



ARDENGLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

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ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Date presented to Management Committee	02/03/10	Date passed by Management Committee	02/03/10
Date of next scheduled review	March 2013	Designated review body to provide recommendations	HMSC
Policy complies with performance standard	AS 1.1 AS 1.2		

ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Ardenglen Housing Association can provide this policy on request, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

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1. Purpose, aims and objectives

1.1 This Policy sets out Ardenglen Housing Association's rules for managing access to our housing list, and how we let our houses.

1.2 The Association's aim is to provide attractive and affordable rented housing, in safe neighbourhoods that people want to stay in.

1.3 Through the Allocations Policy, our objectives are:

- To make it easy for people to get information about our houses and to apply to us for a house;
- To provide equal access and opportunities for individuals and for all sections of the community;
- To let our houses mainly to people with high levels of need, while also providing some opportunities for existing tenants to move within the area to the housing of their choice;
- To help make our area a stable community;
- To make the best use of our houses, by matching houses of different types and sizes in the first instance to the people who will benefit the most
- To support Glasgow City Council and other agencies in addressing homelessness and meeting the needs of other vulnerable people
- To be clear and objective when we make decisions.

1.4 We want this Policy to be clear to the people who are looking for a house from Ardenglen. The way we have written the Policy tries to do this:

PART A (sections 2 to 11) is written from an applicant's point of view. It explains in plain English what's involved in applying for a house and the main rules we use in letting our houses.

PART B (sections 12 to 19) deals with how we will manage the Allocations Policy within the Association. This part of the Policy explains how we will comply with the law and good practice, and how we will balance the various policy objectives we have set.

PART A : OUR RULES FOR GETTING A HOUSE

2. Applying to the Association for a House

Who can apply?

- 2.1 Anyone aged sixteen or over who applies to us will be placed on the Association's housing list.
- 2.2 If you want to exchange your house with another tenant, you do not need to join the housing list to do this.
- Mutual exchanges can help people who want to move, but who don't have enough priority to be re-housed under the Allocations Policy.
 - We have a separate policy on mutual exchanges; please ask for more information if you are interested.

How to apply

- 2.3 You can apply for a house at any time, by filling in a Housing Application form.
- 2.4 We use the same housing application form as four other landlords in Castlemilk. These are Cassiltoun Housing Association, Craigdale Housing Association, North View Housing Association and Thenew Housing Association.
- 2.5 You can get an application form from Ardenglen's office, or from the offices of any of these other housing associations.

Other ways to get a house

- 2.6 Your chances of getting a house will be greater if you also apply to other landlords, as well as Ardenglen.
- 2.7 So you may want to think about applying to the other local housing associations mentioned above.
- 2.8 Each housing association keeps its own housing list and uses its own rules for letting houses. But by filling in just one form, you can apply to more than one housing association at the same time.
- 2.9 You can also be considered for housing from Ardenglen if you are:
- Referred to us by Glasgow City Council as homeless
 - Referred to us by another agency that we have a re-housing agreement with.

3. Ardenglen's Housing List

Putting your application on the Housing List

- 3.1 The application form and our leaflet, "Information for housing applicants" explain what information you need to give us, and how we make decisions about your application.
- 3.2 We will use the information you have provided to work out:
- Whether your present housing meets your needs
 - What type of house you need
 - Whether you have any particular needs such as a ground floor or adapted house
- 3.3 We will then write to you, normally within 10 days of receiving your application, to tell you how we have assessed your application.
- 3.4 Our letter will tell you how many points we have given your application and how we have worked these out.

Applications Suspended From Offers

- 3.5 We will put everyone who applies on to our housing list.
- 3.6 There are some circumstances where we will suspend your application form from offers of housing. This means you are on the housing list, but you will not be considered for offers for a specified length of time, or until we receive more information, or until your circumstances change.
- 3.7 The main reasons for putting a housing application on hold may include:
- You owe us, or another landlord, a tenancy related debt which is more than one month's rent, and you have not kept to a repayment arrangement for a 3 month period
 - You or a member of your household have behaved in an anti-social manner
 - You have given false information on your application form
 - You or any members of your household have broken some condition of your tenancy agreement, such as causing damage to your home
 - We are waiting to receive more information from you to complete our assessment
- 3.8 The Association aims to keep suspensions to a minimum and will assess each case individually. We will always tell you if we have suspended you

from offers, what the reasons are, and what needs to happen before the suspension can be lifted.

- 3.9 Full information about suspended housing applications is provided at the end of the Allocations Policy (see Appendix 2).

Applications from Asylum Seekers

- 3.10 The Association will accept housing applications from asylum seekers.
- 3.11 We will not normally be able to offer re-housing until after a decision is made about an applicant's entitlement to live in the United Kingdom.
- 3.12 This is because asylum seekers are not entitled to work in the UK or to receive welfare benefits while their asylum application is being assessed. While the law generally prevents us from taking into account an applicant's income, the Association's general policy is that it would be irresponsible to re-house any person who does not have access to any income to pay rent, either from earnings or welfare benefits.

Keeping your application up to date

- 3.13 We aim to write to you each year, asking you to tell us about any changes in your circumstances, housing needs or contact details.
- 3.14 When we write to you, we will provide you with a copy of our most up to date information on turnover and availability for different house types and areas.
- 3.15 If you do not respond to our review letter after 28 days, we will write to you again. If you do not respond after a further 28 days, we will remove your application from the housing list.
- 3.16 In between the annual review letters we send you, you should also tell us immediately if there are any changes to your household's circumstances. These changes could affect your chances of being re-housed.

Cancelling your housing application

- 3.17 If you have applied to us direct, we will remove your application from the Housing List in the following circumstances:
- If you ask us to do this
 - If you have been adequately re-housed
 - If mail we send you is returned to us
 - If you do not respond to letters or other communication from us regarding your application

- If you do not respond to the annual review of the housing list
- If you do not keep appointments you have made for us to visit you at home

3.18 If we cancel your application, you can apply to re-join the Housing List at any time.

4. How we decide your priority for re-housing

4.1 The Association decides which applicants have priority for re-housing, based on their housing needs and the legal requirements we must meet.

4.2 We place applicants into different “lettings categories”, shown in the box below. We then decide who has the most priority for re-housing in each category, based on their needs:

Category	Who this category covers	How we decide who has priority for re-housing
Housing list	People who are not already Ardenglen tenants who apply to us for a house	Ardenglen points system
Internal move (needs-based)	People who are already Ardenglen tenants who apply for a move to another house, for example because their current home is no longer suitable	Ardenglen points system
Internal move (aspirational move)	People who are already Ardenglen tenants, who want to move to another house. We let a small proportion of our houses in this way, because it helps make Ardenglen a more stable community	Date order of application (points are not used)
Homeless referrals	People who Glasgow City Council passes to us as homeless and eligible for permanent re-housing under the law	Referral agreement with the Council (we have a legal duty to re-house people passed to us by the Council)
Other referrals	People passed to us for re-housing under agreements with other landlords or agencies. This usually covers people who	Any referral arrangements we make with other agencies

Category	Who this category covers	How we decide who has priority for re-housing
	need housing and support.	
Emergency cases	People who need re-housing as a matter of emergency, for example because their life or safety are at risk, or because their present home has been affected by fire, flooding etc	On an individual basis

4.3 Depending on your circumstances, you can be considered for re-housing under more than one of these lettings categories.

- For example, if you have applied to the Council as homeless you can also be considered for housing under the points system, if you apply to join our housing list.
- Or if you are already an Ardenglen tenant, you can be considered for both an aspirational move and an internal move based on your housing needs.

4.4 Each year, our Housing Management sub committee will approve an Annual Lettings Plan. This predicts how many houses we expect to let in the year ahead, and how we will try to divide these up between the different categories of applicant. If you want to know more about our Lettings Plan and how we use it, you can find this in section 10 of the Allocations Policy.

The Association's Points System

4.5 The Association uses a points system to work out the needs of housing list and internal transfer applicants. The points system is shown in full at the end of this Policy; you can also read a summary in our "Allocating our houses" leaflet.

4.6 These are the main types of housing needs for which you can get points:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are homeless or threatened with homelessness • You do not have secure accommodation • You are living with family or friends and need a permanent home of your own • Your present accommodation is in poor condition, or does not have basic facilities • You have to share basic facilities such as a kitchen or bathroom with |
|--|

others

- Your present accommodation is overcrowded, or it is too big for your needs
- Your present home is unsuitable because you have problems with mobility or your health
- You cannot continue to live in your present home because of domestic abuse or serious harassment
- You need to move for personal reasons. For example, if you need to give care and support to a family member, or to receive care and support yourself; if you are having problems with neighbours; or if you want to live closer to work or to a college or training course.

4.7 You can receive points for as many of these needs as you may have.

Eligibility for aspirational moves

4.8 We want tenants to stay in the area and to have a chance of getting their preferred type of house. So if you are already an Ardenglen tenant, you will be considered for an “aspirational move”, as well as being considered for a move based on your housing points.

4.9 We only let a small number of houses in this way, but it is a way of recognising that people don’t always get their preferred type of house when they first become an Ardenglen tenant. For example, we know that some tenants living in tenements would ideally choose to live in a house with its own entrance or garden.

4.10 Aspirational lets are decided on the date of application rather than housing need. Tenants who were already waiting for an aspirational move before this Policy came into force will keep their existing priority for a move, ahead of any new entrants to the aspirational list. New entrants to the aspirational list will be considered after this, based on the date of application.

4.11 To be considered for an aspirational move, you must meet all of the following conditions:

- You should not have any debt relating to your tenancy (including any rechargeable repairs) amounting to more than one month’s rent. Or if you do owe more than one month’s rent, you must have maintained a repayment arrangement for three consecutive months.
- You must not be subject to any legal action by us in relation to your tenancy (this includes a live Notice of Proceedings against you)
- You must have maintained your house in an acceptable, lettable condition in accordance with your tenancy agreement

- You must have maintained your tenancy to our satisfaction, in accordance with your tenancy agreement. So if you have been the subject of complaints by other tenants about anti-social behaviour, this may affect your chances of getting the move you want.

Relationship breakdown

- 4.12 If you live with somebody and your relationship has broken down, you can join the housing list. We will provide advice and help on your rights. If you have made a joint application with a former partner, we will give each partner separate points according to their new housing circumstances.

What size and type of house can you be considered for?

- 4.13 We put your application on the housing list according to the type and size of the house that you need. This helps make sure that each house is let to a household that will make the best use of the house.
- 4.14 Because our housing is all within the same area, we will consider you for all houses of the right size and type that become available.
- 4.15 We normally carry out home visits before your name comes to the top of the housing list. This will give you the chance to tell us about any preferences you have or any of our houses you wouldn't consider accepting, before you receive offers.
- 4.16 Our policy is that no more than two people should have to share a bedroom. We then work out the number of rooms you need as follows, based on who will be living permanently in your household.

Your household should have access to a living room plus:

- One bedroom for couples/partners
- One bedroom for single adults/parents;
- One bedroom for the only child in a household;
- One bedroom for a person over 14 years old
- Or if your household has more than one child:
 - One bedroom for two children of different sexes after the older child reaches 10 years old
 - One bedroom for children of same sex, after the older child reaches 14 (unless there is a 10 years age gap in which case a bedroom each)

These are the normal rules we use. In some cases, your needs or your preferences may be different. For example, you may have older teenagers of the same sex who are happy to share a bedroom. Or you may have younger children who cannot share a bedroom for health-related reasons.

If you prefer to be considered for a different size of house than usual, you should let us know. We will take account of your preferences wherever possible.

4.17 We use the same guidelines to work out if you are overcrowded in your present accommodation.

- If your accommodation has a box room or a bed recess, we will not normally count this as a bedroom unless there is a window and there is enough space to fit and use a bed, a small wardrobe and a chest of drawers.
- If your present accommodation is large enough for your own needs but too small because you have access to children who do not live with you permanently, you can receive overcrowding points for one bedroom only.
- If you are still living with a former partner and there is only one bedroom available for both of you, you can receive overcrowding points.

4.18 We will be flexible in applying the guidelines about whether you are overcrowded and the size of house you can be considered for, if your circumstances show that there are good reasons for doing this.

For example, we will consider you for a house with one extra bedroom if:

- You need this for a medical reason (we may also take account of this in working out overcrowding points, depending on your household's circumstances)
- You need a ground floor house for medical reasons, and we can only meet your needs by offering you a house with an extra room
- Someone living in your household is pregnant
- You have a disability and/or need support, and need an extra room for an overnight carer
- You have an arrangement giving you access to children (including grandchildren) who do not live with you permanently.
- You provide foster care, or you have been approved to provide foster care or to adopt children in the near future
- You are an existing Ardenglen tenant seeking an aspirational transfer, and you already have an extra room in the property you will be moving

from

Please note that we will normally allow a maximum of one extra bedroom if you have access to children or want to provide foster care, regardless of the number of children involved, and their ages and sexes.

If you want to be considered for a larger house than normal for any of these reasons, we will usually ask you to provide information in support of this part of your application.

4.19 **We will not normally offer a house if it is too small for your household.**

- We will only consider doing this if you are already overcrowded and the house on offer would improve your situation.
- If you are re-housed in this way, you can stay on the housing list for a bigger house. Your points will be changed, based on your new living situation.

Medical priority

4.20 If you need to be re-housed for medical reasons or because you have a disability or mobility problems:

- We may ask for independent confirmation of your condition and your rehousing requirements, for example by asking your permission to contact your GP or consultant.
- We will only offer you housing that is compatible with your needs, for example ground floor accommodation with no stairs.

5. **Dealing with emergency cases**

5.1 Our points system gives priority to people who are the victims of serious harassment or domestic abuse, who need to be re-housed as a matter of emergency. But as a relatively small landlord, we may not always be able to provide immediate help in such cases.

Serious harassment

5.2 Serious harassment can take different forms including violence, threats of violence, unprovoked assault and/or hate crimes (such as racial harassment, harassment against people with mental health problems, disabled people, gay, lesbian or transgender people or people with HIV).

- 5.3 We will work closely with the Police and other agencies to take action against any of our tenants who are the perpetrators of such harassment. We will also support victims if they wish to be re-housed. We will adopt a position of belief and award re-housing points if an applicant tells us that they have suffered serious harassment and need to be re-housed because they feel their life or safety is at risk, or if it is having a serious adverse effect on their ability to cope with living in their present situation. If further investigations show that the level of points awarded is unjustified, we will review the assessment
- 5.4 If the applicant has not already made a homeless application or contacted the police or a victim support agency, we will provide advice and assistance about how they can do this.

Domestic abuse

- 5.5 The Association will use its best efforts to assist in the re-housing of people experiencing domestic abuse. We will do this whether the abuse is physical, sexual or emotional; and whether the victim is male or female.
- 5.6 We will adopt a position of belief if somebody tells us they are experiencing abuse. We recognise that safety is paramount and will always respect the confidentiality of information to preserve victims' safety. Where appropriate, and with the victim's agreement, we will request assistance from the Council's homelessness team or other suitable agencies like Women's Aid to provide emergency accommodation.

6. Applicants with Support Needs

- 6.1 The Association will enter into referral arrangements with other agencies to provide re-housing for people seeking to live more independently within the community. The Housing Management sub committee will approve which agencies we work with for this purpose, with individual re-housing decisions then delegated to the Housing Manager.
- 6.2 In addition, people who need support can apply to us direct. If an applicant needs support in order to sustain a tenancy, but there are no support arrangements in place, we will seek wherever possible to contact appropriate support agencies, with the applicant's consent.
- 6.3 If no support arrangements can be agreed, or an applicant does not wish to receive support, we will assess whether it is reasonable in all of the circumstances to make an offer of housing. Our assessment will have regard to:

- The applicant's current circumstances
- The future sustainability of the tenancy
- Any risks to the applicant or to others if a tenancy was granted without support.

6.4 If we decide that it would not be appropriate to give a tenancy without support being in place, we will tell the applicant the reasons for our decision, and advise them of their right to appeal against the decision.

7. Community Safety

7.1 People who are registered sex offenders must inform the Association of this fact when they apply for housing.

7.2 The Association is currently working with the local authority and others to develop an agreed protocol for the re-housing of sex offenders.

7.3 The Association will only consider re-housing sex offenders when agreed protocols are in place, and these allow us to be satisfied that risks to community safety will be properly identified and managed.

7.4 How we let our houses

Deciding who will receive an offer

7.5 **Being on the housing list does not mean that we will always be able to make you an offer.**

- Receiving an offer depends on your housing need, who else is waiting to be re-housed at the same time as you, and how many houses become available.
- So you will not necessarily move up the housing list just because of how long you have been waiting.

7.6 When a property becomes available, we will let it in line with this Policy. There are three main steps involved when we let a house.

Step 1: Which category of applicant will be offered the house?

7.7 We will decide which category of applicant the house will be offered to. For example, the housing list, people waiting for an internal transfer, or homeless people passed to us for re-housing by the Council.

7.8 In making this decision, we will take account of our Annual Lettings Plan targets and how to make the best use of our housing. So we will use our judgement in individual cases, and measure our performance against the Annual Lettings Plan targets over the whole year rather than one let to another.

Step 2: Which applicant in the chosen category will be offered the house?

7.9 We will normally select the applicant with the highest priority, taking account of who is waiting for that size and type of house.

- If a house has been specially designed or adapted for a person with mobility problems, we will consider applicants with medical priority ahead of any other applicants.
- If a house is being let to a homeless person referred by the Council, we will base our decision on the criteria specified in the referral.
- If a house is being let to the housing list or to an internal transfer applicant, we will normally offer the house to the applicant with the most points. If two or more people have the same number of points, we will normally offer the house to the applicant who has been on the list the longest.
- If a house is being let to the aspiration transfer applicant, we will offer the house to the person who has been waiting the longest.

7.10 **Step 3: Making an offer of housing**

7.11 Before making an offer of housing, we aim to carry out a home visit or interview for all applicants close to the top of each category on the housing list. This should mean that we have up to date information, before we reach the stage of making a firm offer of a house.

7.12 The purpose of a home visit is to make sure that your housing needs and living circumstances are still the same as when you sent in your application. You can also tell us at the home visit whether there are any areas you don't want to be considered for, when we are making offers in the future.

7.13 The checks we carry out at home visit stage will depend on your circumstances. But we will always need to check information about:

- Proof of residency at the address you are applying from

- The household composition and living circumstances of the people included in the housing application
- 7.14 If relevant, we will also ask for a tenancy report from any previous landlords.
- 7.15 Your points may be changed following a home visit, either upwards or downwards. If we find that you have given us false information, we may write to you telling you that your application has been suspended and that you will not be considered for an offer for a fixed period of time.
- 7.16 Once we have made a decision about who to let a property to, we will:
- Give you a written offer of the house
 - Arrange for you to view the house
 - Give you two working days to decide whether or not you wish to accept the offer
 - Meet with you to explain and sign your tenancy agreement or, if you turn the offer down, offer the house to the next applicant
- 7.17 To maximise your rights, our general policy is to provide a Scottish Secure Tenancy when we offer you a house. We may offer you a different type of tenancy (a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy) in the circumstances set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. If we do this, we will explain fully the reasons for this, and what this means.
- 7.18 We do not put any limit on the number of offers you can receive, to give you as much choice as possible about where you want to live. Through our contact with you, we will try to get a good understanding of what you are looking for.

8. Lettings Promotions

- 8.1 While most of our properties are popular, there are lower levels of demand for some of them.
- 8.2 If we know from past experience that a house is likely to prove less popular, we may carry out a special promotion to ensure that the house is let to somebody in housing need as soon as possible.
- 8.3 We may also use special promotions in other circumstances. For example, if we know that a property is suitable for applicants with particular needs.
- 8.4 Special promotions will normally involve:

- Sending details of the vacancy to everyone waiting for that size of house
- Inviting applicants to register an interest in being considered for the property
- Holding viewings
- Allocating the house to the interested applicant who has the highest level of need under the points system

8.5 For harder to let properties, we may relax our usual rules on house sizes and allow the house to be “under occupied” by an applicant who is willing to accept it.

8.6 If a house is proving difficult to let, we may also contact other agencies for referrals of suitable candidates.

9. Responding to Homelessness

9.1 We have agreed referral procedures with Glasgow City Council, to help the Council meet its legal obligations towards homeless people. We have a legal duty to provide permanent accommodation, where the Council refers people to us for this purpose. In responding to referrals, we will offer accommodation that meets the specified needs as soon as a suitable property becomes available.

9.2 We will make sure that homeless applicants are treated fairly in relation to the quality of offers they receive and that the prospects of new tenancies being sustained are maximised. We will do this by:

- Working with the Council and the applicant, to clearly identify the applicant’s re-housing needs (including any medical, support or social needs)
- Matching our offer, as far as possible, to the applicant’s needs and preferences
- Monitoring the re-housing outcomes for individual households and for homeless households as a whole, to ensure that they are receiving fair access to all of our house types and stock areas.

9.3 People who are homeless or threatened with homelessness also approach the Association direct. In these cases, we will provide advice and assistance, by referring the applicant to the Council and by encouraging them to make a direct housing application to the Association.

10. Customer service

10.1 Ardenglen aims to provide an excellent service to everyone who applies to us for a house. We will provide all applicants with information about the standards they can expect from us in our leaflet, "Allocating our houses".

Complaints and appeals

10.2 You have the right to appeal:

- If you disagree with the points we give to your application
- If we suspend you from receiving offers
- If you think we have not followed our Allocations Policy in dealing with your application.

10.3 You can raise your concerns informally with the member of staff you have been dealing with, or you can ask for a formal review of your case by our Housing Manager.

10.4 If you are dissatisfied with how we have considered your appeal or about the standard of service you have received, you can make a complaint using Ardenglen's complaints procedure. This is available from our office.

10.5 Having used our complaints and appeal procedure, you can contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman if you wish to have your complaint considered by an independent body. Details are available from our office or by contacting the Ombudsman direct

PART B: MANAGING THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY

11. Legal and regulatory requirements

11.1 We will assess housing applications and let our houses in line with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements. We have taken account of these obligations throughout this Policy and in our working procedures.

11.2 The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, requires us to:

- Provide open access to our housing list.
- Give reasonable preference, when we are letting houses, to:
 - People who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness
 - People living in houses that do not meet the tolerable standard
 - People living in houses that are overcrowded

- Large families
 - People living under unsatisfactory housing conditions
 - Take no account of certain factors (such as applicants' age, income, property ownership, length of residence in our area) when we are letting houses.
 - Publish our rules for letting houses.
 - Meet equal opportunities requirements in all of our services.
 - Provide Glasgow City Council with access to some of our houses, for people who the Council has assessed as being homeless.
- 11.3 The letting of houses to past and present employees and committee members of the Association, and their close relatives, is subject to statutory controls. We will comply fully with the controls described in Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and regulatory guidance.
- 11.4 The Association will follow the regulatory guidance contained in “Performance Standards for social landlords”, and any statutory guidance issued by the Scottish Government on access to housing and allocations.
- 11.5 “Performance Standards” oblige us to:
- Provide fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process.
 - Work with others to maximise and simplify access routes into our housing.
 - Let our houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need; makes best use of available stock; maximises choice; and helps to sustain communities.
 - Ensure that our approach to letting houses is well managed, and that we achieve high standards of customer service, information and consultation.

12. Equal Opportunities

- 12.1 The Association will strive to provide equality of opportunity for all individuals and for all sections of the community. We will do this irrespective of factors such as sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or religious beliefs.
- 12.2 We will meet our legal duties to prevent direct or indirect discrimination in providing services, because of a person's gender, race, disability, sexual orientation or religion or belief. These duties are set out in legislation and in

statutory Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

12.3 To put our commitment to equal opportunities into practice, we will:

- Publicise our housing to all sections of the community
- Be flexible in how we provide information and advice, to remove barriers to communication and understanding
- Make sure our staff understand how factors such as race, disability and sexual orientation can affect individuals' housing needs, and that they respond sensitively to individuals' circumstances
- Monitor access to the housing list and to our houses for different groups
- Give priority to meeting the housing needs of disabled people and people who are victims of domestic abuse, racial harassment and other hate crimes
- Be fair and accountable in our working practices.

13. Information and Promotion

Simplifying access to our houses

13.1 The Association supports the City Council's aim of introducing a Common Housing Register for Glasgow.

13.2 This is currently being tested in other parts of the city, before a planned roll-out to other areas. In the meantime, we have simplified access to our housing by introducing a shared housing application form with other housing associations in Castlemilk.

Publicising our houses

13.3 We will make information about our housing freely available in response to individual requests.

13.4 We will make information available through places and services that people seeking housing from us are most likely to use. We will also seek to reach people from all sections of the community.

13.5 The places and services we will target for this purpose will include:

- The Association's website
- Advice providers, such as Castlemilk Law Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau, Shelter and the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living

- Other housing providers in Castlemilk
- Organisations that work with people from particular groups (such as Women's Aid, Positive Action in Housing and the various support agencies with which we have nomination and referral arrangements).

13.6 As described later in the Policy, we will also carry out special promotions to invite applications for specific properties.

14. Annual Lettings Plan

14.1 The Association will aim to let some of its houses to people in all of the categories we have set. This will allow us to respond to different types of housing needs, and to the aspirations of existing tenants who wish to move on to their preferred house types and locations within the area.

14.2 We will prepare an Annual Lettings Plan, to help balance individual needs with our wider aim of making the Association's area a stable and balanced community. The Annual Lettings Plan will:

- Estimate how many houses we expect to become available in the year ahead, including houses that become available as a result of moves within our stock by existing tenants;
- Set targets for the number of lets we intend to make to each of our 4 main lettings categories (the housing list, homeless referrals, internal transfers and aspirational transfers).

We will not set targets for the remaining two lettings categories (nominations/referrals and emergency cases), since the number of lets involved is very low and is impossible to predict with certainty.

14.3 The targets in the Annual Lettings Plan will be a guideline rather than fixed quotas. For example:

- If the City Council refers more homeless households to us for re-housing than expected, we must provide accommodation even if this would mean exceeding the target set for lets to homeless households.

14.4 We will not let our houses on a strict rotation basis (e.g. every fifth house to an internal transfer applicant).

- Instead, we will look at the potential each individual vacancy has to address our overall policy objectives.
- This means that meeting the Lettings Plan targets will be measured for all lets over the course of the year, so the targets will not be used in a

mechanistic way to decide which category individual houses will be let to.

14.5 During the year, we will monitor progress and performance in meeting the overall Annual Lettings Plan targets, and report this to our Housing Management sub committee. The sub committee is responsible for approving the original targets and any subsequent changes.

14.6 We will publicise our lettings plans to local agencies and people on our housing list.

15. Special lets

15.1 In very exceptional circumstances, we may consider allocating a property to respond to a situation that is not provided for in the Allocations Policy. We will only do this if there is an urgent and demonstrable need.

15.2 Decisions will be approved by the Housing Manager and endorsed by the Director, based on a fully documented case for the proposed decision.

15.3 Prior committee approval of such decisions is not required, but the number and circumstances of any such cases will be reported to the Housing Management sub committee retrospectively, to ensure that staff are accountable for any such decisions.

16. Accountable decision-making

16.1 Our staff will maintain a clear record of how decisions have been made. We will ensure that:

- Points decisions at application stage and lettings decisions at offer stage are checked by a second member of staff;
- The Housing Manager will regularly review lettings decisions for quality assurance and compliance purposes.

17. Balancing Individual and community needs

17.1 We recognise that housing is a scarce resource, and that letting our houses fairly and to people with high levels of need are important principles. These principles are reflected in our lettings categories and points system. If we are letting a property to a housing list or internal transfer applicant, our normal approach will be to select the applicant with the highest level of points.

17.2 However, our Policy allows our staff to apply their professional judgement in a reasonable way, so that wider aims can also be addressed when lettings decisions are being made. For example, our policy aims to have sustainable tenancies and a stable, balanced community.

17.3 The following examples are not exhaustive, but illustrate the factors that may be considered in deciding which lettings category to allocate a property to, and which applicant to select:

- Management issues (for example child density, potential clashes of lifestyle between tenants, how to maximise the prospects of a sustainable tenancy for vulnerable people)
- Whether a property has physical features that make it particularly suitable for one type of applicant (for example, an applicant with a disability or medical needs)
- Whether the location of a property makes it particularly suitable for an applicant providing or receiving essential support from a family member living nearby
- The frequency with which a particular type of property becomes available and the likelihood of suitable offers in future for a household with particular needs.

17.4 We will ensure that decisions of this nature are made fairly and transparently:

- We will record for audit purposes the reasons why we have chosen to let each house to a particular category of applicant, and the reasons for selecting a particular applicant if they were not at the top of the housing list;
- We will monitor lets to each category and report the results to the Housing Management sub committee.

18. Policy management: roles and responsibilities

18.1 The implementation of the Allocations Policy and the day-to-day management of applications and allocations will be carried out by the Association's housing management staff. The Housing Manager has overall responsibility for ensuring the Policy is implemented effectively, and for the services provided to housing applicants.

18.2 Through the Director, the staff team is accountable to the Association's Management Committee.

- 18.3 The Management Committee has delegated responsibility for the following functions to the Housing Management sub committee:
- Monitoring service performance and quality
 - Approval of the Annual Lettings Plan
 - Approval of any lets which are Special Exceptions under Schedule 7, Part 3 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 18.4 Quarterly reports on performance will be provided to the Housing Management sub committee. These will focus on performance in relation to the Annual Lettings Plan. In addition, the Association will review the outcomes from the Allocations Policy on an annual basis, to assess whether objectives are being met and to inform the Annual Lettings Plan for the coming year.
- 18.5 The Association will periodically assess service outcomes and performance in relation to “Performance Standards”, to measure service quality and improvement.
- 18.6 The Allocations Policy will be reviewed in 3 years time, or earlier if required.

Appendix 1 Ardenglen's Points System

Introduction

1. Ardenglen uses a points system for all housing applications, except for:
 - People referred to us by Glasgow City Council as homeless, where the Council has a legal duty to secure permanent re-housing
 - Ardenglen tenants who have registered for an aspirational housing transfer*
 - People who are referred to us by other agencies, under re-housing agreements that Ardenglen has with them.
2. This part of the Policy shows the points you can be considered for, and how we make decisions about each type of points.
3. We will not give points if you deliberately provide false information, or if you deliberately and unreasonably make your housing situation worse to get a higher position on the housing list.
4. Please remember that we will always check your points before we make you an offer of housing. So we may take away points if you have given us incorrect information.
5. Remember as well that we can only give you points if you tell us about all your circumstances in your application form. Some people don't do this, and may not be getting all the points they are entitled to.
6. We are happy to provide any help or advice you might need with completing your application.

TYPE OF HOUSING NEED	POINTS
<p>1) IF YOU DO NOT HAVE SECURE ACCOMMODATION OF YOUR OWN</p> <p>You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below</p>	
<p>You are threatened with homelessness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are the tenant of a private landlord and your landlord has served you with a Notice to Quit. OR – You are an owner-occupier and your house is being repossessed within the next 2 months. OR – You live in tied, armed forces, NASS or supported accommodation and have been told you must leave this within the next 2 months. 	<p>30</p>
<p>You do not have secure accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are living in temporary accommodation (such as a hostel, caravan, bed and breakfast or other type of short stay accommodation), but there is no immediate need for you to leave OR – You have secure accommodation but you cannot reasonably continue to live in it. For example, you live with your partner or spouse and the relationship has permanently broken down <p>Separate households coming together</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You and your partner currently live apart in separate houses where you are not the householders. You want to come together to live in the same house. <p>You are living with family and need a permanent home of your own</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are living “care of” another household (for example, with friends, parents, partner’s parents, other relatives) <p>You have no fixed address</p>	<p>15</p> <p>15</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p>
<p>You do not have long-term secure accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You have a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, OR – You have a private lease but have not received a Notice to Quit from your landlord 	<p>5</p>

TYPE OF HOUSING NEED	POINTS
<p>2) IF YOUR PRESENT ACCOMMODATION IS IN POOR CONDITION AND/OR IT DOES NOT HAVE BASIC FACILITIES</p> <p>You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below</p>	
<p>ONE of the following statements applies to your present accommodation</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>TWO OR MORE of these statements apply to your present accommodation</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>• Statements on property condition and facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You are the householder, and the house has structural problems – You are the householder, and the house has severe rising or penetrating damp or water penetration – There are no windows in a room that you or a person who will be re-housed with you sleeps in – The property does not have satisfactory central heating – The kitchen does not have a sink with a supply of both hot and cold water – The property does not have satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food – There is no inside toilet for the exclusive use of the people living in the house – There is no fixed bath or shower and wash-hand basin, with hot and cold water – The property has other significant defects not covered in the list above 	
<p>3) IF YOU HAVE TO SHARE BASIC FACILITIES WITH OTHERS</p> <p>You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below</p>	
<p>If you share any of the following facilities with family or friends, or as a lodger</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>If you share any of these facilities in a bedsit or hostel, or in a House in Multiple Occupation</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>• Facilities shared with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cooking facilities – Toilet – Bath or shower 	

TYPE OF HOUSING NEED	POINTS
– Living area/room	
<p>4) IF YOUR PRESENT ACCOMMODATION IS OVERCROWDED, OR IF IT IS TOO BIG</p> <p>You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below</p>	
<p>You need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 3 or more extra bedrooms – 2 extra bedrooms – 1 extra bedroom <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – You need 1 or more extra bedroom, because you have regular overnight access to children who do not live with you permanently – You or someone who will be living with you is pregnant, and this will result in a need for an extra bedroom – A bedroom you have is too small for the people sharing it (e.g. two children sharing a small single bedroom) 	<p>25</p> <p>15</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>8 per bedroom</p>
<p>You have</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Any number of extra bedrooms and you live in a 4 apartment or larger. <p>Only Ardenglen tenants who have lived in their present house for at least one year can receive these points. The aim is to help us make the best use of our houses by freeing up larger houses that are in high demand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – One or more extra bedrooms you don't need (tenants of any social landlord can receive these points, if they are willing to move from a house that is larger than they need) 	<p>12</p> <p>6 per surplus bedroom</p>
<p>5) IF YOU NEED TO BE RE-HOUSED FOR HEALTH REASONS</p> <p>To receive these points, you must complete the medical questions in the housing application form. You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below.</p>	
<p>One applicant needs to be re-housed for medical reasons</p> <p>You are housebound or an emergency case</p> <p>For example, you cannot leave your house at all or without physical assistance; getting up and down stairs is impossible to manage; your</p>	<p>30</p>

TYPE OF HOUSING NEED	POINTS
<p>current house is not or cannot be adapted for your needs; or you cannot return to your present accommodation if you are leaving hospital or a nursing home</p> <p>You have mobility problems or serious physical or mental health problems, and your current housing severely restricts your daily activities For example; getting up and down stairs is difficult to manage; or you have difficulty leaving and entering your house without help</p> <p>You have other health or mobility problems that could be alleviated by more suitable housing For example, asthmas aggravated by heating type; mental health problems that are adversely affected by your present housing conditions; mobility problems that have some impact on daily activity</p> <p>In all cases where medical points are awarded, we need to be satisfied that you have a disability or a recognised illness or medical condition <u>and</u> that re-housing would make a practical difference in helping to alleviate or manage the condition.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">15</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>
<p>If more than one person covered by the application needs to be re-housed for medical reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 30, 15, or 5 points will be awarded as above (based on whichever person has the greatest need) – An additional 5 points will be awarded to recognise the situation of the household as a whole 	<p style="text-align: center;">5</p>
<p>6) IF YOU NEED TO BE RE-HOUSED DUE TO SERIOUS HARASSMENT You can receive points at ONE of the levels shown below.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You or members of your family are experiencing very serious problems due to the actions of others that are targeted specifically at you. Your physical safety or your home is at risk and/or your ability to cope with daily life has been seriously affected as a result. • You or members of your family are experiencing these types of serious problems. While you may not consider yourself to be in immediate physical danger, your quality of life is being adversely affected by the harassment directed towards you. 	<p style="text-align: center;">40</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20</p>

TYPE OF HOUSING NEED	POINTS
<p>We will use these points to address issues such as criminal harassment, domestic abuse, racial harassment and other types of hate crimes. If you receive harassment points, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide information about making a homeless application to Glasgow City Council since this will generally provide a quicker route to re-housing for people in these types of emergency circumstances. - Keep in touch with you, so that application is kept under regular review. 	
<p>7) YOU NEED TO MOVE TO GIVE OR RECEIVE ESSENTIAL SUPPORT</p>	
<p>You or a member of your family needs to move to the area to give or receive essential family support (we may seek confirmation from social work department or other official agency)</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>8) YOU NEED TO BE RE-HOUSED FOR SOCIAL REASONS OR BECAUSE OF THE PARTICULAR NEEDS OF YOU OR A MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD</p> <p>You can receive points for ONE OR MORE of the needs shown below</p>	
<p>You have experienced problems with neighbours over a period of time and/or you are dissatisfied with the area you currently live in, and wish to be re-housed because of this</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>You want to move to be closer to work or a college/training course you are attending</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>You have other needs not described in the Policy that we agree are relevant to your re-housing needs</p>	<p>5</p>

Appendix 2

Procedures for Suspending Housing Applications

Suspension from being eligible to receive offers

- 1) Ardenglen will only suspend an application where it is reasonable to do so, having considered the individual circumstances of the case.
- 2) We will inform applicants in writing if we suspend their application. We will provide reasons for the suspension, how long it will last for and/or what action the applicant needs to take to end the suspension. Applicants will also receive details of how to appeal against our decision.

Criteria for Suspensions

Tenancy related debts

- 3) We will suspend applications if the applicant is responsible for an outstanding tenancy-related debt (e.g. rent, rechargeable repairs, service charges) where the debt is:
 - Less than five years old
 - More than one month's rent, and the tenant has not maintained a repayment arrangement for at least 3 months.
- 4) Tenancy-related debts may relate to an Ardenglen tenancy or to a tenancy with another landlord.
- 5) We will disregard non-technical arrears due to outstanding housing benefit payments in identifying the outstanding debt.
- 6) We will also take account of any special or extenuating circumstances before suspending an applicant due to rent arrears.

Anti Social Behaviour

- 7) We will suspend applications if an applicant or a member of their household has behaved in an anti-social manner, and the conduct involved is of a serious nature, relatively recent, and is confirmed by an official source such as the Police or a present/previous landlord.
- 8) Examples of anti-social behaviour include the following. These examples are illustrative, they are not an exhaustive list:

- Eviction or serious anti-social behaviour within the last three years. This includes cases where the applicant was not the tenant but was named as the cause of the problem.
 - An Anti-Social Behaviour Order is in place.
 - A current or previous landlord provides a tenancy reference stating that there have been complaints about anti-social behaviour by the applicant or their household.
 - The Police advise us that the applicant or a member of their household have been convicted of drug dealing from a tenancy or of crimes which have affected others in their local area (for example, acts of violence, harassment or threats to neighbours).
 - The applicant has been violent towards an Ardenglen tenant, resident or employee and this has resulted in Police involvement.
- 9) We will take account of the circumstances of each case when making decisions, for example:
- The nature, frequency and duration of the behaviour involved
 - How long ago the incidents occurred
 - Whether there is a current Notice of Proceedings for anti-social behaviour
 - The effect on others
 - The extent to which the behaviour is affected by persons other than the applicant, including actions by other members of the household.
- 10) We will normally apply a suspension period of 6 months, and then review the case.
- 11) We will lift the suspension when:
- A period of six months has elapsed without any incidents of unacceptable behaviour; or
 - An ASBO has expired, or a Notice of Proceedings ceases to be in force or is withdrawn by the landlord.
- 12) If we continue a suspension, we will review the case in a further six months. We may also consider the use of a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy with support, as an alternative to continuing a suspension.

Failure to Adhere to Tenancy Conditions

- 13) We reserve the right to suspend applicants who have not adhered to the conditions of their present tenancy. In particular, where they have caused damage to their landlord's property or have not maintained it in a lettable condition. We will take special or extenuating circumstances into account if we are considering placing an application on hold for these reasons.
- 14) We will review suspensions for these reasons when the tenant has agreed and adhered to a course of action to make good the breach of tenancy conditions.
- 15) We will not apply a standard suspension period in such cases. Instead, we will tell the applicant what steps we expect them to take to address the breach of tenancy conditions, and then schedule regular reviews with the applicant.

Abandonment and eviction

- 16) Where an applicant has abandoned a property or been evicted, we will normally suspend their application for a period of 12 months, from the date of the abandonment or eviction, unless there are special or extenuating circumstances.
- 17) Other suspensions criteria may also apply in such cases (for example, rent arrears, rechargeable repair costs for clearing a property etc).

Failure to provide information

- 18) Applicants who do not provide information required to confirm their points level will not be eligible to receive offers until the information is provided. Applications placed on hold for this reason will be reviewed monthly.
- 19) Housing applications may be cancelled if there is a repeated failure to respond to correspondence by the Association, as described in our Allocations Policy.

Fraudulent or false information

- 20) If an applicant has deliberately provided fraudulent or false information, we will suspend their application for six months. We will lift the suspension after this period and invite the applicant to submit a new application.

Housing support

- 21) We may suspend an application where the Association has carried out a risk assessment and believes that an applicant would not be able to maintain a tenancy without support, and no such support is in place. In all such cases we

will seek an independent assessment of the applicant's housing needs. The suspension will be lifted when appropriate support arrangements are put in place.

Community Safety

- 22) As described in the allocation policy, we must accept housing applications from registered sex offenders, but we will not make an offer of re housing until the association is fully satisfied about the risk assessment carried out and the risk management arrangements that will be in place. If we are not satisfied on these matters, we will suspend the housing application and review it if and when fresh information is provided to us

Applicants subject to immigration controls

- 23) We will register applications from asylum seekers on our waiting list, but will suspend their application until they have been granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom; unless we are satisfied they have the ability to meet the rental commitments of a tenancy.