



RUCHAZIE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ALLOCATION POLICY

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1 Introduction

This Allocation Policy describes how Ruchazie Housing Association will manage access to its waiting list, how it will let our homes to applicants on the waiting list and how it will provide advice to applicants on a range of options they may wish to consider to meet their housing needs/improve their housing conditions.

In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 Ruchazie Housing Association will give reasonable preference when letting our homes to applicants in the following circumstances

- Homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have *unmet housing needs, including those at risk of harassment and abuse
- Persons who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions and who have *unmet housing needs
- Social housing tenants who are under-occupying their home

*Unmet housing needs definition as defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 ' where the social landlord considers an applicant to have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options which are available'

2 Legislative and Regulatory Framework

We have developed this policy using the good practice and guidance available from the Scottish Government, the Scottish Housing Regulator and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

Legal Framework

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 meet the requirements set out in other legislation including:

Human Rights Act 1998
GDPR 2018
Matrimonial Homes (Family protection) (Scotland) Act 1981
Children's 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; and
Adult Support & protection (Scotland) Act 2007

3 Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

The following charter outcomes and standards are directly relevant to the allocation policy:

Charter Outcome 1 'Equalities':

'every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services'.

Charter Outcome 2 'Communication':

'tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides'.

Charter Outcome 3 'Participation'

'tenants and other customers find it easy to participate and influence their landlords decisions at a level they feel comfortable with'

Charter Outcome 4 'Quality of housing':

'tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair'.

Charter Outcome 7,8 and 9 'Housing Options':

'people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them'.

'tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options'.

'people at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness'.

Charter Outcome 10 'Access to Social Housing':

'people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects for being housed'.

Charter Outcome 11 'Tenancy Sustainment':

'tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations'.

4. Policy aims and objectives

The main objectives of this policy are to :

- Meet all relevant legal and good practice standards.
- Avoid discrimination on grounds covered in our equality policy such as discrimination on grounds of age, belief, disability, language, marital status, race, sex, sexual orientation or social origin.
- Make best use of the housing stock.
- Form partnerships with other housing providers to address housing need.
- Establish new tenancies that are successful and sustainable .
- Maximising income by letting empty houses quickly in accordance with timescales.
- Maximise opportunities by offering applicants comprehensive advice and information concerning their housing options.
- Process personal information confidentially to meet relevant legal obligations.
- Provide comprehensive staff training so that the policy is implemented effectively and quality services are delivered.
- Deal with appeals and complaints fairly in accordance with timescales. Review the policy every three years or sooner if required due to a change in legislation or good practice.

5. Access to the housing register

Any person who is sixteen years or more may apply to the housing register. This is not, however, an automatic right to receive offers of housing. Section 6 explains how we prioritise applications in line with law and good practice.

We will provide application forms at our office and online. In line with our equality commitments, this form can be made available in different languages and in alternative formats. We also offer interpreting services and meet relevant costs. On request, we can assist applicants to complete their application form.

In addition, applications can be made by referrals by agencies that have an agreement with Ruchazie Housing Association. Examples being Glasgow City Council Homeless Service (also known as a section 5 referral).

5.1 Reasonable preference groups

The law requires us to give reasonable preference to certain groups when letting houses. The groups to which we must give reasonable preference when letting houses are:

- (a) Homeless people and those threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs

- (b) People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions and who have unmet housing needs; and
- (c) Social housing tenants who are under-occupying their home

We recognise that people may be in housing need for other reasons than those covered in the law. Section 7 details the range of housing needs that we address.

5.3 Factors to be ignored

In accordance with legislation, certain factors must be ignored when letting houses. These factors are:

- Length of time applicants have lived in the area
- Housing debt not owed by applicants, for example, rent arrears owed by a partner
- Housing debt now repaid
- Any non-housing debt such as council tax
- Age of applicants unless it involves housing designed or specifically adapted for people of a specific age, for example, sheltered housing
- Applicants income or property, including income or property owned by other household members
- Any rent arrears where the amount is no more than one months rent or where the applicant has an arrangement for paying the arrears, has been keeping to the arrangement for at least three months and is continuing to make such payments
- An applicant who is staying care of another household, and who is not a permanent member of the household, will not require formal permission to reside but will require to demonstrate that they are registered at the property with the relevant authorities, for example, housing benefit, council tax, employment or benefit agency.

However we may take into account heritable property ownership of the applicant or a member of the applicant's family who is proposed to reside with the applicant and each case will be considered on its own merit. However, we will not take into account heritable property where:

- The property has not been let, but the owner cannot secure entry to the property.
- Where it is probable that occupying the property will lead to abuse from someone currently living at the property.
- Where it is probable that occupying the property will lead to abuse from someone who previously resided with the applicant whether in that property or elsewhere
- Where occupation of the property may endanger the health of the occupants and there are no reasonable steps that can be taken by the applicant to prevent the danger.

5.4 Information

A copy of this policy is available to view on our website at www.ruchazieha.co.uk. We will make available a summary of this policy Applicants may also obtain a full copy on request

5.6 Data protection and Access to personal information

We recognise the confidentiality of information gathered as part of the allocations process and all applicants will be informed clearly of the way in which the information provided will be used. Applicant information will be used for the assessment of housing need and including the request for tenancy references from current or previous landlords. All applicants will be made aware of this at the point of application and asked to confirm their consent to this.

Data will only be used for the purposes listed above and will only be shared in accordance with the Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. .

An applicant is entitled to view information supplied in connection with their application. This right is set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

We will provide this information on request within forty working days. A small charge may be applicable in these matters.

6 The Application Process

This section explains the stages and rules concerning the allocation process.

6.1 Admission to the housing register

In order to be admitted to the housing register, applicants are asked to complete an application form.

This can be obtained by contacting the office :

- In person
- By phone
- By post
- Via website

All applications will be acknowledged within 5 working days. Our target for assessing application forms where we have all the required information and informing the applicant of the outcome is 5 working days from receiving them. Applicants are sent written confirmation of their housing application details, including their award of points.

Where we do not have the required information these applications may be subject to delay. Applicants will be advised of the information we require and only when we have all information will we process the application.

We will where requested provide support to applicants, e.g. where English is not their first language or the applicant is deaf or hard of hearing.

Home visits to assist applicants complete their forms can be carried out in special circumstances.

6.2 Verifying an applicant's circumstances

To enable the correct housing need assessment to be made, we generally require applicants to provide information to verify their circumstances. Examples of the verification required include the following, however this list is not exhaustive:

Circumstance	Verification required
All applicants	Proof of identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proof of current address (2 items) - Photographic ID
All household members	Proof of current address (if over 16) Proof of ID (passport, driving licence, birth certificate)
Asked to leave current accommodation	Notice to quit
In need of housing for health reasons affected by current housing circumstance	Completed medical form Up to date relevant medical information Other supporting information (if available)
Residency	Bank statement Driving licence Tenancy agreement
Access to children where additional bedrooms are required for overnight residence.	Letter from parent Legal confirmation
Experiencing harassment	Corroborating evidence from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police - Landlord - Other agency
Pregnancy	MAT B1 form or similar confirming due date
Owners	Proof of intent to sell Confirmation that applicant cannot return to the property
People from Abroad	Immigration Status

6.3 Tenancy checks

We may carry out tenancy checks/ ask for references from any landlord or mortgage lender to confirm housing and tenancy details. We will ask the applicants permission before we do this.

6.4 Home Visits

We may carry out home visits to verify applicants details, to provide information relating to tenancies and also to consider any support requirements of the applicant.

6.5 False/misleading information

Applicants are advised on the application form that it is their responsibility to advise us of any changes to their housing circumstances.

If we believe an applicant has intentionally changed their circumstances in order to secure a higher position on the housing register , we may assess this application as if the change has not occurred.

If an applicant provides false or misleading information we may suspend the application for a period of up to 6 months but each case will be considered on an

individual basis. If an applicant is housed as a result of false or misleading information, we may take action to repossess the property.

6.6 Suspensions

There are circumstances in which applicants on the Housing List can be suspended from receiving offers of housing for a period of time. Applicants can be suspended for the following reasons:

We can suspend applicants for unpaid rent or other money relating to current or previous tenancies. For instance:

- Unpaid rent and factoring charges
- Outstanding rechargeable repairs. For example, if a tenant has lost their keys and we have changed the locks
- The cost of cleaning a house if you leave furniture or rubbish behind when you move out
- Legal costs if we have taken an applicant to court

If an applicant owes money, however, we will only suspend if:

- More than one month's rent is owed and there is no mutually agreed arrangement to repay it; or
- The applicant owes more than a month's rent, a mutually agreed arrangement is in place to pay it, but has not been kept for three months

We can also suspend applicants due to anti-social behaviour. For instance:

- The applicant has been given a final warning for anti-social behaviour in the last six months
- The applicant has been given a "Notice of Proceedings" for antisocial behaviour in the last six months
- The applicant or someone that lives with them has been given an anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) or an interim ASBO (the ASBO must be removed by the Sheriff Court before we can end a suspension)
- The applicant has a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy because of anti-social behaviour
- The applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months
- The applicant has been violent or aggressive towards staff of the Association or its representatives including committee members and contractors.

We can also suspend applications due to breaches of their tenancy agreement. For instance:

- The applicant has been given a "Notice of Proceedings" for breaking the rules of the tenancy agreement in the last six months (for example, maintaining the property or common part in a reasonable condition, a failure to maintain a garden to an acceptable standard)
- The applicant has been evicted for a breach of a tenancy in the last twelve months.

We can also suspend an application where a false declaration has been proven to be made by the applicant.

We may also suspend an application where an applicant has been made and refused 2 reasonable offers of housing.

When we suspend an application, we will write and explain why, how long the suspension is for and what needs to be done to remove the suspension. Details will also be given confirming their right of appeal and information on the Association's complaints procedure will also be included. We will also write to the applicant when we have removed the suspension.

Reasons for suspension and likely period of suspension

Reason	Period of suspension
Anti-social behaviour, evidence of convictions in surrounding area,	3 years maximum , or where the applicant has demonstrated for a reasonable period of time the behaviour has changed
Where information available that applicant abandoned a previous social rented tenancy	12 months
Where an Order for Recovery of Possession has been made against an applicant in the last 12 months	Up to 3 years
Rent arrears and other tenancy related debt	Up to 3 years or where that debt is no longer outstanding.
where 2 offers of suitable housing have been made and refused by the applicant	3 months
Where an applicant has knowingly made a false statement	The application will be suspended until information confirmed as correct no longer than 3 years

6.7 Statutory Suspensions

The 2014 Housing (Scotland) Act introduced a new statutory suspension provision and provides an additional power to suspend an application at the point at which that application is placed on the list.

Where we make a decision to suspend an application in this way, we will write to the applicant and state the reason for suspension. We will also advise that applicant of his right to appeal this decision to a Sheriff.

All suspended applications will be reviewed every quarter.

6.8 Reviewing applications

A review of all applicants on our waiting list will take place annually. Applicants can however review and update their application at any time to ensure we hold accurate information so that appropriate offers of housing can be made. Applicants require to provide proof/evidence of any change in housing/personal circumstances.

If no response is received after a standard review and reminder letters applicants are removed from the housing list however they can re-apply at anytime.

6.8 Removal of an application

An application can be removed from the housing list under the following circumstances:

- The applicant has made a request to remove their application – to be confirmed in writing to applicant once request made.
- The applicant has not responded to review correspondence following 2 reminders with a reasonable timescale
- The applicant is deceased

6.9 People from Abroad

People subject to immigration control must declare this on the application form. Eligibility for housing will require to be assessed in terms of Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and asylum and immigration legislation. People may remain on the housing list, but will be asked to provide evidence of their immigration status before we can confirm if they are eligible for an offer of housing.

6.10 Applicant Choice/ selection

Applicant Choice

Our allocation system ensures that applicant choice is taken into account. We aim to maximise applicant choice. Applicants can state their preferences for a number of factors including

- Streets preferred
- House type
- Floor level

Applicants may also state what they do not want in respect of these factors.

An applicant's choice of housing may be affected by legal orders and relevant guidance that we are required to follow. For instance, matrimonial interdicts and exclusion orders.

Applicant's choices are also often determined by availability of housing. Applicants prospects of housing will vary based on numbers of properties available for let.

Selection

We will identify the applicants who have priority in each group in accordance with this policy and have regard to targets set for each group within our letting plan. We aim to give reasonable preference to applicants in the highest housing need. However, we also reserve the right to use flexibility in making individual allocations e.g. to avoid particular clashes of lifestyle; to avoid over concentrations of one particular household type or housing need in any one close. All such allocations will be approved by the Senior Officer, recorded in the audit trail for that allocation. All allocations will be made in line with legislation.

6.11 Offers

We make offers based on the applicant’s housing needs and preferences after confirming details on their application form. This is good practice as it aims to reduce inappropriate offers.

Reasonable offers are those that reflect an applicant’s stated choice. For example, we will not offer applicants house types that they have expressly stated they will not consider.

We will also not offer properties which do not suit an applicant’s housing requirements e.g. we will not offer a top floor flat where mobility requirements have been identified.

Nonetheless, we provide advice and information on realistic preferences, as demand generally exceeds supply.

In cases where an applicant refuses a number of reasonable offers (i.e. meeting the assessed needs and preferences of the applicant) we reserve the right to re-interview and re-assess the application.

If we decide to offer an applicant a property this will be a written formal offer of housing. We may telephone to tell applicants we have an offer but we will always confirm in writing.

6.12 Tenancies

We provide applicants who accept an offer of housing a Scottish Secure Tenancy in accordance with our legal obligations. In a limited number of instances, we may offer applicants a short Scottish secure tenancy. This has limited security of tenure.

Examples of grounds for a short Scottish secure tenancy agreement include:

- An applicant has been evicted for anti-social behaviour within the last three years
- A tenant (or a member of their family) is subject to an anti-social behaviour order
- The applicant owns a property that is not currently meeting their needs and requires housing on a temporary basis to enable their needs to be met pending making alternative arrangement.

6.13 House size

All applicants will be placed on the housing list for the size of property required based on their current household composition.

This section explains the house size for which applicants may be considered. It also outlines rules to address overcrowding and under-occupation.

Table 1: The size of house for which applicants will be considered

Household size	1 apartment	2 apt	3 apt	4 apt	5 apt
Single person	√	√	√		
Couple	√	√	√		
Parent(s) with 1 child			√		
Parent(s) with two children under 16 years of same gender			√		

Parents(s) with 1 girl and boy both under 10 years			√		
Parent(s) with 2 children where 1 is over 15 years of same gender				√	
Parent(s) with 1 girl and 1 boy where oldest is 10 years or over				√	

6.14 Overcrowding rules

Demand for larger houses often exceeds supply. On occasion, this makes it necessary to consider applicants for smaller houses than specified in the table above. It may also be necessary to consider applicants for smaller properties due to the changes introduced in April 2012 under The Welfare Reform Act (“bedroom tax”).

We do not let houses to families if this would create statutory overcrowding, as this would constitute an offence.

6.15 Under-occupation

In special circumstances we may consider under-occupation. .

For example, this may be necessary if:

- An applicant can show a need for such accommodation due to medical needs such as overnight support or space for necessary medical equipment.

Internal applicants affected by under-occupation will be prioritised for offers of housing. This is to ensure, as set out within The Housing Scotland Act 2014, as a reasonable preference group, that we make best use of stock. We will also consider applicants from other social landlords.

7 Our Allocation System

This section explains the type of allocation system we have adopted to ensure that we meet our policy objectives effectively.

7.1 Group plus points system

The group plus points system establishes a number of groups with individual applications placed into an appropriate group. Applicants are placed into a group with points awarded dependant on their housing need.

If applicants share the same points within the same group, applications will be prioritised based on their time in housing need. Accordingly, if two applicants have the same points, the applicant who has been in housing need the longest will be given priority.

Where more than one applicant has no housing need, but can be made an offer in terms of this policy, the offer will be made to the applicant who has been on the list longest or where a tenant the longest length of tenancy.

7.2 Advantages of a group plus points system

- Addresses housing needs specified in law (the reasonable preference groups), as well as other housing needs
- Facilitates monitoring of allocation practice, in particular how effectively we are meeting our legal responsibilities
- Ensures accurate identification of housing needs and allows us to respond quickly to changing patterns of need
- Provides for a wide range of housing needs to be tackled thereby promoting our objective of creating sustainable communities

7.3 Our groups and placing applications

We have established a total of 8 groups. These groups cover the main needs covered in housing law and good practice guidance. These groups are listed in order of priority.

Our groups are as follows:

- Group 1 - Homeless
- Group 2 - Unsatisfactory housing conditions
- Group 3 - Under-occupation
- Group 4 - General Needs
- Group 5 - Aspirational

Group 2 and 4 have sub groups.

7.4 Group 1: Homelessness

We recognise our policy objective to assist in the prevention and resolution of homelessness.

All applicants who have a resettlement plan from Glasgow City Councils Health & Social Care Partnership Team and we have accepted as a Section 5 homeless referral will be placed in this group.

If a suitable property is available at the time or within 6 weeks of receipt of the Section 5 referral, applicants will be made one reasonable offer of accommodation. If this offer is refused this may result in the applicant being removed from this group.

7.5 Group 2: Unsatisfactory Housing Conditions

The needs covered under this group are:

- (a) Living in a non- tolerable standard property – where housing falls below the tolerable standard if it does not meet the relevant legal standard. These standards are set out in Section 86 of The Housing (Scotland) amended by Section 102 of the 2001 Act and Section 11 of the 2006 Act.

For example a property must be substantially free from rising or penetrating damp, and must have a sink with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water.

- (b) Overcrowding – applicants of households who are overcrowded or people with larger families. When awarding points in this category we use the below occupancy standard as follows

Household size	Bedroom required
Single person	1
Each adult couple	1
A disabled person who cannot share a bedroom because of their disability	1
2 children of the same sex under 16	1
2 children under 10 regardless of their sex	
Any other person	1

We will not let houses to applicants where it would create overcrowding. See part 6.11 for the size of property we will offer to applicants.

- (c) Applicants who are victims of harassment or domestic abuse - applicants who require to be re-housed as a consequence of harassment or domestic abuse. The types of abuse and harassment we consider include:

- Domestic abuse
- Racial harassment
- Religious or sectarian harassment
- Homophobic harassment
- Transphobic harassment
- Harassment of autistic people and people with learning or physical disability and;
- Sexual harassment

- (d) Applicants living in unsecure accommodation –where an applicant:

- has been served with a Notice to leave a private tenancy
- lives in tied accommodation and is required to leave because of retirement or redundancy. This includes applicants who will be leaving the armed forces and is required to leave service accommodation or another reason.
- has been served a repossession notice on an owner occupied property.

- (e) Applicants where there current accommodation does not meet their needs Where an applicant or a member of their family included in the moving group suffers from a medical condition and where re-housing would alleviate the medical problem. The applicant will require to complete a medical

assessment form which will enable a decision to be made on the suitability for re-housing. There are three priority groups;

- **Priority A** where an applicant's current accommodation is potentially life threatening to a household member's medical condition and where re-housing is extremely urgent, and that property cannot be adapted to suit those needs, whether that be cost or structure related.
 - **Priority B** where an applicant's current accommodation is potentially life threatening or causing severe aggravation to the household members medical condition and that property cannot be adapted to suit those needs, whether that be cost or structure related.
 - **Priority C** where members of the applicant's household included in the moving group have medical problems which would be alleviated by rehousing.
- (f) Applicants who wish to receive/give social, community or family support – where an applicant requires to give/receive support from a relative, friend or service in the community. Each application will be considered on its own merits taking into account factors such as:
- Distance between the two parties
 - Other support in the area
 - Type/ frequency of care provided
 - Supporting evidence in relation to support given/required
- (g) Houses subject to demolition on regeneration - Applicants whose own homes are subject to demolition or regeneration due to a decision taken by their own landlord and who require permanent re-housing. We will give reasonable preference to applicants where we have an agreement to assist landlords in their programme.
- (h) People re-housed through care initiatives - applicants who require housing as part of community care initiatives and are referred through Social Work or other support agencies. Examples of such groups are:
- Young people looked after and accommodated by the local authority
 - Residents of hospitals and other institutions who are returning to the community
 - Residents in supported accommodation now ready to move to other accommodation.
- (i) The applicant has been approved for adoption, kinship care or fostering – applicants who have been approved for adoption, fostering or kinship care who will be in housing need if a child or children come to live with them.

7.6 Group 3: Under Occupation

To make best use of our stock we will give reasonable preference to RHA tenants who are under occupying their home, we will also consider applicants of other social landlords in this group.

7.7 Group 4 : General Needs

All applicants who have a need for housing but not given reasonable preference this includes applicants who are:

- Lodgers
- Living with their parents
- No fixed address
- Have a relationship breakdown (and not entitled to priority)
- Living in private rented sector but with no housing Need (recognising affordability for those living in such accommodation)

7.8 Group 5: No housing need

We will retain a list of applicants who have no housing need but wish to remain or move to our area of operation. This is important to meet policy objective for the following reasons:

- it promotes households to move to other accommodation, in turn releasing stock for other applicants
- it addresses the preferences of existing tenants and is important in maintaining a sustainable community.

7.9 Needs not covered by this policy

We apply this section of the policy only in extreme circumstances if our present policy does not address the housing need in question. If this applies, we will award points only after each case has been fully investigated and evidence has been provided to support the application.

- In order to ensure accountability, each case will be reviewed and approved by a senior member of staff. The points award will be withdrawn if the particular need is met before an offer is made. Cases such as these will be monitored closely and where a need is identified this may be recognised in any policy review.

7.10 Groups & Points Breakdown

Group	Verification	Points
Group 1 - homelessness	Homeless (Section 5 referral received)	No points awarded, queued in date order – date homeless priority awarded)
Group 2 – urgent housing needs	Living below tolerable standard	200
	Overcrowding (points for each room required)	50
	Harassment/domestic abuse	100
	Unsecure accommodation (where evidence is provided)	100
	Medical priority	
	Priority 1	100
	Priority 2	75
	Priority 3	50
	Support	100
	Property subject to demolition or regeneration	100
	Living in care/long term institution	100
	Approved for kinship/adoption/fostering and require additional bedroom(s)	100
Group 3 – under-occupation	Under-occupation- points for each room under-occupied	50 (RHA tenant) 25 (other social landlord tenant)
Group 4 – General Needs	Sharing amenities	30
	Lodger/living with parents	20
	Relationship breakdown (where no	20

	priority given)	
	Tenant in private rented sector (no housing need)	20
Group 5 – aspirational – no housing need	No points given, application placed on list with date of application.	0

8 Appeals

An appeal can be made if the applicant is unhappy with a decision we have made, for example:

- The group or points awarded
- A decision to suspend and application from receiving offers
- A decision to cancel an application ; or
- Any decision made which the applicant believes has not been dealt with in accordance with this Allocation Policy.

An applicant should appeal in writing to The Director of the Association.

9. Complaints

If an applicant is dissatisfied with the level of service they have received e.g. published service standards not being met, a complaint can be made to the Association. The complaint will be managed in accordance with our complaints policy. Should an applicant remain dissatisfied having exhausted the association's internal complaints procedures the applicant can complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

A copy of this complaint policy is available on request and can be provided in alternative formats.

10. Equalities

Our core values include providing a fair and equal service for all housing applicants and we will ensure that in applying this policy we will not discriminate against any individual, household group or on any of the grounds detailed in our Equality & Diversity Policy.

We will achieve this by

- Making this policy available in other formats and different languages on request
- Ensuring our allocation documents are produced in plain language
- Providing interpretation services on request
- Consulting with national bodies as required, to promote good practice.

11. Training and development

Training is an important element in ensuring that the allocation policy is implemented effectively. We, therefore, provide ongoing training for staff and management committee to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to effectively implement and monitor this policy. This includes training on:

- Allocation law and practice
- Allocation policy and procedures
- Information technology systems
- Other relevant legislation such as equality law

12. Auditing and monitoring performance

12.1 Auditing performance

We ensure that proper mechanisms are in place to allow individual allocations to be audited.

12.2 Monitoring performance

Monitoring the implementation of the allocation policy is an important part of quality assurance. It is also essential to ensure that allocation practices are subject to continuous improvement.

We ensure we monitor performance in the following areas:

- The number of new applications, included whether or not they are processed within targets - quarterly
- The number of applicants suspended and cancelled - annually
- Applications reviewed and removed as part of the review process - annually
- The number of applicants in each group - quarterly
- The reason for allocations - quarterly
- Household type and equality information- annually
- The number of lets against targets for each group - annually
- The number and reasons for refusals- annually
- Appeals and complaints - quarterly

General allocation performance is published for all tenants and service users.

13 Tenant participation and policy review

13.1 General

We review the allocation policy every three years, or as required by changes in law or published good practice.

We use our performance indicators to discuss improvements to service delivery.

13.2 Methods of review

We use a range of methods as detailed in our tenant participation strategy when reviewing the policy.

We discuss changes to policy with tenants, applicants and other service users through our tenant participation strategy.

We also carry out regular surveys of service users to gather their views concerning allocation services