



Perth and Kinross Common Allocations Policy

April 2019





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Summary of Proposed Changes

The following proposed changes and benefits of the revised Perth and Kinross Common Allocations policy are summarised below.

The revised policy:

- *is compliant with current legislation and good practice;*
- *maintains the flexibility in allocating 2-bedroom housing therefore reducing the extreme pressure on demand for 1-bedroom housing;*
- *further reduces the length of time homeless applicants wait for permanent housing in line with Home First;*
- *targets those in urgent need of housing in a fair and more consistent way avoiding the need for them to apply as homeless or leaving them in an at-risk situation;*
- *removes inconsistencies between the way housing is allocated and the way applications are assessed;*
- *is responsive to meeting the housing needs of our own tenants;*
- *enhances the use of vacancy chains and makes better use of our housing stock;*
- *maximises housing opportunities for applicants by removing the need to have a limited number of areas selected on their application;*
- *provides a policy which is easier to understand ensuring fair and transparent access.*



Background

The Perth and Kinross Common Housing Allocations Policy ('the CAP') has been developed as part of the Perth and Kinross Common Housing Register ('the CHR').

The CHR is a computer-based single waiting list which three local social housing organisations use to register applicants for housing. It's designed to make it easier and quicker for you to apply for housing by filling in one application form. Each CHR landlord will use this form.

The CAP has been developed by five local social landlords working in Perth and Kinross. They are:

- Perth & Kinross Council (the Council)
- Caledonia Housing Association (CHA)
- Hillcrest Homes
- Fairfield Housing Association
- Kingdom Housing Association

These five social housing landlords are referred to as 'we' or 'the partner landlords' in this document. The CAP tells you:

- how to apply for housing with any of the above partner landlords;
- how we will assess your application based on your housing need;
- how we allocate available homes to meet the needs of housing applicants on the CHR.

We use a group plus points system to allocate houses. This means we will place you in a group which reflects your housing need and award points within your group to reflect the degree of your housing need.

We have developed the CAP following consultation with housing applicants, tenants, and other stakeholders, including other Council services and NHS Tayside. The CAP is designed to meet the legal and regulatory standards that guide how the partners in the CHR should work.

1.1

There are not enough affordable homes in Perth and Kinross to help everyone who applies for housing. We therefore want to make sure that the CAP allows us to assess the needs of each applicant and to allocate homes in a fair and consistent way, so that available homes are let to those in the greatest need of housing.

We also want to make sure that if you apply for housing you can access advice and information on all the housing options available to you, so that you can make informed choices and maximise your opportunities of finding the right home.

We will make this policy available to you in other languages or formats, such as large print and Braille and also publish it on our websites. Refer to Appendix 2 for further details.

Acting Within The Law 1.2

We have developed this policy using the good practice available from the Scottish Government, the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Chartered Institute of Housing. This means our policy is fair and gives reasonable preference to applicants in housing need. This policy complies with, and takes account of, the following housing legislation:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

We also protect your rights by meeting the legal requirements set out in other legislation, including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018

- Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
- Children Scotland Act 1995
- Civil Partnership Act 2004
- Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Management of Offenders etc (Scotland) Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

- **Outcome 10:** People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.
- **Outcome 12:** Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter 1.3

The Scottish Housing Regulator uses outcomes and standards set out in the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) to assess the performance of social landlords. To allow the CAP to meet the required outcomes and standards we have developed our policy to ensure:

- **Outcome 1:** Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and Housing Services.
- **Outcome 2:** Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.
- **Outcome 7:** People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.
- **Outcome 8:** Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.
- **Outcome 9:** People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.



2 Our Aim, Objectives and Principles

Our Aim

2.1

Our Aim is to meet housing need fairly and help secure accommodation for households in the greatest housing need.

Our Objectives

2.2

We will meet our aims by:

- responding quickly to people in acute and urgent housing need;
- giving the right priority to people who are in most need of housing; this includes specific groups identified in legislation to whom we must give 'reasonable preference', namely:
 - people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness (including those at risk of harassment and abuse);
 - people who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions with unmet housing needs;
 - social housing tenants who are under-occupying their home;

(Persons have unmet housing needs where the social landlord considers the persons have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options available);

- preventing and responding to homelessness by being proactive through providing appropriate advice and assistance or suitable housing within a reasonable timescale;
- providing a housing options approach to meet the person's needs, which involves taking early action if their home is at risk, encouraging them to make informed and realistic decisions on their options and assessing and meeting any support needs they may have, in partnership with other agencies;
- providing support to those who need help to find and keep a home by helping them to access the help and support they need to find a property and to live in their new home independently and

successfully by working in partnership with agencies such as NHS, Social Work Services and other support providers;

- making best use of housing that becomes available for rent;
- working to create communities where people want to live.

Our Principles

2.3

Our policy is based on six key principles. We will:

- 1 apply our policy consistently: this means we will apply our policy to every applicant and property we allocate, wherever that property is, whoever the applicant is, and whoever allocates it or processes the application;
- 2 be clear about what we do and when we will do things. We will be clear about how we do things and will explain why we do things wherever we can;
- 3 be open and honest with you and talk clearly and directly about your housing options. We will be clear about what we can and cannot do to help you;
- 4 follow what the law and guidance says we must do and what the law allows us to do. Wherever we can, we will follow what guidance recommends we should do;
- 5 respect diversity and promote equality in everything we do. No one will be treated unfairly because of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, language, religion, belief, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family circumstances, employment status, physical ability or mental health;
- 6 use all the information we receive about you and everyone you apply with in line with the law and hold that information securely.



3 Applying for Housing

Who Can Apply for Housing?

3.1

Anyone 16 years and over can apply for housing unless they are subject to immigration control.

Everyone applying for housing is included on the housing waiting list. However your application will not go live, which means you will not be considered for housing, until you have provided all of the information we require such as proof of identification, birth certificates etc. Where your application is placed on the list depends on your housing need. However, please remember if you apply for housing this does not mean we will definitely offer you housing. More people apply for housing under the CAP than the number of homes we have available to let.

Before you apply for housing we will invite you to use our Housing Options Self-Assessment (HOSA). We will also offer you an enhanced housing options interview to discuss your housing options with one of our trained advisors.

At an enhanced housing options interview, a range of solutions will be discussed, tailored to your individual needs, to help prevent homelessness or promote successful tenancy sustainment including:

- practical assistance or intervention to delay the urgent need to leave home, such as negotiating with landlords, parents or mediation;
- practical assistance or intervention to enable you to remain at home such as providing housing support, assistance with budgeting or debt advice;
- intervention or referral to secure alternative accommodation through exploring various housing types such as private sector, low-cost home ownership and/or social housing.

If social housing is the right option for you, we will support you to fill out a housing application form to become registered on the Common Housing Register (CHR).

By completing an application we can gather information on your personal and housing

circumstances, as well as your preferences about where you would like to live and the type of property you would like to live in.

Staff from each partner will be available to provide assistance with completing your application form if you ask for help. Information and advice which recognises your individual needs will also be available to help you make informed choices that maximise your opportunities for housing.

In line with our commitment to make services easily and equally accessible to all housing applicants, we can also provide an interpretation service if you are hearing or visually impaired or if your first language is not English.

In order to assess an application properly, it is important for us to have accurate and up-to-date information on your circumstances. You must keep your application up-to-date by notifying us of any change as soon as it occurs.

If you deliberately provide false or misleading information you will be suspended from the CHR. Any offers of housing that have been made will be withdrawn. If a tenancy is granted on the basis of false information, partners could take action to end the tenancy.

You can apply on your own, jointly with a partner or jointly with anyone else who will be living with you. However, we cannot allow you and two or more applicants who are unrelated to you to rent a property under this policy because this creates a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) which are governed by separate regulations.

Our Housing Options Team will manage your application and you can call them on the phone or visit in person at Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth or any Locality Area Office to discuss your application.

You can also talk to our staff at any of the partners' offices.

The contact details for each partner can be found in Appendix 2.



4 Your Application



Assessing Your Application 4.1

We aim to complete our assessment of your application within 20 working days of receiving it as long as you've provided all the information we need. We will write to tell you which group you have been placed in and the points, if any, we have awarded you.

We will assess your application using the criteria set out in our group plus points system based on your current circumstances and any additional needs you may have, including information provided on your behalf by other organisations and agencies.

We use a group plus points system to allocate houses. This means we will place you in a group which reflects your housing need and award points within your group to reflect the degree of your housing need.

If required, we may request additional information from you to assess your application.

If you don't give us all the information we need, this may delay your application.

What We **Do** and **Don't** Take Into Account When Assessing Your Application 4.2

When assessing your application for housing we will and will not take the following factors into consideration.

Factors that **are not** taken into consideration when applying for housing

- Whether you live in Perth and Kinross and how long you have lived there.
- Any debts that are not related to your current or former tenancy (Council or registered social landlord tenancies).
- Any debts you have already repaid.
- Debts related to your tenancy if they are less than one-twelfth of the yearly amount of rent you pay; or you have already arranged a repayment plan and have kept it for at least three months and you are still keeping to it.

- You and/or your family's income (including any benefits you receive).
- Your age, as long as you're over 16, and the home you want has not been designed or adapted as older persons housing.
- If you are legally separated or divorced.
- Who you live with at the time you apply for housing.

Factors that **are** taken into consideration when applying for housing

- You owe a landlord more than one-twelfth of the annual rent, and you have not agreed to repay what you owe and haven't made at least three monthly payments towards the money you owe when you said you would pay.
- You need to get support from, or give support to, a family member or carer to help you or a member of your family or carer to live independently.
- You have a social or medical reason to move to Perth and Kinross.
- Whether you or anyone that will live with you owns any property which you are entitled/able to live in.
- You are being harassed or abused where you live.

Making Enquiries and References 4.3

We make enquiries about your application when we receive it but the enquiry we make will depend on where you're living at the time you apply and where you've lived for the three years before you applied.

We will ask your landlord for a reference if you've been a tenant at any time in the past three years to find out if:

- you owe any money;
- you have acted in an anti-social manner;

- your landlord has taken any formal action against you to end your tenancy.

We may suspend your application if we receive an unsatisfactory reference; refer to Section 9 for more details on suspending your application.

If you refuse us permission to get references we won't make you an offer of housing until we receive a satisfactory reference, but your application will not be suspended.

Home Visits 4.4

We may need to arrange a home visit to assess your application if:

- you are housebound or otherwise vulnerable;
- we need to confirm your circumstances as we are unable to do this from your application.

Proving Your Identity 4.5

You will need to provide us with proof of your identity in the name you have applied in. We will accept your birth certificate, passport or National Insurance card. We also need two forms of proof showing your current address as your permanent and principal home. This may include, but is not limited to:

- official letters/bills/statements from a local authority, public agency or private utility (gas, electric, telephone), government department, private sector lease, bank or building society;
- current passport or photographic driving licence;
- National Health card.



5 Types of Housing and Areas Where You Want to Live



Applicants Choice

When you make an application for housing you will be able to choose:

- the CHR partner(s) that you would prefer to be your landlord(s);
- the areas that you would most like to live in;
- the property types that you would most like to live in.

We will not put any limits on the number of areas that you can choose, however your choices of property type and location may be affected by specific issues or circumstances.

Examples of where your choices could be restricted include:

- if you have a medical recommendation/requirement for a specific type of property;
- if an anti-social behaviour order may prohibit you from accessing a particular area;
- the availability of the remaining housing stock in the area.

We will provide you with clear information about the stock held by all three partners, so that you can make informed choices when selecting your preferred areas that maximise your opportunities for housing.

Note on Selecting Areas of Choice

It is important that you carefully consider the areas that you would like to live in taking account of things like:

- how close it is to your place of work or your children's school;
- the availability of public transport at the times you would need it;
- whether key local services like shops, a chemist or a post office are available.

Whilst it is useful to select a range of areas to maximise your chances of receiving an offer of housing, there is no point in selecting an area that you really don't want to live in or which would create difficulties for you for reasons like those listed above.

5.1

House Size (Number of Bedrooms)

We will register your application on the housing list according to the type and size of property that you require. This helps us to make sure that each property is let to an applicant that will make the best use of the stock that becomes available.

We will work out the number of bedrooms that you require using the following criteria, based on who will be living permanently with you in the household.

Household Size	Number of Bedrooms
Single Person	Bedsit or 1-2 bedrooms*
Couple	Bedsit or 1-2 bedrooms*
Family* with one child	2 bedrooms
Family with two children of the same gender (any age) or different genders but both are under 10 years of age	2 bedrooms
Family with two children, of different genders, and at least one aged over 10 years of age	3 bedrooms
Family with 3 children	3 bedrooms
Family with 4 children of the same gender, or all at least under 10 years of age	3 bedrooms
Family with 4 children or more	4 or 5 bedrooms

* A Family is defined as a couple or a single parent (male or female) with at least one child.

* Please note it is only possible to be on one waiting list at a time so single people and couples will have to choose whether they want to be on the one-bedroom or two-bedroom waiting list.

The exception to this is where you are willing to consider a bedsit, you can be on the waiting list for a bedsit and a one-bedroom property simultaneously. Couples will only be allocated a bedsit if they have selected this property type on their application form.

5.2

We will make common sense exceptions to these rules, depending on individual circumstances.

For example:

- if you require an additional bedroom on medical grounds;
- if you provide foster care, or have been pre-approved to provide foster care or to adopt children we will provide one additional bedroom;
- if you have access to children who do not reside with you on a full-time basis we will provide one additional bedroom if required;
- if you or a member of your household is pregnant and can provide us with proof of pregnancy from someone independent like a doctor or midwife, the unborn baby will be included in terms of the number of bedroom required;
- if there is a significant age-gap between same-sex siblings who are sharing a bedroom.

We will ask you to provide further information in support of your application if you require larger accommodation than we would normally allocate within the CAP.

If we make you an offer of housing that has one more bedroom than you need, we will provide you with information and advice to enable you to make an informed decision and choice about how you will manage to pay for your home financially. It is really important that you consider this information as you could be at risk of financial hardship which could result in the loss of your home.

Housing Type

5.3

The main type of housing provided by the three partners is general needs housing. However, we also provide housing with support and housing with particular design features such as:

- **Very Sheltered Housing**
This type of housing is designed to meet the needs of people who are aged 60 or over who require support to live independently. The service on offer has all the features of sheltered housing along with additional support and meal provision. To apply for very sheltered housing, a medical self-assessment must be completed and you need to:
 - normally be 60 years or over or with a recognised disability;
 - be assessed as needing the additional support and meal provision that very sheltered housing offers to allow you to continue living independently in the community.
- **Sheltered Housing**
Sheltered housing properties allow older people to retain a high degree of independence within their home. Services include staff on site Monday to Friday, 8.30 am - 4.15 pm and access to an emergency mobile response service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
To apply for sheltered housing, a medical self-assessment must be completed and you need to:
 - normally be 60 years or over or with a recognised disability;
 - be assessed as needing the additional support that sheltered housing offers to allow you to continue living independently in the community.

If you are applying as a couple, only one of you need to meet the criteria listed above.



5 Types of Housing and Areas Where You Want to Live *(continued)*

Sheltered housing is not restricted to over 60s and the partners recognise that, in some cases, there are people of all ages who would benefit from this type of housing.

If you make an application for very sheltered or sheltered housing, you will be assessed by the Housing Options Team to identify if this housing is suitable for you and the level of priority to be awarded.

● Retirement Housing

Similar to sheltered housing, retirement housing has staff available to offer you help, deal with any health and safety issues and respond to community alarm calls. You can make an application for retirement housing if:

- you are 60 years or over or with a recognised disability;
- you need more manageable accommodation with security.

If you make an application for retirement housing, you will be assessed by the Housing Options Team to identify if this housing is suitable for you and the level of priority to be awarded.

● Amenity Housing

Amenity housing is available for older people or people with a recognised disability. You can make an application for amenity housing if:

- you are over 50;
- have a medical condition and would benefit from the features of this type of accommodation.

If you make an application for retirement or amenity housing, you will be assessed by the Housing Options Team to identify if this housing is suitable for you and the level of priority to be awarded.

Please note that there is a separate application process for the types of housing outlined above. If you are interested in this type of housing,

please contact the Housing Options Team at Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth or by calling 01738 476000.

● Adapted Housing

Adapted housing includes houses purposely built for disabled people as well as homes that have been significantly adapted.

If you require a specifically adapted property because you have a particular health need or a disability, a full needs assessment will be carried out by an Occupational Therapist and/or Social Work and points then will be awarded within your group to reflect the degree of your housing need.

When allocating adapted housing, your suitability for the property will be the determining factor so it is important that we fully understand the type of property you need.

6 Assessing Your Housing Need - Our Group Plus Points System



In order to provide a fair system, the CAP prioritises applicants on the waiting list according to their housing need. To do this we operate a group plus points system. This means applicants are placed into a group with points dependent on their housing need. Refer to Appendix 1 for further details on the groups and points.

The Groups are:

- Strategic Needs
- Homelessness
- Transfer Applicants (you are a tenant of one of the three partners):
 - 1 Medical
 - 2 Overcrowding
 - 3 Under-Occupying
 - 4 Providing and/or Receiving Support
 - 5 No Housing Need (no points awarded)
- Housing Waiting List Applicants:
 - 1 Medical
 - 2 Overcrowding
 - 3 Below Tolerable Standard
 - 4 Insecure Housing
 - 5 Providing and/or Receiving Support
 - 6 No Housing Need (no points awarded)

Strategic Needs

6.1

The Strategic Needs Group has been designed to meet urgent or exceptional housing need as quickly and successfully as possible. If you are placed in the Strategic Needs Group you may be given priority over other types of housing applicant because of the urgent circumstances that you are facing. Refer to Appendix 1 for further details. This group includes applicants who are:

- looked after and accommodated children;
- foster/kinship carers whose current property is unsuitable for reasons relating to their caring responsibilities;

- people at risk of/experiencing serious harassment including harassment of a racial, religious or sexual nature or which is based on someone's gender, sexuality or disability;
- people leaving supported accommodation;
- armed forces personnel leaving full-time regular service;
- people who require to leave home as a result of regeneration activity;
- witness protection cases;
- people who are ready to leave hospital but cannot as they don't have suitable accommodation (delayed discharge);
- served with a Closing Order;
- staying in adaptive housing but no longer require it;
- exceptional circumstances.

If your application is placed in the Strategic Needs Group, it will be held in date order, based on the date the decision was made to place your application in this Group. At least 10% of all our housing allocations are made to this Group. The 10% proportion reflects the legal responsibilities that we have as well as our policy objective 'to respond quickly to people in acute and urgent housing need'.

If your application qualifies to be placed in the Strategic Needs Group we will make you one reasonable offer of accommodation. If you refuse the offer we make, this will normally result in the priority being withdrawn and your application will be removed from the Strategic Needs Group.

You will be placed in one of the other housing groups, for example Housing Waiting List or Transfer Applicant.

Applicants who qualify for priority rehousing within the Strategic Needs Group and are not rehoused within 3 months of being placed in the Strategic Need Group will have their application reviewed.



Homelessness

Our policy objective to 'minimise the impact of homelessness' means that we will target our resources to try and prevent homeless situations before they arise. We want to provide you with good quality information and advice on the range of housing and support options available to help you make informed choices and good decisions about how to meet your housing needs. Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

If you believe that you may be at risk of losing your home, you should contact the Housing Options Team, Locality Area Office or one of the partners as soon as possible to discuss your housing options. This means that we can give you advice on the range of housing options in your area, as well as giving you guidance on support available to help you continue to live in your current home. The contact details you need are listed in Appendix 2.

If the Council finds that you are 'unintentionally homeless', it means that you are homeless through no fault of your own and because of your circumstances, you will be offered accommodation by one of the partners.

We operate a rapid rehousing response to homelessness called Home First. This is designed to minimise the impact of homelessness by providing direct access to settled accommodation where possible, avoiding the need for temporary accommodation.

If you are assessed as unintentionally homeless, your application will be placed into the Homeless Needs Group. If you are in this group, we will prioritise your application based on the date which you applied for a homelessness assessment. At least 50% of all our housing allocations are made to this group. The 50% proportion reflects the legal responsibilities that we have to meet the needs of homeless applicants, as well as our policy objective 'to respond to people in acute and urgent housing need'.

6.2

We will offer accommodation that meets the needs of the applicant as soon as a suitable property becomes available. If more than one homeless applicant has an equal need for a property, we will offer the property in date order, based on the date of the homeless application. We will take positive action to make sure that homeless applicants are treated fairly when we make an offer of rehousing. We will do this by:

- *matching our offer, as far as we possibly can, to the applicant's needs and preferences;*
- *making further offers, if the Council upholds an appeal about the suitability of the original offer;*
- *monitoring the housing outcomes for homeless applicants to ensure that they are receiving equal access to all of our house types and locations.*

If your application qualifies to be registered in the Homelessness Needs Group we will make you one reasonable offer of accommodation. If you refuse the offer we make, this will normally result in your priority being withdrawn and your application will be removed from the Homelessness Needs Group.

You may be considered under the other housing groups, for example Housing Waiting or Transfer List, but given the level of priority awarded to the homelessness group, it could be some time before another offer of housing is made.

Transfer and Housing Waiting List Applicants 6.3

Housing Waiting List applicants are applicants who do not qualify in any of the other housing groups (eg Strategic Needs or Homelessness), and who want to move into the social housing sector. This group also includes applicants who are tenants of one of the partners but do not currently live in Perth and Kinross.

Transfer applicants are current tenants of the partners who live in Perth and Kinross and want to move to a new home.

The housing needs of applicants in the Transfer and Housing Waiting List groups will be fully assessed and we will award points depending on your personal circumstances and current housing situation.

Applicants in the Transfer and Housing Waiting List groups will share the same number of points but applications will be prioritised based on the date of their application. This means that if two applicants have the same number of points, the applicant who registered first will be considered first, if a suitable property becomes available. However, around 24% of all our housing allocations will be made to applicants on the Transfer list and around 16% to Housing Waiting List applicants. These proportions reflect our legal responsibilities and allow us to respond to housing need effectively whilst making best use of our housing stock.

Housing Waiting List and Transfer Applicant Points Categories

When you apply for housing, you receive a certain number of points based on your current housing circumstances. We award points for six main reasons including:

- 1 *Medical*
- 2 *Overcrowding*
- 3 *Under-Occupation*
- 4 *Below Tolerable Standard*
- 5 *Insecure Accommodation*
- 6 *Providing or Receiving Help to Live Independently*

Within the points system, you can usually receive points in every category that applies to you. For example, if you are in an overcrowded property and living in accommodation which is below tolerable standard you would receive points for all of these circumstances. We will assess whether you qualify for these points using the detailed guidelines set out below.

Transfer applicants will not receive points for below tolerable standard or insecure housing. Housing Waiting List applicants will not receive points for under-occupying.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Medical Priority

If your health or the health of someone in your household is affected by your current housing circumstances, you will be asked to complete a 'Medical Housing Self-Assessment Form'. The Council's Housing Options team will assess your housing needs to determine if you have a high, medium or low medical need for rehousing. In some complex cases or where you are unhappy with our decision, we may refer to the NHS Medical Advisory Service for advice.

Based on this assessment, we will add points to your application if this assessment confirms that your current home is unsuitable, the extent to which your home is unsuitable and whether the property could reasonably be adapted to meet your needs.

The focus of the medical housing self-assessment is not on the health condition itself, but on the way it affects how you manage in your home, eg you may have been diagnosed with a serious illness or condition, but you can live independently in your current home.

You can apply for medical points at any time throughout the duration of your application. Once assessed, a decision will be made to award any relevant level of points and if appropriate a recommendation for specific housing types or adaptations.

In some circumstances it may be more appropriate to carry out adaptations to your existing home. We will advise you where we feel this is the case. There are different options available if you rent from one of the partners.

If you are a tenant of a private sector landlord, you also have a right to adapt your home if it is unsuitable for your needs or equally if you own your own property. You should contact your landlord or any of the partners, to ask for advice and practical assistance on installing equipment and adaptations to the property.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.



6 Assessing Your Housing Need - Our Group Plus Points System *(continued)*



Overcrowding

You will receive points for overcrowding if you do not have enough bedrooms in your current home to meet the size of your household. You will be awarded points for every bedroom that you do not have. We will not provide points if you have rooms that could be used as a bedroom but you are currently not using them in this way such as an office. In calculating overcrowding we will consider it reasonable for the following household members to share a double bedroom:

- couples;
- same-sex household members;
- two mixed-sex household members, provided that they are both under 10 years of age.

However, in some circumstances, we will take into account the relationship between those sharing a bedroom when calculating overcrowding particularly if there is a significant age gap between the two household members.

If you have a box room in your current accommodation, we will count this as a bedroom if the room has a window and there is space to fit and use a single bed, a small wardrobe and a small chest of drawers.

If you wish to be considered for the same size of accommodation that you are currently residing in, we will not award overcrowding points to your application.

Equally, we will not award overcrowding points to your application if you overcrowd your current property by moving people into your home who will not be part of your household when you move.

If you are a single person and you live in a bedsit or studio flat, you will not be awarded overcrowding points.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Under-Occupation

Under-occupation is when you have more bedrooms in your accommodation than you require or use. We will award points to your application for under-occupation if you meet the following criteria:

- you are a tenant of one of the partner providers residing within Perth and Kinross;
- your accommodation is too large for your current requirements and you want to downsize.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Below Tolerable Standard

We will award points to your housing application if your accommodation is significantly below the tolerable standard. This means the condition of your home falls below the minimum standard set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the 2001 and 2006 Housing (Scotland) Acts.

It means that your accommodation is not in a good enough condition for you to live in (for example, if your property has no hot or cold running water, mains electricity or it is structurally unstable). The tolerable standard consists of a set of criteria covering the parts of a property which are essential to its functioning as a healthy, comfortable and safe home. The tolerable standard focuses on the building itself, and does not extend to internal decoration, heating systems or other amenities in the house. The tolerable standard applies to houses of all tenures, which means that it applies in private sector housing as well as social housing.

A house meets the tolerable standard if it:

- is structurally stable;
- is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp;
- has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating;
- has satisfactory thermal insulation;

- has an adequate piped supply of 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 or waterless 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 provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house;
- has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water;
- in the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installations for the purposes of that supply:
 - 'the electrical installation' is the electrical wiring and associated components and fittings, but excludes equipment and appliances;
 - 'the relevant requirements' are that the electrical installation is adequate and safe to use;
- has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house;
- has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.

A property is below the tolerable standard if it fails to meet any one of the elements of the tolerable standard, as defined above. If your current accommodation is in very poor condition you must tell us when you make an application for housing. We will then contact you and arrange for a property inspection to be carried out so that we can assess whether or not the property fails the standard. If it does, we will add points to your housing application and we will liaise with Environmental Health Officers and they

may contact your landlord for repairs or work to be carried out on your property.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Insecure Accommodation

This category covers situations where we will add points to your housing application if you are at risk of losing your current accommodation through no fault of your own, ie we will not award points if you are at risk of losing your home as a result your behaviour (eg breaching the terms of your tenancy agreement, failing to pay your rent or mortgage, anti-social behaviour). There are two main situations where insecure housing points may be added as follows:

- Notice to Quit or Notice to Leave: you will be awarded points if you have been served with a valid Notice to Quit from your landlord to end a Short Assured Tenancy, through no fault of your own (eg your landlord wants to sell the property). These points will also be awarded if you have a Private Residential Tenancy and you have been issued with a Notice to Leave.
- Tied tenancy: you will be awarded points if you currently live in accommodation provided by your employers and you require to leave it as a result of retirement or redundancy.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Providing or Receiving Help to Live Independently

We will award points to your housing application if you need to move to provide help to a person to enable them to live independently.

We will also award points to your application if you need to move so that you can receive help from a person to enable you to live independently in your new home.

When we are considering whether to award points to your application, we may ask you to provide a letter from the person receiving or providing help, explaining your reason for



6 Assessing Your Housing Need - Our Group Plus Points System *(continued)*

moving and the reason why you need to live near to them.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

Transfer Applicants - Pre-Transfer Visits

Transfer applicants are tenants of one of the Common Housing Register partners who already live in the Perth and Kinross area.

If you are a transfer applicant and are being considered for an offer of housing, your landlord may arrange to visit your home to check its condition before making you an offer of housing. If your current property is found to be in poor condition, you may be asked to carry out some work to bring it up to the required standard before we are able to offer you alternative housing.

This policy will usually be waived if you have an urgent need for rehousing, for example if your current property is really unsuitable on medical grounds or if you would be at risk if you remained in the property.

No Housing Need

You will not be awarded any points if you are considered to have no housing need. This means that your current accommodation meets your needs. However, we can support you through our housing options approach to consider the other housing options that may be available to you such as private sector housing or home ownership.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details.



7 Offering You a Home

Officers use our computer system to prepare a 'shortlist' of applicants when a property becomes available. Joining the housing list does not mean that we will always be able to make you an offer. Whether you receive an offer of housing will depend on:

- *your housing need;*
- *demand from other people on the list;*
- *the number of properties that become available;*
- *the number of allocations we need to make to applicants in each of the groups.*

If we decide to offer you a property, we will make you a formal offer of housing. We may call you to tell you we have an offer for you and will send you a written offer. If we offer you housing by 'phone' we will always confirm the offer in writing.

The letter we send to you will set out the next steps and information regarding the pre-tenancy interview. We will tell you:

- *the address of the property;*
- *the number of bedrooms it has;*
- *what type of property it is (such as a flat or a house);*
- *how much rent and service charge you will have to pay if you accept the offer; and*
- *what to bring to your pre-tenancy interview.*

When we contact you about an offer of housing, we'll advise you how much time you have to respond but we'll always give you at least 3 days to decide. If you don't respond to our offer of housing within the timescale, we'll treat this as a refusal of the offer.

We will normally make applicants up to two offers of housing, and Homeless and Strategic Need applicants one.

If you turn down two offers, or one offer if you are in Strategic Need or Homelessness, without good reasons, we may suspend your housing application and discharge our

homeless duty to you and you will lose your priority status and your application will move to another group. A further offer of housing can be made from this group but it will be some considerable time before another offer is made.

Every offer we make will be a reasonable offer.

This means that the property we offer you will:

- *have all the bedrooms you need as defined by this policy;*
- *meet all the recommendations our Housing Options Team made after an assessment of your needs.*

Wherever possible, we will offer you the type of housing you'd like but we can't always do this because we don't always have enough of the type of properties people would like to live in.

Accepting Our Offer of Housing 7.1

If you accept our offer, we will sign you up as our tenant at your pre-tenancy interview. If you made a joint application, you will have a joint tenancy. All joint tenants must be present when we ask you to sign your tenancy agreement. We will give you advice, information and support throughout the process of becoming our tenant. We will clearly explain your rights and responsibilities under the tenancy agreement before you sign it.



8 Tenancies

If you are made an offer of housing, we will offer you a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) in line with our legal responsibilities. A SST means you can keep your tenancy for as long as you want as long as you do not break the terms of your tenancy agreement. If you do, we can take legal action to end your tenancy.

In a limited number of situations, we may offer you a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. As a Short Scottish Secure tenant you have many of the same rights as a Scottish Secure tenant.

However, your rights are more limited on eviction, sub-letting and succession.

Your Short Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement will state that your tenancy is for a fixed period of time (at least six months). If by the end of that time, neither you nor your landlord has requested that the lease ends, it will renew itself for the same amount of time again (for example, for another six months).

We can only give Short Scottish Secure Tenancies in very specific circumstances. This is defined by law in Section 37, Schedule 6 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and associated amendments in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. These circumstances will apply to you if:

- *you have previously been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last three years;*
- *you or someone you live with has an anti-social behaviour order;*
- *you, a member of your household or a visitor has been involved in anti-social behaviour in or near their home within the last three years;*
- *you are moving to Perth and Kinross to take up or seek employment;*
- *where you're living is scheduled for development and we need you to move to allow us to get the work done;*
- *you are homeless and the property is let to you on a temporary basis for more than six months;*

- *you need housing support to help you maintain your tenancy;*
- *we are sub-letting the property to you: this means we lease the property we're offering you from another social landlord.*

In all cases we will serve you with a notice, informing you that we are offering you a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy.

This notice will also state why you are being offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy and the period for which the tenancy is being offered.

If you have been given a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy because of a previous eviction for anti-social behaviour or because someone you live with has an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) served against them, the Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will be converted to a Scottish Secure Tenancy at the end of 12 months, provided the landlord hasn't given you a notice to quit.

Your landlord will notify you when your tenancy agreement changes, and will tell you what your new rights and responsibilities are.

Joint Tenancies 8.1

Under this policy you can apply to any of the partners to have a joint tenancy with someone who is staying with you or someone you intend to stay with you.

We encourage joint applicants, of the same or opposite sex, to apply for joint tenancies to ensure that they have similar legal rights.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) 8.2

We will never make an offer of housing that would result in three or more unrelated people living in a property, as this would create a house in multiple-occupation (HMO).

The only exception to this policy is where the property is being leased to a support provider to provide specialist accommodation for community care needs or homeless supported accommodation.



Adapted Properties 8.3

Adaptations such as ramps and level access showers are expensive to install and remove and the process can take time. It makes sense that wherever possible, homes that have already been specially adapted should be made available to people who can make use of those adaptations.

If you have adaptations in your property which you no longer require or which you did not require in the first place, we may require you to move to an alternative property. This only applies to tenants of the partners who live in Perth and Kinross.



9 Reviewing, Removal, Deferral, Suspension and Merging of Applications



We will review your application at least once a year. The date of this review is based on the date you registered your housing application with us. This is important to keep the CHR up-to-date and ensure appropriate offers of housing are made.

As part of the review, we will write to you asking if there have been any changes in your circumstances and if your choices of property type and area are the same.

We will give you 28 days to reply. If you have not replied we will send you a reminder giving you 7 more days to reply. If you don't reply, we will remove your application from the CHR.

However, if you contact us within 3 months of your application being cancelled, you can have your original application form re-instated. The date of registration will be based on the date you made the original application. You may be required to complete a new application form if your circumstances have changed.

If you are placed in Strategic Needs or Homelessness group, we will review your application every three months to check you are still in acute housing need.

Removal of Applications 9.1

There are other times when we will remove an application from the CHR apart from the annual review.

We will remove your application from the CHR if:

- you request, in writing, that you wish to be removed from the list;
- you do not reply when we ask you for more information to support your application or we ask you to get in touch with us for some other reason;
- you fail to respond to a review;
- we have been notified of your death.

Deferred Applications 9.2

You can ask us to defer your application if you don't want to get an offer of housing for some reason. This means that you can stay on the CHR but won't get an offer of housing. People sometimes ask us to do this if their home comes with their job but they don't have to leave their home yet. If you ask us to defer your application, it is your responsibility to tell us when you'd like to be considered for an offer of housing. You must still respond to our letters when we review your application if you ask us to defer your application.

We will not normally defer applications that are held in the Homelessness or Strategic Need groups.

Suspending Applications 9.3

Everyone has a right to have their application added to our CHR if they are 16 years or over. However, we can suspend your application from CHR in certain circumstances. If we suspend your application, you will not be offered accommodation, even if you are in housing need.

We want to keep to a minimum the number of people we suspend on the CHR, but there are some circumstances where we do need to suspend people from the CHR. These circumstances are as follows.

Reason for Suspension	Period of Suspension	Reason for Ending Suspension
You refuse two reasonable offers of housing.	12 months from date of second refusal.	Application automatically reinstated after 12 months.
You withhold information that you should have told us about: for example, if you had a tenancy in the three years before you applied to us for housing and you didn't tell us, that's withholding information that you should have told us about.	6 months from date discovered.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.
You give us misleading information: if you tell us that you left your last home because the tenancy ended but the tenancy ended because your landlord had you evicted because you didn't pay your rent, that's providing us with misleading information.	6 months from date discovered.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.
You give us information that you know is wrong: if you tell us you never owned a property or you were never the tenant of a property when you were, this is providing information that you know is wrong.	6 months from date discovered.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.
You do something that makes your housing situation worse such as giving up a secure tenancy without having another property to go to.	6 months from date discovered or from date you left the accommodation.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.
You or someone that lives with you has been responsible for serious and enduring anti-social behavior or is the subject of an ASBO.	This will be reviewed every three months and information will be obtained from your landlord, the Safer Communities Team, Police Scotland or any other relevant agencies.	Evidence that behaviour has improved.
You have lost a previous tenancy within the last 3 years by abandoning it: for example, you leave a property that you have rented without handing back the keys or notifying your landlord.	6 months from date discovered.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.
You have outstanding rent arrears equivalent to more than one twelfth of the annual rent charge and there is no arrangement in place to repay what you owe.	Subject to you repaying the debt.	Evidence that rent or service charge debt has reduced and you have made at least 3 monthly payments towards what you owe.



9 Reviewing, Removal, Deferral, Suspension and Merging of Applications (continued)

Reason for Suspension	Period of Suspension	Reason for Ending Suspension
You have previously been evicted by a court order within the last 3 years: for example, you were evicted for rent arrears (drug dealing/cultivation from your home) or damage to the property or its contents.	6 months from date discovered.	Application automatically reinstated after 6 months.

You can appeal against our decision to suspend your application and also ask us to review our decision if your circumstances change. See Section 11 for further information on appeals and complaints.

Merging Applications

You may wish to be considered jointly for housing with someone who already has an application on the CHR. This means that you could merge your application with this person. In these cases, the date of application will be determined by the date of the earliest application.

If you wish to withdraw from a joint application you will be allowed to have your original date of application re-instated if you wish to re-submit an application in your own right.

The group and points allocated will be reassessed due to the change in your circumstances.

9.4

Change in Circumstances

You must tell us if your circumstances change.

You can call us, email or write to us to tell us about the change. If someone joins your household or leaves it, or you move home, you need to tell us about this change.

Where your application is placed on the CHR and the group you are placed in and the points you get (if any) may change if there is a change of circumstances.

You can get the form you need on the Perth & Kinross Council website, from any of our officers or by asking for one by phone or email.

9.5

10 Other Allocations Issues and Information



Community Safety - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) 10.1

Social landlords have a legal duty to consider the housing requirements of all applicants including persons currently on the sex offenders register and other high-risk offenders who are subject to the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

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

The aim of MAPPA is to promote public safety and reduce the risk of harm.

Using Our Discretion 10.2

We understand that our CAP cannot cover all of the circumstances that may lead to you needing to move home. In these situations, the Service Manager, Perth & Kinross Council, or the Housing Manager of Hillcrest and Caledonia Housing Association has a special power to use 'discretion' where you need to move or be housed urgently.

Discretion will only be used where:

- *housing is needed quickly;*
- *our Common Allocations Policy won't allow us to offer housing quickly;*
- *there are good reasons or special circumstances to offer housing quickly in urgent cases.*

'Good reasons' and 'special circumstances' include:

- *Significant compassionate grounds: such as the death of a family member in or around the house. In these circumstances, it may be very difficult for the remaining family to distance themselves from the event and professional advice suggests a change of home is fundamental to the future wellbeing of a family member.*

- *Management reasons: such as where we need to carry out substantial works to your home and we need to move you out temporarily or you have succeeded to the property but it was specially adapted for the original tenant and you don't need those adaptations but someone else does.*
- *Community safety issues: such as witness protection measures or there is a high risk to you remaining in the property and this has been confirmed by Police Scotland and other professionals.*
- *Domestic abuse cases where moving the perpetrator enables the victim to remain in the family home.*

If you refuse an offer after we've made you discretion, you will lose your priority status and your application will return to the group where it was before discretion was used.

Bypassing Applications 10.3

Where we don't make an offer of housing to the first or next person on the shortlist for a property that's available to let, we call this 'bypassing'.

When a property becomes available for offer, we have to decide who would benefit most from the property. For example, if a property adapted for the needs of a wheelchair user is available to let but the next person on the list doesn't use a wheelchair, we would bypass that person. We would continue to bypass applications until we found someone with a need for the property which ensures that we 'make best use of housing that becomes available for rent' in order to meet our policy objective.

For overcrowded households with the same number of points, applications will be ranked based on the date of application. However, we may bypass an application to give preference to another applicant who has more people in their household.

Whenever we bypass an application, we must record why the application was bypassed. This helps to ensure our policy is



transparent, we have acted fairly and are responsible for the decisions we make. Any decision to bypass must be based on need and our policy intention of ensuring the best use is made of the housing stock.

The CHR monitoring group reviews bypass reasons each year to ensure that bypasses are made fairly.

Local Lettings Initiatives 10.4

In Perth and Kinross we have different amounts of housing in each area and different levels of demand. House types and sizes, the availability of local services and the location of our homes can affect the demand for housing.

Although our Common Allocations Policy aims to create a simple, straightforward system for allocating our homes; sometimes we will need to make an extra effort to encourage applicants to move to a local area. To achieve this, sometimes we may use the way we allocate our homes to support local investment, community sustainability and regeneration plans or to make sure we have a good mix of different household types and ages.

To achieve this partners may introduce a Local Lettings Initiative to address a specific issue within one of our communities, eg:

- *in areas of low demand, we may wish to relax the bedroom criteria in order to allow applicants to occupy larger properties;*
- *in flatted accommodation, we may wish to reduce the number of household with children occupying properties in order to create a balanced mix of households;*
- *for new-build accommodation in rural locations, we may wish to give priority to local applicants who live in and contribute to the local community;*
- *in areas where there are significant issues and concerns with anti-social behaviour.*

To introduce a Local Lettings Initiative, all partners will jointly consider the evidence that has informed the proposal, the views of the local community/wider partners and the proposed aims and objectives. We will make a joint decision about whether to introduce a Local Lettings Initiative in order to make sure the overall aims and objectives of the Common Allocations Policy are not negatively affected by it.

All partners will manage and monitor Local Lettings Initiatives collaboratively to ensure positive outcomes are achieved. Where we intend to use a Local Lettings Initiative, the details will be published on the relevant Partner's website.

Nomination Agreements 10.5

We have nomination agreements with other social housing landlords who have housing in Perth and Kinross. They may ask us to tell them about anyone on our waiting list who is looking for housing in the areas where they have homes for rent. We call these arrangements '*nomination agreements*'.

We will nominate you if you have agreed to this on your application form and if you qualify under the other landlord's allocations policy.

Social landlords try to offer at least fifty percent of any new homes or properties that become available to people on the CHR.

Mutual Exchanges 10.6

If you currently live in Perth and Kinross and you rent your home from one of the partner landlords, you can apply to swap your home through the Mutual Exchange Scheme.

Your landlord must agree to the exchange, and they can only refuse permission if it is reasonable to do so. Each partner has a separate policy that sets out the rules that apply if you want to take part in a mutual exchange.

You can get more information about mutual exchanges from the partner landlords' offices or websites.

Applications from Staff, Council Elected Members or Management Committee Members 10.7

Members of staff of the partner landlords, including people who live with them and close relatives, must declare their interest on the CHR application form.

We will only accept a housing application or make an offer of housing to someone who is a member of staff, including people who live with them, if the application and offer is authorised by either:

- *Perth & Kinross Council, Service Manager, Perth City and Specialist Services or Team Leader, Specialist Services;*
- *Caledonia Housing Association's, Management Committee;*
- *Hillcrest Housing Association's Area Manager or Operations Manager.*

Personal Information and Information Sharing 10.8

Any personal information you give us when you apply for housing under this policy will be handled according to the legal responsibilities placed on us by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

This means that your personal information will always be held on a secure IT system and accessed only by authorised individuals. The information you give us will only ever be used for the following four purposes:

- *assessing your housing application in accordance with the policy;*
- *statistical monitoring of housing supply and demand;*
- *future consultation and customer surveys;*
- *the prevention and detection of fraud through the National Fraud Initiative which is a UK Government data-matching exercise.*

The information provided by you will be used by Perth & Kinross Council on behalf of the Partners to assess your application for housing, establish the extent of your housing need and consider your suitability for offers of accommodation.

The information may be shared with relevant partner agencies to ensure that your application is assessed accurately and that offers of accommodation are reasonable. These agencies include relevant local authority departments, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Medical Advisory Service (NHS) and Police Scotland.

If you would like a full list of the agencies that may be consulted regarding your application, please contact the Housing Options Team, Housing & Environment, Perth & Kinross Council, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD.

Perth & Kinross Council, on behalf of the Partners, may check information provided by you, or information about you provided by a third party, with other information held by us. We may also get information from certain third parties or share your information with them in order to check its accuracy, prevent or detect crime, protect public funds or where required by law.

For further information:

- *visit our website - www.pkc.gov.uk/dataprotection*
- *email DataProtection@pkc.gov.uk*
- *tel 01738 477933*



11 Appeals and Complaints

Appeals 11.1

We will always try our best to give you an excellent service, but we know sometimes things go wrong and you might want to appeal against decisions that we make about your housing application.

If you are unhappy about any decision we have made on your application, you can appeal:

- the group or points we award your application;
- a decision to suspend you from receiving offers;
- decision to cancel your application;
- the level of medical priority you are awarded;
- an offer of housing if you think it was not a reasonable offer;
- any decision we make which you believe has not been dealt with in accordance with the Common Allocations Policy.

There are two stages to this appeal process as follows:

- **Stage 1**
You can appeal our decision by writing to us, emailing, or verbally, to the Housing Options Team.

For example, if you do not agree with the group or points we have given you, you should first contact the Housing Options Team who assessed your application and ask them to reassess your case.

We will do this within five working days.

- **Stage 2**
If you remain dissatisfied with the decision, a written appeal can then be lodged with the Housing Options Co-ordinator or Team Leader, Specialist Services at Housing & Environment, Perth & Kinross Council, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, PH1 5GD or by emailing housingoptionsandsupport@pkc.gov.uk

The Co-ordinator or Team Leader will review your appeal within five working days so long as you have provided us with all the information we need.

There is no further right of appeal.

Complaints 11.2

If you are dissatisfied with the level of service you have received from us, eg regarding the actual allocation of a property or not meeting our published service standards, each partner has a complaints procedure that is simple and easy to use.

You can contact any partner to ask for a copy of their complaints procedure. If the complaint is about the way in which your application has been registered or anything that is directly associated with the CHR you can complain using the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure by:

- completing an online enquiry form;
- telephoning us on 01738 475500;
- emailing CustomerComplaints@pkc.gov.uk
- writing to us at the Customer Service Centre, Perth & Kinross Council, Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, PERTH, PH1 5GD;
- or visiting us at Pullar House, 35 Kinnoull Street, Perth, at our partners' offices or any Council office.

Our complaints procedures will explain each step of our process, and how you can appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. You must generally use our internal complaints system before contacting the Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman is a government-based organisation who will review your case if you have already been through our complaints procedures and you feel we have not dealt with your complaint fairly. At each stage of the application and allocation process, we will remind you of your right to appeal against decisions that we make about your housing application.



Equality and Diversity 11.4

All partners are firmly committed to equality of opportunity for all housing applicants, and will ensure that in applying this policy we will not discriminate against any individual, household or group on grounds of race, gender, sex, marital status/civil partnership, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, language, social origin, disability, age or other personal attribute.

We will make this policy available in alternative formats such as large print or Braille on request. Translation services for other languages or British Sign Language will also be made available if you require this. We are also firmly committed to the equalities standard in the Scottish Social Housing Charter that 'every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services'.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this Policy. If you would like a copy, please contact the Housing Options Team on 01738 476000.

If you are not satisfied by our response, you can ask the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman to investigate:

*The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
4A Melville Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 7NS*

*Tel 0800 377 7330
Fax 0800 377 7331*

*Email ask@spsso.org.uk
www.spsso.org.uk*

The Scottish Housing Regulator 11.3

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) is the independent regulator of registered social landlords and local authority housing services in Scotland.

The SHR has a legal responsibility to:

'safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants of social landlords, people who are or may become homeless, and people who use housing services provided by registered social landlords (RSLs) and local authorities'.

The SHR monitors how well the partners are delivering their housing services, managing their finances and performing good standards of governance. If needed, the SHR will intervene to make improvements where there is evidence that this is needed.

All partners will provide evidence each year that their performance meets the standards set out by the SHR in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. This means that the SHR will monitor, assess, compare and report on the performance of all partners in relation to:

- how easy we make it for you to apply for housing;
- how well we communicate with you and give you advice;
- how well we manage the Common Housing Register.

Our approach to monitoring our performance against Charter standards is set out fully in Section 12.3 of this policy.



12 Managing the CHR and the Common Allocations Policy

CHR Monitoring Group

All partners are involved in the CHR monitoring group which oversees the management of the CHR and Common Allocations Policy.

This group meets on a quarterly basis. The objectives of the group are:

- to monitor performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter indicators Annual Letting Plan proportions and the objectives and outcomes of the CAP;
- to oversee service delivery and implement new ways of working such as housing options;
- to make strategic decisions following consultation with all stakeholders;
- to make recommendations/decisions on procedural change and development.

12.1

Training

Training is an important part in making sure that the Common Allocations Policy is implemented effectively and delivers positive outcomes for customers. We, therefore, provide ongoing training for staff. This includes training on:

- housing options;
- housing legislation and good practice;
- Common Allocations Policy and procedures;
- information technology systems;
- other relevant legislation such as equality law;
- skills development, for example, conducting effective interviews.

We monitor and identify the need for staff training by developing training plans, by performing staff appraisals and by implementing staff development programmes that link training to job and personal development needs. This ensures that our approach to training contributes to continuous improvement in the way we deliver our services.

12.2

13 Quality Assurance and Performance Management



In line with our commitment to meeting the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, we work collaboratively to monitor our performance. We want to continuously improve our service delivery and implementation of the Common Allocations Policy.

Quality Assurance

13.1

We use a quality assurance system to make sure we provide an efficient and consistent service to our applicants and assess their applications accurately, fully reflecting their housing needs. Every month we:

- carry out a 10% random audit of new housing applications to make sure we have carried out assessments in line with our policy, performance standards and legal requirements;
- report on the number of complaints, appeals and outcomes.

Performance Management

13.2

We will review our performance in managing the CAP and CHR and report regularly to the senior management teams of all the partners and the CHR Monitoring Group using the following monitoring reports:

- **Access to the CHR**
We will monitor performance against the following indicators which assess admission to the Common Housing Register:
 - number of new applications received;
 - number of new applications registered;
 - time taken to register an application;
 - number of new applications by ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

Assessing Applications

We will monitor performance against the following indicators which evaluate our assessment of applications:

- time taken to process an application;
- number of applicants reviewed and removed from the list;
- number of applicants suspended including group and grounds for suspension;
- number of applicants who have chosen to defer their application;
- number of appeals made, including the outcomes;
- number of complaints received, including the outcomes.

Outcomes

We will monitor performance against the following indicators which assess the outcomes achieved by housing applicants:

- number of applications in each group;
- number of lets to applicants by group against proportion;
- time taken to offer housing to applicants in Strategic and Homelessness group;
- number of offers accepted and refused, by group and reason for refusal;
- number of applicants nominated to a registered social housing landlord and re-housed and, reasons for refusing a nomination;
- number of applicants re-housed through a mutual exchange;
- number of applicants under-occupying by one or two bedrooms who are re-housed;
- number and reason for bypassing an applicant for an offer of housing.



Review of the Common Allocations Policy 13.3

We will also use a variety of methods to review the content of this policy, as well as the information provided in our leaflets and on our website.

In particular, we will:

- *obtain feedback about the quality of information and service provided;*
- *review the content of all of our publications and correspondence to ensure that it is accurate, up-to-date and written in plain language.*

We will use the outcomes from our assessment and customer feedback to improve our service and working practices.

We will review this policy every three years, or earlier if required in light of changes in the law or good practice guidance.



Appendix 1 - Group Plus Points System

Group	Points	Allocation Priority
1 Strategic Need		
<p>This group is designed to meet urgent or exceptional housing need as quickly and successfully as possible. Refer to Section 6 for more details.</p> <p>This group includes applicants who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>looked after and accommodated children;</i> ● <i>foster/kinship carers whose current property is unsuitable for reasons relating to their caring responsibilities;</i> ● <i>people at risk of/experiencing domestic abuse;</i> ● <i>people at risk of/experiencing serious harassment including harassment of a racial, religious or sexual nature or which is based on someone's gender, sexuality or disability;</i> ● <i>people moving on from supported accommodation;</i> ● <i>served with a Closing Order;</i> ● <i>staying in adaptive housing and no longer require it;</i> ● <i>armed forces personnel leaving full-time regular service;</i> ● <i>people who require to leave home as a result of regeneration activity;</i> ● <i>witness protection cases;</i> ● <i>people who are ready to leave hospital but cannot as they don't have suitable accommodation (delayed discharge)</i> ● <i>in exceptional circumstances.</i> 	<p>Applications will be held according to the date of decision to place them in this allocations group.</p>	10%
2 Homelessness		
<p>This group is designed to enable the partners to respond to homelessness. For more details about this group refer to Section 6. Applicants in this group must be assessed by the Council as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>threatened with homelessness;</i> ● <i>unintentionally homeless (under Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and 2001 Act).</i> 	<p>These applications are held in date order because of the exceptionally urgent circumstances involved.</p> <p>Applications will be held according to the date of their homeless presentation.</p>	50%



Group	Points	Allocation Priority
3 Transfer Applicants		
(Tenants of the three housing providers living in Perth and Kinross who apply to move to an alternative property).	These applications will be held in order of the number of points awarded.	24% overall
Medical You can receive these points if:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> you have difficulty with mobility; and/or you have a serious long-term or terminal health problem; and/or your health problems are being made worse by your current housing situation which could be alleviated or managed more effectively by being rehoused. 		
There are three levels of medical points:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High You have an urgent need for housing and your medical condition is being severely affected or made worse by your current accommodation and you are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> unable to return home from hospital as your home does not meet your medical needs; or urgent housing to prevent admission to hospital, residential care, nursing home; or unable to access any of the facilities in your home; or having extreme difficulty getting in and out of your home due to steps or slopes leading to your doorway; or having extreme difficulty moving around your home. 	150	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium You have serious health or mobility issues and your home seriously affects your daily activities. Re-housing would alleviate your health or mobility difficulties and/or improve your quality of life. 	100	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low You have less serious health or mobility difficulties and your home hinders daily activities. Re-housing would alleviate your health or mobility problems and/or improve your quality of life. 	50	



Group	Points	Allocation Priority
3 Transfer Applicants (continued)		
Overcrowded This group is designed to provide points if you are living in accommodation that is not large enough for the people living with you. You will receive points based on the information in your application. Refer to Section 6 for more information. You will receive points if you need:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 extra rooms; 	150	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 extra rooms; 	100	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 extra room; or 	50	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a bedspace (have a single bedroom but requires a double bedroom). 	25	
Under-Occupying This group provides points to you if you are living in accommodation with more bedrooms than you require or use. You will receive points based on the information within your application form. Refer to Section 6 for more details. You will receive points if you have:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 rooms too many; or 	200	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 bedroom too many. 	100	
Providing or Receiving Help to Live Independently You can receive points in this group if you or a member of your household need to move home for one of the following reasons:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to receive help - for example, you need to move to be closer to your carer or family; 	10	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide help to somebody else - for example, you want to move to be near somebody you are going to help live independently. 	10	
No Housing Need This group is for those applicants that have no housing need. Refer to Section 6 for more details. This covers:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> those with no housing need or those merely aspiring to move to alternative housing. 	0	



Appendix 1 – Group Plus Points System (continued)

Group	Points	Allocation Priority
4 Housing Waiting List Applicants <small>(continued)</small>		
<p>Insecure Housing You can receive points from this group if you do not have secure accommodation or are threatened with homelessness in the next 3 months. Refer to Section 6 for more information.</p> <p>You will receive points if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • you live in private rented accommodation and your lease has expired or you have been served with a notice to quit by your landlord through no fault of your own; • you are in a relationship that has broken down and you are unable to remain in the home; • long-term sofa-surfer (no bedroom available); • you have no settled address and/or living at a 'care of' address with a bedroom available; • you live in a caravan but have access to facilities that are not below tolerable standard; • you live in tied accommodation and your employer has told you that you will have to leave your accommodation within the next 6 months (for example, as a result of retirement or redundancy); <p>Only one set of points can be awarded in this group.</p> <p>Providing or Receiving Help to Live Independently You can receive points in this group if you or a member of your household need to move home for one of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to receive help - for example, you need to move to be closer to your carer or family; • to provide help to somebody else - for example, you want to move to be near somebody you are going to help live independently. <p>No Housing Need This group is for those applicants that have no housing need. Refer to Section 6 for more details.</p> <p>This covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • those with no housing need or those merely aspiring to move to alternative housing. 	<p>100</p> <p>80</p> <p>60</p> <p>40</p> <p>20</p> <p>20</p> <p>10</p> <p>10</p> <p>0</p>	



Appendix 2 – Contact Details

Partners	Contact Details
Perth & Kinross Council	Housing Options Team Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council Pullar House 35 Kinnoull Street PERTH PH1 5GD Tel 01738 476000 Email housingoptionsandsupport@pkc.gov.uk Website www.pkc.gov.uk
Caledonia Housing Association	5 South St John's Place PERTH PH1 5SU Tel 01738 441088 Email customerservices@caledoniaha.co.uk Website www.caledoniaha.co.uk
Fairfield Housing Association	5 Fairfield Avenue PERTH PH1 2TF Tel 01738 630738
Hillcrest Homes	55 Huntingtower Road PERTH PH1 2LH Tel 0300 123 2640 Email customerservice@hillcrest.org.uk Website www.hillcrest.org.uk
Kingdom Housing Association	Saltire Centre Pentland Court Glenrothes KY6 2DA Tel 01592 630922 Email customerservices@kingdomhousing.org.uk Website www.kingdomhousing.org.uk Facebook facebook.com/KingdomHousingAssociation

Locality Teams	Contact Details
<p>Perth City</p> <p>Areas covered:</p> <p><i>Bridgend, City Centre, Craigie, Errol, Friarton, Glencarse, Inchtute, Invergowrie, Leetown, Longforgan, Moncrieffe, Muirton, North Muirton, Scone, Rae Place, Stanley Crescent, Florence Place, Balhousie Street, Dunkeld Road.</i></p>	<p>Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council Pullar House 35 Kinnoull Street PERTH PH1 5GD Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email CityCentralHousing@pkc.gov.uk</p>



Appendix 2 - Contact Details *(continued)*



Locality Teams	Contact Details
Letham Areas covered: <i>Letham, Hillyland, Double Dykes and Fairfield.</i>	Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council Marlee Road PERTH PH1 2HL Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email LethamHousing@pkc.gov.uk
Blairgowrie Areas covered: <i>Alyth, Kirkmichael, New Alyth, Meigle, Rattray, Blairgowrie, Carsie, Murthly, Caputh, Spittalfield, Forneth, Meikleour, Stanley, Luncarty, Coupar Angus, Balbeggie, Burrelton, Kinrossie, Saucher, Collace, Guildtown, Wolfhill.</i>	Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council 46 Leslie Street BLAIRGOWRIE PH10 6AW Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email NorthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk
Pitlochry Areas covered: <i>Bankfoot, Aberfeldy, Ballinluig, Grandtully, Blair Atholl, Dunkeld, Birnam, Kenmore, Fearnan, Acharn, Glenlyon, Kinloch Rannoch, Pitlochry, Killiecrankie, Dull, Weem.</i>	Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council 26 Atholl Road PITLOCHRY PH16 5BX Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email NorthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk
Crieff Areas covered: <i>Crieff, Aberuthven, Madderty, Comrie, Aberargie, Almondbank, Pitcairngreen, Auchterarder, Gilmerton, Blackford, Methven, Braco, Muthill.</i>	Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council 32 James Square CRIEFF PH7 3EY Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk
Kinross Areas covered: <i>Kinross, Cleish, Blairingone, Powmill, Crook of Devon, Milnathort, Scotlandwell, Kinnesswood, Glenfarg, Bridge of Earn, Dunning, Abernethy and Forgandenny.</i>	Housing & Environment Perth & Kinross Council Loch Leven Community Campus Muirs KINROSS KY13 8FQ Tel 01738 476000 Option 2 Email SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000

بن لعتجت انت او اي شخص تعرفه نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو تصميم آخر يمكن الحصول عليه (أو على نسخة معدلة لتلخص هذه الوثيقة مترجمة بلغة أخرى) بالاتصال ب: رقم هاتف للتواصل المباشر: 01738 475000

اگر آپ کو یا آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کی نقل دوسری زبان یا فارسیٹ (بعض دفعات دستاویز کے خلاصہ کا ترجمہ فراہم کیا جائے گا) میں دیکھنا ہے تو اس کا بندوبست سروس آپ کی خدمت Customer Service Centre سے کیا جاسکتا ہے۔

如果您或你的朋友希望得到這文件的其它語言版本或形式 (某些時候，這些文件只會是概要式的翻譯)，請聯絡 Customer Service Centre: 01738 475000 來替您安排。

Jeżeli chciałbyś lub ktoś kto alby uzyskać kopię owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski lub w innym formacie (istnieje możliwość uzyskania streszczenia owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski), Proszę kontaktować się z Customer Service Centre: 01738 475000

P ežete li si Vy, alebo n kdo, koho znáte, kopii této listiny v jiném jazyce nebo jiném formátu (v n kterých p ípadech bude p eložén pouze stručný obsah listiny) Kontaktujte prosím Customer Service Centre: 01738 475000 na vy ízení této požadavky.

Если вам или кому либо кого вы знаете необходима копия этого документа на другом языке или в другом формате, вы можете запросить сокращенную копию документа обратившись Customer Service Centre: 01738 475000

Nam bu mhath leat fhéin nó roach eile as áitlíné dhut leithbhreac cén pháipear seo ann an cánán nó ann an cruth eile (uaireannan cha bhí eadh gárr-iomradh den pháipear ní fheostairín ann an eadar-theangachadh), gabhadh seo a dhéanamh le fios a chur gu Ionad Sheirbhíais Theachdaíchean air 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.