own merit, and proof of this arrangement would be required.

The default position will be to disallow under-occupancy.

Carers

The Association will allow applicants with carers to queue for a larger house where the carer sleeps over for three nights or more in any given week.

Proof of such an arrangement is required however the Association recognises that some carers do not either qualify for payment or opt not to take payment as it impacts adversely and disproportionately on other benefits.

No additional overcrowding points will be awarded.

Domestic Abuse

Refer to PHA Domestic Abuse Policy “The Association as a default position will support the abused partner and any children to remain in the family home while recognising that this may not be the preferred choice of the abused person or indeed in all cases be possible. This will be an early conversation with the abused person.”

“Where for whatever reason it is not possible for the abused person and any other children to remain in the family home the Association will automatically award a transfer application special case of 200 points to expedite the earliest possible move to another secure Association tenancy assuming this is the wish of the abused person.”

Retirement housing

The Association has a stock of 59 Retirement Housing properties. The Association does not provide housing support but has a Retirement Housing Officer providing enhanced housing management services. Any personal care needs which tenants have are the responsibility of Social Work and Health Services.

A separate list of applicants wishing to access Retirement Housing is maintained. The applicants are pointed as per the Allocations Policy, based on housing need.

Criteria for accessing the Retirement Housing waiting list are:

- Aged sixty or over (in some circumstances this can be varied)
- Some vulnerability due to physical or mental health, or age,
- Ability to maintain a tenancy.

Wheelchair / Ambulant disabled

The Association has a total stock of 226 wheelchair/ambulant disabled properties which have a very low turnover and waiting times for this type of house may be lengthy.

A separate list of applicants requiring this type of house will be maintained. Priority will be given to transfer applicants.

Disabled Adapted & Specialist housing (Special Needs)

Disabled adapted housing and specialist housing will be identified and matched with the applicant who will benefit most from the adaptation/specialist housing.

Existing PHA tenants who are residing in a disabled adapted property that is no longer required by the current tenant will be offered a transfer to a property that meets their needs. This potentially frees up a disabled adapted property for letting for a suitable applicant.

In the case of Specialist Housing (Special Needs) Glasgow City Council Social Work Services will identify a suitable applicant.

Age Criteria

Properties at Helenvale Court & 43 Dechmont (23 units) were ex-Scottish Homes properties acquired in 1995.

Prior to transfer these were generally for aged over 55's. The Association wishes to retain the over 55 category within these properties.

We also wish to include the flats (2nd floor) above the Retirement Housing at Crail Street/Thornhill Path as aged over 55 (12 units) and the single bedroom properties with a lift at 1331 Duke Street

While not location specific the future roll out of retirement housing will be assisted by the age criteria at these locations.

Properties with Lifts

In blocks that have lifts (currently 1 Crail Place, 1 Dalton Court, 44 Helenvale Street, 70 Salamanca Street, 1331 Duke Street) we will allocate in the first instance to those applicants with mobility issues.

GCC Section 5 homeless referrals

The Association will meet its obligations under the joint Glasgow City Council/Registered Social Landlord protocol in relation to homeless applicants. All referrals must come via the Housing Access Team.

Mutual exchanges/Home Swapper

The Associations mutual exchange scheme is through Home Swapper. Home Swapper is used to further expand mobility and choice, and is a service which allows tenants in the social housing sector to list and exchange homes with other social rented tenants anywhere in the UK. The Association pays an annual fee which allows our tenants to use the service free of charge.

We will issue transfer tenants with information about Home Swapper. The Association will add all new transfer applicants to Home Swapper if they agree via the transfer application form.

We will also actively promote exchanges based on suitably sized accommodation using the Home Swapper Right size register.

The legislation governing mutual exchanges state that a landlord must not reasonably refuse permission for the mutual exchange of a house. Reasonable grounds for refusing permission, outline in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 include:

- A notice has been served on the tenant warning that eviction may be sought on certain grounds, because of his or her conduct.
- The landlord has obtained an order for the tenant's eviction.
- The house was let to the tenant because of his or her employment with his or her landlord.
- The tenant's house was designed or adapted for persons with special needs and, if the exchange was allowed, there would be no person living in the house who required those designs or adaptations.
- The other house is larger than required by the tenant and his or her family.
- The other house is not suitable for the needs of the tenant and his or her family.
- The proposed exchange would lead to the criminal offence of overcrowding.

The Association's decision whether to grant or refuse an exchange will be provided within 28 days. If we fail to respond within 28 days, we will be deemed to have granted permission for the exchange.

Protocols (Temporary Homeless Flats, Care Leavers Protocol, Recovery Housing, etc)

Any additional requests for lets will be taken to Policy & Performance sub-committee for lets under this category.

Help for Heroes provides direct, practical support to wounded, injured and sick Servi

Re-housing Offenders

The Management of Offenders Act (2005) established Criminal Justice Authorities across Scotland. Criminal Justice Authorities comprise of what the legislation calls “responsible authorities”, and the partners are now statutorily required to co-operate. The legislation is concerned with the management of offenders and seeks to prevent re-offending. Sex offenders are but one category of offenders.

Risk assessment is the responsibility of the responsible authorities (Social Work Services, Police, Prison Service and NHS where appropriate). Management of the risk on an ongoing basis is shared between Social Work and the police. Housing has a role in contributing to the management of the risk by the provision of appropriate housing. The arrangements known as Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), contained in the legislation seek to provide a framework for the Assessment and Management of risk.

In Glasgow, the local authority have a best practice protocol in place called the “National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO) Glasgow Duty to Cooperate Protocol”. The Association has signed up to this protocol.

The Association has a question on the housing application form asking if the applicant is required to register with the police under the Sex Offenders Act 1997. If this box is ticked yes, the designated responsible person for the Association is the Director of Operations, would contact the local authority Sex Offenders Liaison Officer (SOLO).

The process which the protocol outlines is summarised below:

- The Solo (Sex Offenders Liaison Officer) contacts Director of Operations at PHA to enquire about potential availability.
- If it is likely that PHA can assist then SOLO asks Director of Operations for further information.
- If a potential property is identified the Director of Operations will be provided with relevant information about the sex offender and asked to contribute to the risk management plan.
- PHA will be asked to reserve the property for 5 days to allow the responsible authorities to confirm its appropriateness to the risk management plan.
- Decision taken re housing and implementation of the risk management plan.

If the sex offender is re-housed PHA Director of Operations requires to contribute to the Police and Social Work Criminal Justice Team environment

screening in the vicinity of the let. Risk management and risk assessment is paramount throughout the whole process.

6. Outcomes and Targets

The Association will seek to achieve the following:

1. Lets will be made in accordance with the policy while also considering the best use of stock in relation to promoting a sustainable community within the Parkhead area.
2. Lets will be made as far as possible within the targets agreed by the Board / Policy & Performance Sub-Committee.
3. On an annual basis to coincide with the budgetary process the Association will produce a lettings plan.

7. Responsibilities and Delegated Authority

The Housing Officers are responsible for managing lettings on a daily basis reporting to the Housing Manager.

The Housing Manager/Director of Operations will report to the Policy & Performance Sub-Committee quarterly on:

- Number of lets in each category
- Number of days to let in each category
- % of lets in each category (i.e by source)

And in addition annually

- % of lets by ethnicity of applicant
- Number of refusals
- Waiting list numbers

Quarterly The Housing Manager and Senior Housing Officer will audit 5% of lets and annually Internal Audit will audit 5% of lets.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner where changes in legislation affect procedure.

Policy was amended in August 2023

Full review is due December 2023