

Letting Policy

Introduction

Aims

It is the aim of the Council's letting policy to:

- Accurately assess applicants' housing need, and
- Let houses to people with the greatest need, whose household fits each empty property best.

Principles

This policy is based on the following principles:

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

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone who applies to us for housing is treated fairly, consistently and with respect.

Our policy aims to promote equality and diversity, by eliminating discrimination between persons on grounds of race, colour, ethnic and national origins, marital status, domestic circumstances, gender, sexuality and transgender, age, class, ethical or religious belief, basic skills, disability, trade union activity or long term unemployment.

The objectives for our Letting Policy are that:

- To contribute to keeping void levels down to the annual targets.
- To give greatest priority to people with housing need, in particular:
 - Homeless people.
 - People living in poor housing conditions (i.e. below the tolerable standard).
 - People who are overcrowded.
 - People who live in houses or areas which are causing them stress (e.g. suffering racial or domestic abuse, people who need to live close to carers or support).
 - People who have a medical reason for rehousing.
 - People who are under-occupying a social-rented house.
 - People whose houses are to be demolished.
- It will contribute to enabling the regeneration programme to progress re-housing for demolition areas to help progress to meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015).
- It will be as clear, simple and understandable as we can make it.

APPLICATIONS

We wish to make the application process as straightforward and as accessible as possible. We will achieve this by:

- Making application forms available in appropriate formats at all offices and on the Council's website.
- Enabling applicants to apply by telephone.
- Accepting applications from anyone aged 16 or over who wishes to live in Dundee.
- Ensuring that all applications are, registered and assessed and acknowledged.
- Allowing applicants to choose the type of housing in areas they would prefer.
- Offering applicants help to complete their form if required.
- Providing, in appropriate formats, advice and information on the availability of houses in the City, as well as applicants' housing prospects and options.

Anyone aged sixteen or over can apply for Council housing. An applicant can apply on their own or with a joint applicant. Application forms are available from any housing office, by telephoning the Lettings Centre or by download from the Council's website. Completed forms can be handed in at any housing office, Dundee House or posted to the Lettings Centre.

Guidance on how to complete the application is included in the form. Applicants are encouraged to phone the Lettings Centre if they have queries about filling in the form and the Council staff will offer to help an applicant to complete the form if they have particular difficulty.

The details the applicant gives on their form will be used to work out how many points they will be given, so it is important that applicants are encouraged to be very accurate when they are telling us what kind of a house they want. We will use this information when we are making offers.

Housing Associations will be able to access our waiting list through the Letting System and offer houses to applicants who have indicated on their form that they would like to be housed in areas of the City where they have houses. They will then be considered according to each Housing Association's policy when they are allocating their houses. Applicants who are re-housed by another landlord will be asked if they would like their application to be reviewed or to be cancelled.

It is very important that the applicant gives us as many contact details as possible because we may want to telephone them if there is anything else we need to know about their application, or if they have missed some details off their form. From receipt of a completed form, applications will be assessed and the applicant written to telling them that their name is now on our waiting list within 15 days. The letter will advise them of the size, type and location of the accommodation they have chosen along with the group we have placed them in and any points awarded. The letter will also contain some advice on their prospects of being housed. Applicants are advised to check the details to see they are correct and let us know if there is anything that needs to be changed.

Processing an Application

Applications will be accepted at any of our housing offices. Upon receipt, applications will be, registered and assessed and acknowledged. Points will be awarded to reflect the applicant's housing need as set out in this policy. Applications will then be placed in their priority group.

Applicants will be sent a letter detailing the following:

- The group they are in.
- The points they have been awarded and how these have been calculated.
- Some information about their prospects of being re-housed
- How to appeal if they feel they have been treated unfairly.
- Where they can get further advice and information about their housing needs.

At the time an application is being assessed the applicant's previous addresses will be confirmed and a check carried out for any outstanding debt related to a Council tenancy where there is no existing agreement to repay.

Applications will be placed on the Active Waiting List, (*for those applicants who are currently seeking housing*), or the Inactive Waiting List, for applicants who do not wish to be considered for housing at the present time.

Joint Applications

The Council welcomes joint applications from persons aged 16 or over who wish to be housed together. Only two joint applicants may apply. They do not have to be living at the same address to apply, but each will have to supply details of their present circumstances, so that their application for housing can be assessed. Any priority for housing will be based on whichever applicant has the greatest need to ensure they get the highest number of points possible. Should their circumstances change, and they no longer wish to be rehoused together, a new assessment will be carried out for each applicant. They will not lose the date of application originally made by them. Where the application was originally submitted in one name, but another joint applicant was subsequently added, then each applicant will be entitled to the date they applied.

Review of Application

We will review each application every year. We will also review the applicant's form and their circumstances every time we telephone them. There are two reasons that we review applications:

- To check that the applicant still wants to be on our waiting list, and
- To make sure that the information we hold is accurate and up to date.

All applications for housing will be reviewed regularly. For any applicants who have been suspended because they are not able to sustain a tenancy or have been involved in Anti-Social Behaviour, their applications will be reviewed at least once a year. Where there has been no activity on an application form for twelve months, applicants will be contacted to check if their circumstances have altered, and if they wish to remain on the Council's Waiting List.

Applicants can make changes to their housing application at any time. This can be done by telephone, by e-mail, in person at a Housing Office or in writing. Examples of changes might be changes to their areas of choice or adding a baby to their household. Any time we have contact with applicants, we will advise them that it is both their responsibility and vitally important that they inform the Council if their circumstances change, as this may affect the number of points they have or the house they might be offered.

Cancellations

Applications can be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- At the applicant's request. The applicant can cancel their application form at any time by contacting us. If they want to stay on our list, but don't want to be offered a house for a period of time, e.g. to recover from a stay in hospital, they can let us know and we will not offer them a house for an agreed length of time, or until an agreed date. The Applicant will be sent a letter of confirmation.
- In the event of failure to respond to correspondence. If we cannot contact an applicant by telephone or a letter we send to them is returned we will write again to their last known address. If this letter is also returned, or the applicant does not contact us, we will assume that they are no longer looking for a house and cancel their application.
- On the death of the applicant.
- When the applicant has been re-housed by the Council or another Social Landlord (housing association,) in the City. Applicants then have the option to have their application reviewed or cancelled.

Where an application is cancelled, the applicant has the right to appeal. When considering an appeal, the applicant's circumstances will be taken into account. Where an appeal is successful, the application will be reinstated with the date of their most recent form.

It is the applicant's responsibility to advise us of a change in circumstances to allow us to re-assess their application.

Transfer of Applications

On notification of an applicant's death, the application will automatically be transferred to the surviving spouse or partner as long as they were living with the applicant at the time of their death. Where there is no surviving spouse or partner, the application may be transferred to any other person named on the application form, provided the person is aged 16 or over and has been resident with the applicant for at least 6 months prior to the applicant's death. **The Council may ask for proof of residency when a request to transfer an application is received.**

Relationship Breakdown

In the event of a relationship breakdown, where the partners wish to be housed separately, the following will apply:

- Where the application is in joint names, the joint application will be cancelled and each person can apply for housing separately. A new assessment will be carried out for each applicant, based on their current circumstances. They will not lose the date of application originally made by them. Where the application was originally submitted in one name, but a joint applicant was subsequently added, then each applicant will be entitled to the date they applied.
- Where one of the partners wishes to leave the household and apply for housing, they can submit an application form that will be assessed according to their current circumstances.
- Where there is a current joint application for housing, a new assessment will be carried out for each applicant based on their current circumstances. They will not lose the date of application originally made by them.
- Where the application was originally submitted in one name, but a joint applicant was subsequently added, then each applicant will be entitled to the date they applied.

Inactive Waiting List

The Council holds lists of applicants who are not actively seeking housing at the present time, or who, through the pre-tenancy checking process are suspended.

The reasons are:

- Applications deferred at the applicant's own request.
- Those currently serving a custodial prison sentence, (6 months prior to an applicant's anticipated release date, their form can be re-activated and considered for offers of housing).
- Where we are awaiting further information before a priority can be awarded.

Applicants who are held on this list can make changes to their application. Where a change in circumstances is made that could affect their priority, the Council will review the application to ensure any priority awarded is accurate and up to date. Where applicants who are deferred at their own request or are living in tied accommodation and notify us to re-activate their application, they will be placed on the waiting list using their original date of application.

Similarly, where an applicant has been suspended awaiting the award of a priority, the original application date will be applied to their application.

Applicants *may* also be suspended where there is evidence of serious anti-social behaviour or serious breach of tenancy. The Council will not suspend applicants who have been given a statutory homeless priority.

False and Misleading Information

Where an applicant deliberately makes a false statement in order to gain access to housing, or withholds important information, their application may be suspended for a period of 6 months. Once the period of suspension is over, the application will be reviewed and the applicant re-admitted to the active waiting list with the date that their suspension was removed. The Council may take action to repossess a tenancy that has been achieved by the tenant providing false and misleading information in respect of their housing application.

MAKING OFFERS OF HOUSING

Information to be Considered when Making Offers

In accordance with the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, (Sections 9 and 10), when allocating housing, the Council cannot take account of:

- The age of the applicant (*provided they are aged 16 or over*).
- The length of time the applicant has lived in Dundee.
- The income of the applicant and their family.
- Whether they own or have owned a property.
- Whether the applicant is living in the same house as a spouse or partner.
- Whether a judicial separation or divorce has been obtained.
- Rent arrears or other tenancy related debt from a house where the applicant is/was not the tenant, there is no debt still outstanding, or the amount due is less than one month's rent.
- Any outstanding debts (*including Council Tax*) due by the applicant or their household that are not related to a tenancy.
- No offers will be made to applicants who have not passed the pre-tenancy check.

Offers of housing will be made reflecting applicants assessed housing need.

Size of Housing

Applicants will be asked to indicate their preferred house size and can request additional bedrooms. Dependent upon demand for housing, applicants may only be offered the size of property their household needs. However, actual house size required (*refer to the guidance included in the table on page 25*) will be taken into consideration when allocating properties. Applicants will not be offered housing that would result in them being overcrowded. Any permanent member of the household who is temporarily absent is still included in the household for the purposes of assessing the size requirements.

The number of bedrooms needed will take into account future or occasional members of the household. This may include:

- An unborn child.
- Where there is a separated parent whose visiting or access arrangements mean they require larger accommodation.
- Foster/adopted children where the applicant has Social Work approval and they need a larger house to provide care.

Definition of a Family

For the application of this policy a “family” is as defined in the Housing Scotland 2001 Act s108. The Act defines a family as:

- A single adult, a married couple or a couple (*regardless of sex*) living as if married.
- Their children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces.
- A child raised or treated by the partner as if their own (even though the child is not related to them) shall be considered part of the family.
- Two unrelated households or people who apply for housing will be considered by us as one household.

An application for housing containing any of the above family relationships shall be accepted as a household which can be given a priority reflecting their needs. It may be that the applicant does not currently live with their extended family (or have not yet taken guardianship of an adopted or foster child) but wishes to obtain housing to accommodate them all.

Minimum Household Sizes for City Council Housing

Property	Bedspace	Household Size
Studio	Single	1 Person
2 Apt (1 Bedroom) 1 Person	Single	1 Person
2 Apt (1 Bedroom) 2 Person	Double	1 person or couple
3 Apt (2 Bedrooms) 3 Person	1 Double and 1 Single	Single parent/couple with one child/pregnant woman
3 Apt (2 Bedrooms) 4 Person	2 Double	Single parent/couple with 1 child or 2 children(of the sex if over 8 years of age)/pregnant woman
4 Apt (3 Bedrooms) 4 Person	1 Double and 2 Single	Single parent/couple with 2 children
4 Apt (3 Bedrooms) 5 Person	2 Double and 1 Single	Single parent/couple with 2 or 3 children
4 Apt (3 Bedrooms) 6 Person	3 Double	Single parent/couple with 2, 3 or 4 children, provided that no more than 2 children of the same sex(if over 8 years of age) have to share a bedroom
5 Apt (4 Bedrooms) 6 Person	2 Double and 2 single	Single parent/couple with 4 children
5 Apt (4 Bedrooms) 8 Person	4 Double	Single parent/couple with 4 to 6 children, provided not more than 2 children of the same sex (if over 8 years of age) have to share a bedroom
6 Apt (5 Bedrooms)	5 Double	Single parent/couple with 6 to 8 children provided that not more than 2 children of the same sex (if over 8 years of age) have to share a bedroom

GROUPS ON THE WAITING LIST

Assigning an applicant to a Group and awarding points

When we are notified about an empty house, the Lettings System will automatically put it into one of four groups. It will do this strictly in rotation to match the targets that we have set so that all applicants have the same chance of being offered a house in every area of the city. The number of houses becoming available in different areas of the city will vary, so an applicant's chances of being offered a house in some areas will be better than in others.

The waiting list is divided up into four groups. We use a group and points system when we assess any application. We will make our assessment according to the details the applicant provides on their form and award points according to their current housing situation as well as their needs. Applications will be placed in one of the following four groups.

Homeless Group – includes applicants who have been assessed by our Homeless Services Unit under the terms of Part 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended, and awarded a homeless priority. This group includes members of HM Forces, those released from prison and applicants in tied accommodation with a notice to quit. Personnel serving in HM Forces will be considered for housing up to nine months prior to their discharge. Applicants who are serving custodial sentences will be considered for housing up to six months prior to their release. All 'tied' applicants will be considered for housing up to three months prior to the date of their notice to quit.

Points Awarded: People who have been assessed as being homeless or potentially homeless and who have a priority need will be given 70 points. Members of HM Forces, applicants who are serving custodial sentences and applicants currently living in 'tied' accommodation and who have received a "notice to quit" will also be given 70 points and placed in this group. Applicants in the homeless group can only have medical points added to their homelessness points. No other types of points can be added.

Redevelopment Group – includes applicants where a formal decision has been made to demolish or redevelop their property. Applicants in this group will have points awarded to reflect the length of their tenancy with their current landlord as well as points for any other need.

Points Awarded: Where applicants are living in accommodation which is due to be demolished, their application will be given points which reflect the length of continuous tenancy, or tenancies, with their present landlord. Points will be awarded on a sliding scale ranging from 20 to 70 as detailed in the table on page 15.

- Less than 5 years tenancy 20
- 5 - 10 years tenancy 40
- More than 10 years tenancy 70

General Needs Group – includes applicants with a variety of needs. They include a medical need, a social need, those who are living in overcrowded conditions or under-occupying property, those living in sub-standard housing conditions and applicants who are staying with family and friends or as lodgers or sub-tenants.

Points Awarded: Points in this group are awarded under different categories.

Social needs points:

People who are the victims of harassment, domestic abuse or who need to live in a particular area to give or receive support may be given 40 points for social need. Where there is an identified child protection issue social needs points can be given.

We will normally need proof from an applicant that they have a social need before they will be awarded. People who are given medical points by the Medical Advisory Service because of a

social need will not be able to have social needs points added to their application if they are for the same reason as the medical points. Applicants with social needs are to receive an award of 40 points where there is an assessed need.

Overcrowding points

Where the size of an applicant's household means that they need one more bedroom than they currently have, 40 points will be added to their application. Where their need is for two bedrooms (or more) than they currently have, 70 points will be added to their application.

When we check to see if a household is overcrowded, we will look at the number of people in the household and their relationships to each other, and compare that with the number of rooms (and their sizes) in their current accommodation. We will not award overcrowding points if the applicant has two household members of opposite sexes under the age of eight sharing a bedroom. When one of them reaches their eighth birthday then 40 overcrowding points will be added to the application to allow them to have separate bedrooms. If there are two people of the same sex in a household sharing a bedroom (whatever their relationship), no overcrowding points will be added to the application, no matter what age they are.

Under-occupation points

If the house the applicant is living in is too big for the household size, we will award extra points on their application. If the applicant has one bedroom more than needed, we will award 40 points and if they have two or more bedrooms than needed, we will award 70 points.

People Living in Sub-Standard Housing Conditions

This refers only to housing which is below the tolerable standard (BTS) as defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, s86 as amended.

For an applicant to be awarded points their accommodation must fail one or more of the following measures:

- Is structurally stable.
- Is substantially free of rising and penetrating damp.
- Has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and heating.
- Has an adequate supply of piped and wholesome water available within the house.
- Has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house.
- Has a water closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house.
- Has a fixed bath or shower and a wash hand basin each supplied with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located in the house.
- Has an effective system for the drainage and dispersal of both foul and surface water.
- Has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house.
- Has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.

(Note: Private Sector Services Unit/Housing Investment Unit should be requested to confirm whether a house falls below the tolerable standard).

Where an applicant is judged to be living in housing below the tolerable standard as outlined above, their application will be awarded 70 points.

Non-Householders

Applicants who are staying with family, friends or as lodgers or sub-tenants and who wish to have their own tenancy, will be awarded 10 points. Applicants who have been assessed as homeless will not be awarded an additional 10 points under this category. Applicants who have no fixed address or who are sleeping on the floor or sofa will be assessed under the terms of the Homelessness, etc (Scotland) Act 2003.

Choice Group – includes applicants adequately housed with no housing need.

Points Awarded: Applicants in the 'Choice' group will not have points, and will therefore be placed in date order.

An application can be given multiple points if it is assessed as having more than one need (e.g. if an applicant is living in overcrowded conditions *and* has a medical priority, they will be given points for both needs). The applicant can only be placed in one group, according to their overriding need.

Sheltered Housing

Sheltered housing is linked by an alarm system to a nearby warden. If an applicant is aged 60 years and over they can apply. It is possible for people under the age of 60 to be allocated sheltered housing but this is exceptional and will only be done on the recommendation of the Medical Advisory Service. (For example someone with a learning disability who needs a degree of housing support.) All applications for sheltered housing are assessed by the Medical Advisory Service, who will take into account the medical requirements and current housing circumstances of the household and may award a low, medium or high priority to reflect need. This will add 20, 40 or 70 points respectively to an application.

Disabled Adapted Housing/Very Sheltered Housing and Housing with Care

Applicants for the above will have their medical needs assessed by the Council's Medical Advisor/Assessment Panel/Single Shared Assessment and will be awarded a low medium or high priority, with 20, 40 or 70 points respectively, to reflect the severity or urgency of their needs. For this type of housing we will match an individual applicant to a specific property.

Medical points

If an applicant's present accommodation is unsuitable for medical reasons, then they should complete a medical assessment form. The Council's Medical Advisor will assess the form and may award a low, medium or high priority to reflect the applicant's needs. This will add 20, 40 or 70 points respectively to their application. Applicants will only qualify for this priority where a house move is expected to improve their medical needs/circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances

In some cases, applicants may be given extra priority (e.g. where an applicant is unable to be discharged from hospital as their current house is unsuitable). Their case will be dealt with on an individual basis and a higher award of points may be made. Where emergency re-housing is needed, tenants may be offered alternative housing. Wherever possible this will be to housing of a similar type. These cases will be assessed on an individual basis.

Letting Targets

Dundee City Council allocates properties in a way that ensures each group gets a share of the available housing and we have targets for each of the groups. Targets will be subject to an annual review and will be published in the local press and on the Council's website.

Group	Target %
Homeless	45
General Needs	25
Redevelopment	25
Choice	5

Making offers of Housing that is Readily Available

We may, at the discretion of the Director of Housing classify a property as "readily available" under the following circumstances:

- When there is no demand for a particular empty property, or
- The property has been formally offered and refused three times, or
- The property has been fit to view and had remained un-let after 3 weeks.

Properties deemed to be readily available will be let by advertising so that people who are on the waiting list can let us know that they are interested in being considered for it. The applicant's needs and household size must be suitable for the property. We will allocate the property to the applicant with the highest number of points and the greatest need. Properties will be advertised on the Council's web site, www.dundee.gov.uk, and in Council offices.

Local Letting Initiatives

From time to time we may introduce special rules in certain areas of the City in order to let our houses. This can be for a number of reasons including:

- Where houses are difficult to let, or
- Where we convert sheltered houses to standard housing

When we do this we will publish the special rules, consult with local residents and seek the permission of the Council's Housing Committee. We will monitor any local letting initiative to make sure that it has been effective.

When setting up initiatives, due regard will be taken of legislative requirements. Local tenants, residents and Elected Members will be involved in the development of local letting initiatives, in accordance with the Council's Tenant Participation Strategy and details of the scheme will be advertised. Initiatives will be reviewed every 6 months in order to assess their continued need.

Pre-tenancy checks

As part of the process we will carry out a series of checks before we offer any applicant a tenancy. These include evidence over the last *three* years of:

- A history and/or evidence of serious antisocial behaviour (both the applicant and anybody aged sixteen or over in their household), and
- Evidence of any tenancy related debt, and
- Evidence of whether the applicant or anyone in their household is required to register with the police under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. In these circumstances we may still be able to offer a house to the applicant, but it may influence the location of any house we offer.

- We may also carry out a home visit or seek references from other landlords.

Prior to making an offer of housing, pre-tenancy checks will have been carried out for all applicants. These checks will include carrying out interviews with applicants to confirm current housing circumstances and check that, where appropriate, their current tenancy is being maintained to a satisfactory standard. This may include carrying out home visits or, seeking references from other social registered landlords and registered private landlords. Checks will be carried out for evidence of debt related to a tenancy, evidence of serious antisocial behaviour or other serious breach of tenancy.

Where information indicates the applicant will not be able to maintain a tenancy straight away, the application may be suspended for a period of time (from a minimum of one month, for example to assess needs for support to a maximum of one year for evidence of serious anti-social behaviour), to allow further investigation, to allow a support package to be put in place or to allow the applicant to take the necessary steps to resolve their problem.

Where an applicant has been evicted as a result of antisocial behaviour within the past 3 years, they may be offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy with support. Applicants who have a debt related to a tenancy and who have signed an agreement to repay will be placed on the waiting list. This agreement will be monitored. The applicant will remain on the active waiting list but offers of housing will be dependent on evidence of satisfactory repayments. Where there is evidence of antisocial behaviour which is not regarded as being serious, the applicant will remain on the active waiting list and have their behaviour monitored. No offer of housing will be made unless the level of behaviour is considered satisfactory by the Antisocial Behaviour Team Leader and the Lettings Centre Team Leader. If the applicant is bypassed for an offer, they will receive written confirmation of the following:

- The reason why they will not be offered housing now.
- An explanation of the next steps in the process.
- The steps they can take to resolve the problem.
- Advice on when their case will be reviewed.
- Their right to appeal the decision.

Offers of Housing

Number of Offers

Applicants will be made reasonable offers of housing to meet their needs, as stated in their application. However, in cases where the applicant refuses a number of reasonable offers, the Housing Department reserves the right to re-interview and re-assess the applicant's application.

In cases where the applicant is homeless, after a reasonable offer has been refused, the Department may decide that their duty to re-house the applicant under homeless legislation has been discharged.

Offering Housing

When we know that a house is about to become empty, the Lettings System will identify a queue of applicants whose needs match it, with the applicant with the highest number of points at the top. Where more than one applicant has the same number of points, we will then consider who has been in that group the longest.

We will telephone (usually the top ten) applicants at the top of that queue and review their application to see if they are still interested in that type of house and that their circumstances are still the same.

The person at the top of a list when that house is ready to be formally offered will be contacted either by telephone or in writing to make a viewing appointment.

If the applicant decides to refuse the offer of a house, we will record their reasons and make any changes that are needed to their application form.

Inactive Waiting List

All of our applicants can ask to be placed on the Inactive Waiting List. This means that they will not be made offers of housing until they let us know that they wish to be considered again. This can be for any length of time that the applicant chooses. We will still continue to review their application annually to ensure that their circumstances are up to date.

We may in some cases bypass applicants for the offer of a house in some circumstances. This may include:

- Where they refuse to acknowledge any debt they may have, or
- Where there is a current ASBO against anyone in the household or evidence of serious antisocial behaviour in the household, or
- Where the applicant is assessed as requiring a support or care package before they can maintain a tenancy, or
- Where the condition of their current house is unacceptable, or
- Where they have not supplied us with adequate information to allow us to fully assess their housing application
- Where we have placed applicants on this list we will regularly review their circumstances and decide whether or not they should remain on it.

Size of Housing

The size of accommodation the applicant will be offered will depend on the size and needs of the household. The table below sets out the size(s) of house we will assess the applicant as needing according to the number of people in their household. Applicants will not be offered housing that would result in their being overcrowded. Applicants can ask for one extra bedroom on their application if they wish, but when we are allocating houses, we will always give priority to the applicant whose household best matches the property size.

Appeals

If an applicant is unhappy with a decision we have made, or an offer of housing we have made, they have the right to appeal. We will send the appellant an appeals form. If the applicant wishes, we will help them to complete an appeal, or they can have a friend or relative make the appeal for them, as long as the applicant gives their permission. The appeal will be dealt with by a more senior member of staff not related to the initial decision or offer of housing. Applicants will be advised of the outcome of the appeal in writing within 28 days. We will monitor the number of appeals we receive, analyse the data and use our findings to improve our future performance.

Complaints

If an applicant feels they have been treated unfairly or are unhappy with the level of service they have received from Lettings Centre Staff, the applicant can complain by letter, by telephone, or by using the Corporate Complaints form which is available on the Council's website.

Service users who feel that they have been treated unfairly or are unhappy with the *level of service* they have received, can complain using the Housing Complaints Form.

Monitor and Review

The Council will review this policy every 3 years together with tenant representatives in accordance with the Tenant Participation Strategy. It will also be monitored regularly to ensure that equality requirements are met in terms of access to and allocation of housing.

- We will monitor regularly the quality of a percentage of all offers of housing made to applicants in each of the four groups and review the data to ensure that we are meeting our objectives to giving greatest priority to people in need.
- We will monitor regularly the quality of a percentage of all application forms processed to make sure we are getting it right.
- We will monitor closely the *entire* process to ensure that our equalities requirements are being met and that every applicant is being treated fairly and consistently.
- We will review the targets for lets to each group every year and regularly ask our customers what they think of our policy and service.

Other Allocation and Exchange Schemes

Mutual Exchanges

Dundee City Council is a partner in the Dundee House Exchange Scheme

The scheme provides the facility for secure tenants to exchange their home.

- Registration is made online at www.houseexchange.org.uk
- The exchange must be with another Scottish Secure tenant whose landlord is a local authority, registered social landlord, water authority or sewerage authority.
- Applications will also be accepted from tenants who wish to exchange with a secure tenant of a local authority in other parts of the UK
- Both landlords must agree to the exchange.

We will carry out a pre-tenancy check on our tenant/s, and we will require them to have a clear rent account and not subject to ongoing action for antisocial behaviour prior to the exchange being approved.

We will not refuse an application for a mutual exchange without good reason. More detailed information can be found in the Council's Mutual Exchanges policy, or at the Dundee House Exchange website.

Summary of Points Awards and Targets

Points Group	Number of Points	Targets
Homeless	70	45%
People in Tied Accommodation with a Notice to Quit (not assessed as in priority need under the homeless legislation)	70	
People who have been released from prison or who are within 6 months of their anticipated release date	70	
Members of HM Forces who are within 9 months of their anticipated date of discharge	70	
Housing which is Below the Tolerable Standard		25%
Overcrowded - require more than one bedroom	20	
Overcrowded - require two more bedrooms	40	
Overcrowded - require three more bedrooms	70	
Under Occupied - 1 bedroom more than needed.	40	
Under Occupied - 2+ bedrooms more than needed	70	
Medical - Low	20	
Medical - Medium	40	
Medical - High	70	
Social Needs	40	
Want own Tenancy	10	
Redevelopment - less than 5 years tenancy	20	25%
Redevelopment - 5-10 years tenancy	40	
Redevelopment - more than 10 years tenancy	70	
Choice	0	5%

Policy consolidated July 2011