

COMPANY NAME:

Hillcrest Homes

POLICY NUMBER:

HHA-04

POLICY TITLE:

Allocations Policy

This document can be produced in different formats, for example, in larger print or audio-format, and in other languages, as appropriate. We promote equality through seeking to eliminate unlawful and unfair forms of discrimination, as appropriate.

Underpinning and Supporting Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

Other Policies:

- Voids Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Allocations to relatives of Staff and Committee members procedure

Legislation:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 & 2014
- National Accommodation Strategy for Sex Offenders (NASSO) January 2012,
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003

We also meet the legal requirements set out in other legislation, including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation 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

Compliance:

This Policy complies with the Scottish Government guidelines in the Scottish Social Housing Charter November 2022

Charter Outcomes 7, 8 & 9 Housing Options:

Social landlords work together to ensure:

- 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.

Social landlords have a role to prevent homelessness and should ensure that:

- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

Charter Outcome 10: Access to Social Housing:

Social landlords ensure that:

- 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 on their prospects of being housed.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Scottish Governments Social Housing allocations in Scotland: practice guide.

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out Hillcrest Homes commitment to an open, transparent and accountable allocations process which complies with the law and reflects regulatory and best practice requirements.

It underlines our commitment to work with Local Authorities and other partners to help prevent and alleviate homelessness and allocate our homes in a fair and consistent way to those in the greatest housing need.

Applications are assessed in accordance with our partner Local Authorities Common Allocation policies and agreed lettings plans to ensure that the correct property is let to the most appropriate applicant having taken regard of any reasonable preferences.

2. Principles

The key aims of the Allocation Policy are:

- To maximise the opportunities for applicants to access our housing.
- To enable applicants to make informed choices through the provision of clear information and advice.
- To facilitate a straightforward application process.
- To offer applicants the opportunity of greater choice through our membership of a Common Housing Register or Choice Based Lettings approach to allocations in conjunction with Local Authorities and other Registered Providers.
- To give suitable priority to people with significant levels of housing needs, (and/or support needs, as appropriate), without discriminatory restrictions.
- To promote sustainable communities, where people want to live, by making best use of housing stock and by working with partners, including Local Authorities, towards this aim.
- To promote equality of opportunity and to ensure that, in allocation of housing, Hillcrest Homes does not unfairly discriminate against any individual, household or group on the grounds of sex or marital status, on racial grounds, or on grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, religion or personal beliefs.
- To maximise the best use of our stock.

To achieve this, the Hillcrest Homes will:

- Comply with the agreed Common Housing Register policy and protocols with each Local Authority partner for matching properties to applicants through an agreed set of quotas from sources including transfers, homeless (section 5) and general category.
- Links to the relevant local authority allocations policy are noted below:
 - Aberdeen City Council - [Approved Housing Allocation Policy 14.3.2023.pdf \(aberdeencity.gov.uk\)](https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Approved_Housing_Allocation_Policy_14.3.2023.pdf)
 - Aberdeenshire Council - [ALLOCATION POLICY FEBRUARY 2023 \(aberdeenshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/12345/ALLOCATION_POLICY_FEBRUARY_2023.pdf)
 - Angus Council - [Communities Committee 26 September - Report No 331 - Revised Common Allocation Policy - App1 \(angus.gov.uk\)](https://www.angus.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Communities_Committee_26_September_-_Report_No_331_-_Revised_Common_Allocation_Policy_-_App1.pdf)
 - Dundee City Council - [Allocations Policy Framework \(dundeecity.gov.uk\)](https://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Allocations_Policy_Framework.pdf)
 - Fife Council - [Housing-allocations-policy-March22.pdf \(fife.gov.uk\)](https://www.fife.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/Housing-allocations-policy-March22.pdf)
 - Perth & Kinross Council - [2018659 Common Allocations Policy 2019 - Final - 22 March 2019.pdf \(pkc.gov.uk\)](https://www.pkc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/2018659_Common_Allocations_Policy_2019_-_Final_-_22_March_2019.pdf)

- Edinburgh City Council - <https://edindexhousing.co.uk/media/uploads/LettingPolicyJanuary2022.pdf>
- Support and assist applicants in applying for, reviewing and updating their application for rehousing to ensure their points accurately reflect their current circumstances
- Provide applicants with a realistic assessment of their re-housing prospects based on the demand, size, type & location of their desired property
- Carry out assessments, tenancy and document checks as required. Including liaising with external agencies and stakeholders where appropriate.
- Hillcrest reserve the right to provide housing in exceptional cases when the standard approach set out within the local allocation policies will not result in a critical housing need being met.
- There may be occasions Hillcrest needs to move one or some of its current tenants through a management transfer, for example this might include:
 - If a property or properties are being demolished
 - Where repairs will take a long time to complete
 - A serious housing management problem
 - To make best use of our stock
- Publicise and promote mutual exchanges between tenants, ensuring that permission is only withheld if reasonable to do so.
- Work with other partner agencies to support the letting of accommodation to tenants with specific specialist or adaptation needs.
- Use Local Lettings Initiatives (LLIs) to help support the sustainability of a community in agreement with the Local Authority following local consultation.
- Bypass or suspend applications in accordance with the respective Local Authority's allocations policy.
- Comply with the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to ensure community safety in conjunction with each Local Authority's Sex Offender Liaison Officer (SOLO)

3. Responsibilities

The Operations Sub-Committee has responsibility of overseeing and monitoring the progress and effectiveness of the policy and should seek assurance from the Head of Housing and Enterprises that Hillcrest discharges its responsibilities under legislation and its own procedures robustly and effectively.

- The Head of Housing and Enterprises will ensure processes are in place to ensure properties are allocated in accordance with the relevant Local Authority Allocations Policies. Monthly and quarterly reports are reviewed by the Housing Operations Managers with progress reported to the Operations Sub Committee as part of the suite of quarterly performance information.
- The day-to-day responsibility for the operation and monitoring of the policy is delegated to the Head of Housing and Enterprises and the Operations/Area Managers of Hillcrest Homes.
- All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is applied as instructed. The roles and responsibilities of the individual team members involved in the allocations process are detailed in relevant procedures.

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