


Allocations

If you have difficulty with sight or hearing, or if you require a translated copy of this document, we would be pleased to provide this information in a form that suits your needs.

	Policy number:	H02
	Policy approved:	June 2025
	Due for review:	June 2028

Our Vision, Mission Statement and Values

Glen Oaks' vision statement '**Where Communities Thrive**' and our mission statement '**Our aim is to provide good quality affordable housing and an excellent service. We will encourage resident participation and work with other agencies to regenerate our community**' provide the foundation for Glen Oaks Housing Association's commitment to its residents and the communities they live in.

This commitment is also demonstrated in the Association's values which were agreed following discussions with the Board and staff. Glen Oaks' values are fundamental to how we carry out our day-to-day activities.

Our values are:

respectful

we trust and respect our customers and each other

dedicated

we will give 100% commitment to our work

transparent

we will be open and honest about what we do

aspirational

we will strive to achieve the best we can for our communities

Equality & Diversity Statement

The Association is intent on ensuring people or communities do not face discrimination or social exclusion due to any of the following protected characteristics: age; disability; sex; marriage & civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy & maternity.

This document complies with the Association's equality & diversity policy.

The Association will regularly review this document for equal opportunities implications and take the necessary action to address any inequalities that result from the implementation of the policy.

Notifiable Events

Notifiable events will be reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator in line with the Notifiable events policy.

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1.0 Introduction

Glen Oaks Housing Association is a registered social landlord. It aims to ensure effective, efficient and accountable management of its properties. This Policy sets out how the organisation meets the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, regarding the allocations of its properties.

The Association is committed to promoting social inclusion and to creating a balanced and stable community, by making the best use of its available housing stock.

2.0 Policy Context: The National Housing Emergency

In 2024, the Scottish Government declared a national housing emergency in response to escalating levels of homelessness, housing insecurity, and a severe shortage of affordable homes across the country. This crisis is being acutely felt in Glasgow, where pressure on social housing has intensified due to rising private sector rents, cost-of-living impacts, and a backlog in new housing supply.

Glen Oaks Housing Association recognises its critical role in tackling this emergency. As a community-based housing provider, we are committed to allocating our homes fairly and efficiently, in a way that responds to urgent housing needs while supporting stable, inclusive, and resilient communities.

This Allocations Policy reflects our responsibility to:

- House those most in need
- Prevent homelessness
- Uphold fairness, transparency, and equal access
- Collaborate with Glasgow City Council and local partners to meet strategic housing goals

2.1 Compliance with Standards, Legislation and Good Practice

In developing this policy Glen Oaks Housing Association has taken into consideration the Scottish Social Housing Charter, legislation, guidance and good practice, which directly or indirectly affect this policy.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords aim to achieve. This policy aims to meet the requirements of Charter Outcomes 1, 2, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

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.

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.

7, 8 and 9: Housing Options

Social Landlords work together to ensure that:

- 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 ensure that:

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

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 their prospect of being housed.

The legislative framework affecting the allocation of properties namely:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- UK Data Protection Law (UK GDPR)
- Local Homelessness and Housing Strategy for Glasgow City Council

2.2 Policy Aims and Objectives

Glen Oaks Housing Association will ensure that our Allocations policy and procedure will:

- Prioritise applicants in greatest housing need
- Allocate homes in a fair, transparent, and consistent way
- Support the prevention and reduction of homelessness
- Build and sustain strong, balanced communities
- Respond proactively to the national housing emergency
- Comply with all relevant housing and equality legislation
- Make the best use of the available stock and minimise the time properties are vacant
- Consider opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations to identify and alleviate need

3.0 Access to Social Housing

3.1 Admission to the Waiting List

Our housing list is open to anyone aged 16 or over, regardless of tenure, personal circumstances, or immigration status (subject to legal eligibility). Glen Oaks will not discriminate based on race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or other protected characteristics.

In order to be accepted, each applicant must be able to prove their residential details and if applying from a Glen Oaks Housing Association address, must be registered on our housing management system before we can accept their application. Applicants who are unable to prove this, will have their application cancelled until the relevant documents are received or they have permission to reside at the address.

All applicants will have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process. Applications can be made at any time, by visiting our website www.glenoaks.org.uk, or alternatively, by obtaining an application form from the Association's office.

Assistance is offered to applicants who need help to complete an application form if they are unable to complete this independently and have no one else to support them. The issue of an application form should not be taken as an indication that the Association will eventually be able to make an offer of housing.

Applicants may also gain access to rehousing through alternative routes such as –

- Local authority nominations and section 5 referrals
- Nominations from referral agencies
- Existing tenants wishing to transfer
- Mutual exchanges
- Reciprocal arrangements with other organisations
- Non-standard selections

Eligibility for different property types are listed as follows:

- General needs housing - general needs housing is accommodation that is suitable for anyone regardless of age, mobility or other impairment and makes up the majority of Glen Oaks Housing Association's housing stock.
- Amenity housing - the Association has a number of properties which have been built to amenity standard. Amenity properties will normally be allocated, in the first instance, to applicants that have at least one person aged over 60, without young children in the household. However, the age limit may be lowered where the applicant has a specific medical or social need that can be met within amenity housing.
- Supported housing - supported housing provides housing for individuals with specific housing support needs who require up to 24 hour per day support from a local authority appointed contractor to live independently. Tenants in supported housing receive specialist support via tailored packages. Eligibility for supported housing is based on an assessment of need by the local authority. Glen Oaks Housing Association will allocate supported housing by inviting nominations.

3.2 Removal of an Applicant from the Waiting List

The Association would only remove an applicant from the waiting list where:

- The applicant has requested that they wish to be removed from the list.
- The applicant has died.
- The applicant has failed to respond to the periodic review of the waiting list or other correspondence, for example, a request for verification documents).
- Applicants mail has been returned as "gone away".
- The applicant has deliberately given false or misleading information to gain advantage over other applicants.

3.3 Suspending Applicants

Glen Oaks Housing Association can suspend applicants from offers of housing for a specified period. Where a suspension is to be applied, the applicant will be notified clearly of the reason for the suspension, the timescale involved and advised of action that can be taken to end or appeal the suspension. This practice will be kept to a minimum and will only be implemented following full consideration and assessment of the applicant's circumstances. The Association will however take into consideration the safety of existing tenants, stability of the community and the public investment in its properties.

The length of time that Glen Oaks Housing Association will consider when looking at an applicant's history and whether any of the suspension reasons apply will be up to three years. This would start from the time the act was perpetrated and will apply on a rolling basis. For example, if three years was applied, and the tenancy breach was carried out one year before an application was made, then the applicant would be suspended for a further two years.

Where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances the application may be reviewed prior to the planned suspension review date.

Suspensions would apply in the following circumstances

- Arrears in respect of tenancy matters

An Applicant will be suspended where they owe arrears directly attributed to their current tenancy or a former tenancy.

The arrears can include rent arrears, unpaid service charges, rechargeable repairs, costs associated with clearing out of a property or cleaning of a property which has been left in poor condition.

In considering arrears, the debt must be more than one twelfth of the annual rent, less than 5 years old and must not be technical Housing Benefit arrears.

Applicants with more than one month's rent outstanding will only be eligible for housing where they have demonstrated a commitment to clear the arrears through a reasonable repayment agreement of at least three consecutive months with their landlord.

Glen Oaks Housing Association will not take into account current arrears which have been caused by delays in payment of Housing Benefit which is due to be paid direct.

If the applicant is an owner-occupier factoring debt or property repair charge can be considered but mortgage arrears cannot be included.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and will be reviewed every three months.

- Anti-Social Behaviour

An applicant may be suspended where they or a member of their household has previously harassed or been violent to other tenants, neighbours or staff or who has damaged the Association's property.

Anti-social behaviour in this context can include:

- Relevant criminal convictions (relevant to a tenancy or to community safety)
- Drug dealing from a tenancy
- Prostitution from a tenancy
- Fire-raising
- Extensive damage to a property
- Harassment of or threats to neighbours

When considering a suspension of this nature the Customer Services Manager will take account of the following criteria to assess if the suspension is reasonable:

- The nature, frequency and duration of the conduct.
- The extent to which the conduct is the consequence of acts or omissions of people other than the tenant.
- The effect which the conduct is having on other people.
- Any alternative action taken by the landlord to address the conduct.

Suspension of the application will be taken where there is clear robust evidence of the behaviour, which is supported by the current or previous landlord, professional witnesses, Acceptable Behavior contracts, mediation attempts or the Police.

Applicants (or a member or a visitor of their household) whose tenancy record highlights that they have been involved in anti-social behaviour will be suspended as it has been previously established that the anti-social behaviour took place.

Where, however, the Association offers to re-house an applicant, (or a member of their family or a visitor), who has had relatively serious anti-social Behavior, been evicted in the last 3 years for anti-social behaviour or has had an ASBO served against them, or has shown that they have persistent low level breaches of tenancy a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy will be considered. In offering a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy, the Association would ensure the provision of appropriate support services to enable the conversion of the tenancy to a Scottish Secure Tenancy.

If the tenant or a member of their family continues to act in an anti-social manner, the Association may seek possession under the appropriate conduct grounds contained in Schedule 2 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and the Customer Services Manager will determine the suspension review period. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant provides clear and substantiated evidence that they no longer pose a risk.

- Condition of house or tenancy

An offer of housing will be withheld where the tenant has not adhered to the conditions of tenancy in respect of the property as stated in their tenancy agreement.

Matters related to the tenancy include state of the garden or common areas, control over pets, rubbish and vandalism.

Where a home visit or a tenancy reference show that a tenancy condition in respect of the property has not been adhered to, the application will be suspended for a period of 3 months and reviewed thereafter. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant has brought the property up to an acceptable standard.

Suspensions may also occur where debt is owed for the cost of making good repairs which are the tenant's responsibility or for reinstating fixtures.

- Declined Offers

If an applicant refuses an offer, they will be asked for the reason, and their application will be updated to reflect the refusal reason in an effort to improve future offers. If an applicant refuses two reasonable offers, their application will be reviewed, and it may be cancelled based on an assessment of whether we can still rehouse them.

- False Information

Where an applicant has deliberately given false or misleading information to gain advantage over other applicants then the Association will cancel their application. The applicant will be invited to attend an interview to discuss the contents of their application following which the applicant can re-submit a new application after a 12-month suspension.

Applicants who are offered a tenancy agreement will be required to declare that they have not knowingly given false or misleading information to obtain the tenancy.

Should it come to the Association's attention that this has occurred, a Notice of Proceedings for Possession of the property may be served and Legal Action instructed to end the tenancy.

- Abandonment or Eviction

Where an applicant has abandoned a property or has been evicted, their application will be suspended for 12 months from the date of the abandonment or eviction. Where the applicant can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances the application may be reviewed prior to the 12-month period.

- Voluntarily leaving a tenancy

Giving up a previous tenancy will not in itself be grounds for suspension. However, where it can be established that the applicant deliberately placed themselves in a worse circumstance to gain higher priority on the waiting list, their application will be suspended for 6 months. Each case will be considered on its own merits and where it can be demonstrated that there are special or extenuating circumstances the suspension will be reviewed prior to the 6 months.

- Threatening or violent behaviour

The Association reserves the right to suspend an offer to applicants who threaten, or verbally or physically abuse, any member of staff. Similarly, any applicant who attempts to offer an inducement or bribe to any member of staff in order to obtain an offer of housing will be suspended from receiving an offer.

Each case will be considered on its own merits and the Customer Services Manager will determine the suspension review period. This can be reviewed earlier where the applicant provides clear and substantiated evidence that they no longer pose a risk.

Cases where this occurs will be reported in the Unacceptable Behaviour register which is reported to the Board within the Health & Safety Report.

3.4 Nominations and Referrals

The Association will work with other agencies to maximise and simplify access routes into our housing.

Glasgow City Council

Glen Oaks Housing Association will seek to establish formal partnership arrangements with local authorities operating within its geographical area.

These partnership arrangements will outline nomination agreements between Glen Oaks Housing Association and the respective local authorities, detailing the basis upon which the Association will support the local authority in addressing housing needs and fulfilling its statutory duties under homelessness legislation.

Such arrangements will typically permit the local authority to nominate applicants or make referrals under Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 for a proportion of local allocations, following the 'Matching' process. In exceptional circumstances, nomination agreements may allow for up to 100% of allocations in specific areas, such as the initial letting of new-build developments, where this is a condition of the grant funding.

We will work constructively with GCC to prevent and alleviate homelessness and work to fulfill our contribution to Glasgow City Council's Homeless and Housing Strategies.

The Association will provide both temporary and permanent accommodation for

individuals experiencing homelessness, upon request from the local authority, as part of its commitment to supporting the authority's duty to secure permanent accommodation under homelessness legislation.

Where it is not possible to provide accommodation, Glen Oaks Housing Association must demonstrate a valid reason in accordance with the *Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 – Homelessness Section 5: Guidance on Good Reason*. Examples include:

- The Association is unable to provide suitable accommodation within six weeks of the referral, and the local authority confirms that appropriate housing can be sourced from another provider within a reasonable timeframe;
- The only available accommodation is unsuitable for the applicant's needs;
- The local authority withdraws the referral (e.g. due to the above circumstances); or
- The applicant has voluntarily suspended their housing application.

Any disputes arising from the operation of these arrangements will be resolved through the dispute resolution process agreed with each local authority, or, where necessary, through arbitration.

Local partners

Glen Oaks Housing Association will also aim to collaborate with local partners in the development and implementation of Common Housing Registers (CHRs), where practical.

Other agencies

Referral arrangements may also be established with voluntary or specialist support agencies that assist specific groups. These arrangements may be detailed within the annual Lettings Plan.

High Risk Offenders

Some offenders will require accommodation (for example on release from prison) and may require specialist support. As a housing association, we have a duty under Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to work collaboratively with local authorities and other agencies. This may involve assisting with the provision of accommodation while maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that information is shared in a sensitive and lawful way.

Glen Oaks is committed to minimising the risk to local communities and a decision to offer a tenancy will be taken following information being made available in consultation with relevant agencies.

3.5 Housing Waiting Lists

Housing Lists are held for the Arden, Darnley and Pollok areas according to the type and size of property required, and in order of priority as determined by the allocation system. The Association carries out a rolling review of our Housing Lists so that applicants have their circumstances checked and updated routinely.

3.6 Internal Transfer

Glen Oaks existing tenants can apply for a transfer to another Association property provided the condition of the property vacated is suitable for immediate relet and the tenant applying for transfer is not subject to any of our suspension criteria set out in this policy.

Transfer applications will be assessed on the basis of housing need using the same criteria and points system as all other applications. The Board will determine the percentage of properties available for transfer applicants and will report the annual quota in the Lettings Plan.

3.7 Waiting Lists Review

All lists are reviewed annually. Applicants will be required to respond to a letter within 14 calendar days of issue stating whether they still wish to be considered for housing and listing any changes in circumstances. Applicants indicating a change of circumstances will have their application form reassessed and will be advised of any change to their banding.

Failure to respond will result in the applicant being removed from the list. Removal from the list will be confirmed in writing to the applicant. If an applicant contacts Glen Oaks Housing Association within one month of being removed from the list, giving good reasons for not responding, they will be reinstated.

Removed applicants contacting us after the 14-calendar day deadline with no good reasons for not responding, must reapply by completing a new application form. This will be regarded as the new date of application unless the Customer Services Manager considers there to be mitigating circumstances.

The review will only be required for applicants with whom there has been no contact in the previous year.

3.8 Mutual Exchanges

Glen Oaks Housing Association encourages mutual exchanges as they can relieve pressure on the transfer list and provide an additional opportunity to tenants to move to more suitable accommodation. They also assist in making best use of the Association's housing stock.

- A mutual exchange occurs when two tenants exchange houses with the agreement of the Landlord(s).
- Both parties must complete an application form for a mutual exchange to be progressed.
- A Tenancy Services Officer will undertake tenancy checks on the condition of the property(s) before the exchange is approved. Any repairs identified as necessary, which have been caused by the tenant's negligence, must be completed at the tenant's expense before an exchange is approved. Poor decoration is not regarded as grounds for refusing to grant an exchange,

although both tenants must be prepared to accept this.

- The Association will process a mutual exchange application in 28 working days providing all relevant information is available.
- Exchanges are not limited to two parties and three-way exchanges can take place.
- Any tenant can seek to exchange with any other tenant in the social rented sector.
- Any local lettings initiatives apply when mutual exchanges are being considered.
- Mutual exchange applications will be granted in all cases where they constitute a reasonable request.
- The following are examples of where the request for an exchange would not be considered to be reasonable and where approval is unlikely to be given:
 - overcrowding would result;
 - under occupancy of more than one room would result.
 - one of the houses will be affected by works due to be
 - carried out by the landlord, e.g. demolition;
 - the exchange would breach a local letting initiative.
 - requests for exchanges as a result of financial inducement
 - on the part of either of the applicants (in advertisements or by any other means) or where there are grounds to believe that either party has attempted to mislead the other.
Particular attention would be given to applicants who would worsen their circumstances by mutual exchange.
 - either party would be gaining access to a special needs facility (e.g. a house adapted for disabled persons) to which they are unsuited or have no need;
 - either party would be giving up a special needs facility that they require and would be moving to a less suitable house.
 - the applicant owes money to the landlord of one month's rent in relation to the tenancy.
 - a "live" legal notice has been served on the applicant by the landlord.

Requests for exchanges would be considered and assessed individually on their own merits.

3.9 Non-Standard Selections

Glen Oaks Housing Association may from time to time depart from the standard selection process to assist in the maintenance or development of balanced communities or to make best use of its stock.

Any applicant bypassed would normally be offered housing in the near future. The decision to bypass applicants must be sanctioned by the Customer Services Manager and a clear audit trail provided.

Existing tenants may be transferred due to exceptional circumstances using a management transfer, even though they do not have high enough priority to be considered for the house they are allocated. Such transfers will be kept to a minimum, authorised by the Customer Services Manager, or a manager of at least equivalent seniority, and a clear audit trail will be kept which will be reported to the Corporate

Management Team periodically. Use of management transfers will be monitored through the annual Letting Plan.

Glen Oaks Housing Association may make a decision that an applicant would be unable to sustain a tenancy, and offer to consider them for supported accommodation, rather than rehousing through general needs housing.

Strategic Consolidation Priority - if the Association makes a decision to dispose of its homes, such as a transfer to another landlord or demolition, existing tenants occupying properties directly affected by this decision will be given a Management Priority move. This must be authorised by the Corporate Management Team.

3.10 Information, Awareness and Advice

The Association promotes its services to the wider community and makes available information about our housing stock and how to gain access to it. This is undertaken by:

- Liaison with Glasgow City Council, other social landlords and local support agencies, e.g. the Mungo Foundation, Enable and the Richmond Fellowship.
- Direct contact with Positive Action in Housing and the Scottish Refugee Council to promote availability for ethnic minority groups and to endorse cultural adequacy.
- Membership of Homeless Network Scotland.
- Information on Glasgow City Council's website at www.glasgow.gov.uk
- Access to Glen Oaks' website at www.glenoaks.org.uk
- Updates on our Facebook page

The Association will ensure that all communication is in plain language. Where appropriate it can make available interpretation services and will provide information in different formats, e.g. tape, large print, Braille, and key minority languages on request.

3.11 Confidentiality

Information given by an applicant on the application form will be treated confidentially by any member of staff who has access to it. The information will not be revealed to any third party, unless required by law, without the written consent of the applicant.

3.12 Data Protection

Under UK Data Protection Law, an applicant has the right to see information stored about them on the Association's computer systems.

The Association will respond within a calendar month to a data subject access request.

4.0 Allocation of Housing

4.1 Reasonable Preference

In line with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, the Association seeks to give priority (the legal term being “reasonable preference”) to applicants in one or more of the following categories:

- To homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs;
- People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions; and who have unmet housing needs; and
- Tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and which the social landlord selecting its tenants considers to be under-occupied.

The first two of the reasonable preference-groups (homelessness and unsatisfactory housing conditions) are subject to the applicant having unmet housing needs. People have unmet housing needs where the Association considers them to have housing needs which are not capable of being met by the housing options which are available.

4.2 Housing Options

We have adopted an approach called Housing Options which aims to reduce pressure on homelessness services. Prevention is key to Housing Options, and we have developed our Tenancy Sustainment Policy to maximise tenancy sustainment for Glen Oaks Housing Association tenants. This can involve proactive support, information giving and signposting.

Where a homeless applicant approaches the Association directly, we will refer them to Glasgow City Council’s Connect project for assessment within the terms of the Homelessness (Scotland) Act 2003.

Glasgow City Council will also be able to provide advice and access to emergency accommodation.

Applicants who are classified as Statutory Homeless can be referred to the Association for re-housing, in line with the Section 5 ‘Match’ process. We will advise the applicant that they can also make a direct application to the Association.

Glen Oaks Housing Association has only a small number of properties available for allocation each year, so cannot guarantee being able to offer a house to all applicants accepted onto the housing list. Applicants will be actively encouraged to apply for housing with other Housing Associations and local authorities, for example through CHRs. Even if the circumstances of an applicant merit a high priority, it cannot be guaranteed that a house will become available within a reasonable timescale.

4.3 Exceptional Circumstances

We recognise that there will be situations that because of exceptional circumstances may not be covered by this policy. This may be to allow good management of our housing

stock or to alleviate severe exceptional difficulties within a household. The Customer Services Director will have delegated authority to deal with such cases. The decision made on these cases will be reported to the Board.

4.4 Granting a Tenancy to Relatives of Persons connected with the Association

To ensure that the Association complies with statutory requirements regarding entitlements, payments and benefits to our Board members and employees, and/or to someone connected to them, all applicants shall be asked to state whether, to their knowledge, they are connected to a Board member and/or employee of Glen Oaks Housing Association.

The definition of relevant relationships is provided in the Association's Entitlements, Payments and Benefits policy, Section 6 - 'People Connected to You'.

All applications where the applicant has declared a connection to a Board member and/or employee will require to meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrate that the allocation complies with the Association's published policy and procedures.
- The person in question has no involvement or influence over the process by which the Association allocates the tenancy.
- The applicant's circumstances will not be discussed with the Board, although the Customer Services Director will verify that the allocation is in line with the policy.
- Any decision to allocate a property will be made by the Board.
- The decision is recorded in the Association's minutes.
- The Association will enter details of any let into the appropriate Register of Interest within five days of the tenancy commencing. Each entry is required to be counter-signed by the Customer Services Director or the Chief Executive.

5.0 Reviewing and Monitoring Allocations

The Association will ensure that this policy and its operation, effectively meets the objectives set out in Section 1.2 and complies with the Scottish Social Housing Charter standards and outcomes. Annual letting statistics are published in the Association's Annual Report. The Board will monitor this policy, review its operation and make recommendations for policy changes.

At Board meetings, quarterly reports are compiled and displayed as part of our performance dashboard detailing:

- The number of applicants who have applied for housing and the number of lets made to homeless applicants, waiting list applicants and transfer applicants. This information is gathered to monitor demand.
- Number of offers made and number of offers accepted, monitoring reasons for refusal and taking relevant action to meet the aspirations of the applicant.
- Number of days taken to allocate properties, void periods and rent loss. This is monitored to maximise rental income.

As well as reviewing technical data, the Association consults with the Service Improvement Group about their perceptions and experience of the allocations process.

6.0 Lettings Plan

To ensure the best use of stock, and in meeting the needs of applicants and the local communities, Glen Oaks Housing Association operates an annual Lettings Plan, which is reviewed at least on an annual basis by the Board.

Lettings Plan will set out the expected number of properties for letting during the coming year and set targets based on local population and mix. Additionally, annual Lettings Targets are set for each Housing List Band and local authority nominations. Local authority partners may be consulted with regard to the Lettings Plan particularly in relation to nominations targets.

Glen Oaks Housing Association may also set out more flexibility for specific developments within the Lettings Plan, which would be presented to the Board.

The Customer Services Manager will review the allocations and provide an update to the team on the statistics to ensure the association is meeting the allocated quotas in accordance with the Lettings Plan. However, quotas achieved may vary depending upon a variety of circumstances such as turnover and availability of referrals. The performance in meeting the targets set will be reported at least annually to the Board.

7.0 Administration

7.1 Application Forms

Applications can be made either in paper format or electronically via our website. You can request a form by contacting our office or completing an online request at www.glenoaks.org.uk Apply for a House.

All details on our allocations procedures and Allocations Booklet can be found on our website.

This booklet includes information on who can apply, a summary of the Allocations policy and how banding is awarded. Information regarding local schools, amenities, transport links, community activities and other local housing providers is included.

The booklet also provides information about housing stock owned by the Association, typical rents and details of turnover of properties to enable all applicants to exercise choice in their re-housing prospects.

Applicants can choose certain closes or streets within an area in which they wish to be re-housed. It is explained on the application form that although this choice is available, availability in certain streets and areas may be lower so the applicant may be on the waiting list for a longer time period.

The Association is committed to processing applications, where possible, within 15 working days from receipt, provided no additional information is required. Applicants will

be advised of the likely availability of housing that suits their needs and an indication of timescales will be provided if possible.

Those who are asked for further supporting information will be given 15 working days to provide it. Glen Oaks Housing Association reserves the right not to process the application if the necessary information is not provided.

7.2 Verification of Information

Every applicant who is likely to be offered a property will be interviewed before an offer is made. The purpose of the interview is to check that the details on the application form are correct and that banding has been correctly awarded and allow applicants to provide any additional information in support of their application.

Every applicant and any householder over the age of 16 must provide two pieces of correspondence confirming their identity and address (dated within the last 6 months, photographic ID, proof of National Insurance and birth certificates for each child listed on the application).

The onus of proof of circumstances lies with the applicant in most cases. Applicants unable to provide adequate evidence as to their housing needs or circumstances will have their application cancelled. Verification of domestic abuse or harassment from other agencies is not a condition required for an applicant to be given the appropriate priority. Responsibility for notifying changes of address and other changes of circumstances lies with the applicant. Failure to notify changes may result in applications being suspended to allow a review of the application.

Tenancy reports will be obtained from previous and current landlords prior to receiving a formal offer of rehousing. Applicants are required to sign a mandate authorising the Association to contact landlords to obtain information about the conduct of a tenancy.

7.3 Offers and Refusals

All applicants who apply for housing will be shortlisted based on the priority criteria given in the Banding System set out in this policy and additional guidance documents. Applicants at the top of the shortlist will then be considered for a property if they are eligible (for example, they meet the criteria in the Allocations Policy), they meet the household size for the property, and are not subject to a suspension.

If we have a justified reason, we may not make an offer to an applicant who might otherwise have received an offer and they will be bypassed. This could happen, for example, if we know the property does not meet the applicant's needs or the applicant has previously advised they do not wish to be considered. Any bypass needs to be reviewed and approved by the Tenancy Services Officer or Customer Services Manager.

Reasonable offers - a reasonable offer is defined as an offer for a property which based on the application information and preferences, will meet the

applicant's housing need. When determining whether an offer is reasonable, Glen Oaks Housing Association will also take into account:

- Stock availability and demand;
- Legislative requirements;
- Based on the reason for the refusal and the information provided about the property, it was reasonable that the applicant should have recognised the property was unsuitable before accepting an offer; and
- If there has been any change in the applicant's circumstances.

In all cases every effort is made to ensure that applicant's preferences are considered.

Applicants will be given two working days from the date of an offer to respond either by refusing the offer, or by arranging to view the property. Failure to do so will result in the offer being withdrawn by Glen Oaks Housing Association and recorded as a refusal.

The applicant will be required to view the property before signing a tenancy agreement. The Tenancy Agreement will be a Scottish Secure Tenancy. The Association offer this type of tenancy to ensure tenants have a settled home. In circumstance where a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy is being considered, the reasons for this will be fully explained to the prospective new tenant.

An applicant must normally accept an offer and sign the Tenancy Agreement on the same day although this may be extended in special circumstances by a further working day.

Applicants will not be suspended from future offers should they decline an offer of accommodation. However, where an applicant has declined two offers, they will be invited to review their application to ensure all information about their stated choices and re-housing requirements are known. Failure to respond to this request or reasonable belief that we will be unable to rehouse the applicant based on their requirements or preferences may result in the application being cancelled.

Where Glasgow City Council's Community Casework team makes a Homeless Referral through the 'Match' process, the applicant will normally be given one offer unless the Community Casework Team deems the offer to be unsuitable.

7.4 Allocations Audit Trail

The Association is committed to a clear audit trail to demonstrate for any given let how and why that allocation was made and to confirm that the Allocations Policy is achieving its objectives. Responsibility for implementing the policy is delegated by the Board to the Customer Services Director. Allocation of housing is administered by the Tenancy Services Assistant and authorised by the Tenancy Services Officers. All allocation decisions are recorded and are available for monitoring purposes to internal or external regulators. This information will not be made available to the public due to the requirements of confidentiality.

8.0 Policy Review

The Association's elected Board members have determined this policy. The Association will develop the Allocations Policy in consultation with tenants.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner in response to:

- Legal or regulatory changes
- Strategic housing policy shifts
- The continuing impact of the national housing emergency

Applicants will be notified in writing of any changes to their band as a result of a Policy Review.

9.0 Risk Management

Risk can arise from the Association's Allocations policy such as:

- Loss of rental income when a property is not allocated.
- Failure to meet performance targets where a property is proving difficult to let.

Given the importance of these risks the effective management of this policy is vital.

Part 2

10.0 Assessment of circumstances and housing need

10.1 Property type preferences

Glen Oaks Housing Association will generally aim to allocate properties that match the preferences stated on the application form.

Where a medical priority indicates a need for a ground-floor property on one level, a property with some stairs may be considered if:

- It alleviates the applicant's situation.
- It aligns with guidance from the applicant's GP or Occupational Therapist.

10.2 Bedroom Requirements

Under-occupation of Tenement Properties:

Glen Oaks Housing Association **will** allow under-occupation of 3- and 4-apartment tenement properties to make best use of stock in response to demand issues.

Where an applicant knowingly accepts an under-occupied property and later applies to be rehoused, they will be classed as intentionally under-occupied, unless there has been a significant change in affordability, such as a life-changing event (e.g. loss of income) and the applicant is no longer able to afford a bigger property.

Minimum Bedroom Allocation:

Direct applicants will normally only be considered for properties that meet the correct number of bedrooms required for their household composition.

General Guide to Minimum House Sizes

Household Composition	Minimum Size
Single person	1 bedroom
Couple	1 bedroom
Single parent or couple + 1 child	2 bedrooms
Single parent or couple + 2 children	2 or 3 bedrooms*
Single parent or couple + 3 children	3 or 4 bedrooms*
Single parent or couple + 4 children	3, 4 or 5 bedrooms*
Single parent or couple + 5 or more children	4, 5 or 6 bedrooms*

** Depending on the ages and sexes of the children.*

Bedroom Sharing Guidelines

- Children of the same or opposite sex under age 10 will normally share one bedroom.
- Children of opposite sexes aged 10 or over will normally be allocated separate bedrooms.
- Children of the same sex aged 10 to under 16 will normally share one bedroom.
- Children aged 16 or over will be considered adults and allocated separate bedrooms.

10.3 Maximum Occupancy

A maximum of two persons may share a bedroom and parents will have a separate bedroom from their children.

10.4 Pregnancy and Age Considerations

An unborn child will be included in household size calculations from three months before the expected birth, appropriate verification documents such as a MatB1 form should be submitted for verification purposes.

Children reaching age 10 or 16 within six months of the application date will be considered to have reached that age for assessment purposes.

10.5 Bedroom Size Standards & Overcrowding Priority

All bedroom sizes will comply with the minimum standards set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987.

Households not meeting the above minimum standards will be awarded overcrowding priority (see Section 8.10 – Banding System).

Overcrowding priority will not be awarded to single individuals in bedsit or studio accommodation.

10.6 Exceptional Overcrowding Allocations

In rare and exceptional cases, applicants may be allocated a property that still results in overcrowding, such as:

- Referrals from external agencies (e.g., Section 5 match)
- Situations involving highly unsuitable or unsafe current accommodation.
- The property offered would represent a significant improvement on their existing situation but would not lead to statutory overcrowding. The applicant's housing needs will be reassessed after the move.

10.7 Additional Bedroom Entitlements

Households may be offered one additional bedroom beyond the minimum requirements if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Medical need (e.g., for equipment)
- Shared parental responsibility (access to children)
- Couples and single applicants may be considered for one or two-bedroom properties to promote best use of stock.
- Need for a permanent carer or fostering:
 - If a fostering application is pending, an extra bedroom may be granted depending on the application's progress and input from relevant authorities.
 - Approval must be given by a Customer Services Manager or equivalent.

In some cases, a different property size may be offered to address specific housing or health needs (e.g., special educational needs).

10.8 Access and Shared Custody

Where separated parents have joint custody, children will be counted in both households if they reside with one parent for three or more nights per week, unless exceptions apply. Separated parents with access only will be entitled to one additional bedroom beyond the minimum requirement.

The same applies to adults with kinship care responsibilities as defined by the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

Evidence of access must be provided, such as:

- Confirmation from the parent with full access.
- Confirmation from a solicitor.

The Association may require to seek legal advice on the effect of the terms of the agreement provided.

11.0 The Banding System

Applications submitted directly to Glen Oaks Housing Association will be assessed based on the applicant's individual circumstances and housing needs. Following this assessment, each application will be placed into one of five designated bands.

Within each band, applicants will be prioritised according to:

- The original date of application, or
- The date on which they were placed into a new band due to a change in circumstances.

Band 1: Urgent Priority

The following criteria are awarded Urgent Priority banding:

Criteria	Description
Domestic abuse	Where the applicant needs accommodation due to domestic abuse. Confirmation may be requested with the applicants' consent from relevant agencies such as the Police, Health Professional, Social Work, Women's Aid, etc. However, verification of domestic abuse from other agencies is not a condition required for an applicant to be given priority.
Harassment	Where the applicant is suffering serious harassment at their current accommodation and being rehoused will help to alleviate this. Harassment can take many forms including intimidating, threatening or aggressive behaviour, both verbal and physical, and can involve attacks on property as well as

	<p>people. Incidents of harassment can include sexual comments or gestures, offensive or racist graffiti, abusive language and behaviour, violence towards people of all ages, damage to homes or possessions and threatening letters or phone calls. Harassment is often premeditated and reoccurring.</p> <p>Confirmation may be requested with the applicants' consent, either from agencies such as the Police, Social Services and Health Organisations or from other witnesses which can include staff. Where appropriate, confirmation can also be provided by the customer's advocates, i.e. local councillors, Members of Parliament, Members of the Scottish Parliament, advice workers and from voluntary organisations. However, verification of harassment from other agencies is not a condition required for an applicant to be given the appropriate priority.</p>
Severe overcrowding – three or more bedrooms	Where the applicant's current accommodation is overcrowded when assessed against criteria set out at section 10.2-10.7 - House types and sizes to be allocated - by three or more bedrooms.
Severe under-occupation – three or more bedrooms	Existing social housing tenants who are living in houses with more bedrooms over and above the minimum requirement for their present needs.
Urgent health/disability	<p>Where the applicant's existing property is so unsuitable that re-housing would significantly result in an improvement in health or wellbeing.</p> <p>Applicants requiring re-housing on medical grounds will be assessed by the Tenancy Services Officer based on details provided by applicants on their medical condition and current housing situation.</p>
Return to community	Where a Glen Oaks Housing Association tenant no longer needs an adapted property or support provided with the accommodation.
Management transfer	Where there are exceptional circumstances, and the need for a transfer applicant to be moved as soon as possible is both acute and urgent and is authorised by a Customer Services Manager or person of at least equivalent seniority to the Housing Manager.

Where this banding has been allocated a home visit may be required to verify circumstances/needs.

Band 2: High Priority

The following criteria are awarded High Priority banding:

Criteria	Description
Medical	Where the applicant has a medical condition,

	which will be alleviated by re-housing. Applicants requiring re-housing on medical grounds will be assessed by the Tenancy Services Officer based on details provided by applicants on their medical condition and current housing situation.
Overcrowding – two bedrooms	Where the applicant's current accommodation is overcrowded when assessed against criteria set out at section 10.2-10.7 - House types and sizes to be allocated - by two bedrooms.
Under occupation – two bedrooms	Existing social housing tenants who are living in houses with more bedrooms over and above the minimum requirement for their present needs.
Repeated victim of ASB	Where the applicant is suffering from current and serious ASB which will be alleviated by moving house. Requires supporting evidence e.g. from the police, health professional, social worker or housing officer.
Poor quality property in terms of condition/disrepair	Where the existing property of the applicant is unsafe or unfit and falls into at least one of the following: serious structural defects; no running water; no inside toilet; no bath or shower; damp; and no full central heating. Requires documented evidence from Environmental Health or another relevant agency.
Non-secure accommodation	This will apply to those where the case has been heard at the First Tier Tribunal and an eviction notice is granted.
Leaving Armed Forces	Applicants serving in the British Ministry of Defence Armed Forces up to one year ahead of their date to an honourable discharge and 6 months after. They must have completed three years' service or one full tour of duty.
Sharing amenities – non-family members	Awarded to applicants who have to share cooking, toilet and/or bathing facilities with others who will not be part of the same household.

Band 3: Medium Priority

The following criteria are awarded Medium Priority banding:

Criteria	Description
Transfers	Transfer applications (applications from existing tenants of Glen Oaks Housing Association to move to another property) will generally be awarded Medium Priority banding. However, transfer cases that meet the higher priority bandings criteria are placed in the relevant higher priority bands.

Overcrowding – one bedroom	Where the applicant's current accommodation is overcrowded when assessed against criteria set out at section 8.9 - House types and sizes to be allocated - by one bedroom.
Under occupation – one bedroom	Existing social housing tenants who are living in houses with more bedrooms over and above the minimum requirement for their present needs.
Giving and receiving support or to take up employment	Where an applicant needs to move to either give or receive support i.e. for personal or medical care. Medical priority for re-housing for applicants requiring or providing support will be assessed by the Team Leader based on details provided by applicants on their medical condition and current housing situation. Applicants who are moving to an area to take up an offer of employment and have received a formal confirmation of this.
Sharing amenities – family members	Awarded to applicants who have to share cooking, toilet and/or bathing facilities with others who will not be part of the same household.

Band 4: Standard Priority

All other applicants who satisfy the eligibility criteria will be awarded a Standard Priority banding.

Band 5: Nominations/Statutory Homeless Band

Persons nominated or referred by local authorities will be placed in this band. Designated staff must ensure that customers who have made an application based on homelessness are guided to the appropriate local authority Homelessness Unit/Department who are responsible for assessing homeless applications.

The Association contributes towards housing people in this category by accepting Homeless Referrals. The Association will agree a target with the local authority, annually, for the quota of lets to statutory homeless applicants.

Tenants of the Association must seek permission from the Association before allowing lodgers into their home. Should overcrowding be caused, permission shall not be granted and if the lodgers are already resident the tenant will be found to be in breach of their tenancy agreement which will be dealt with accordingly.

11.1 Priority for Medical Need

Priority will be given to applicants who have a relevant medical need when allocating the following types of properties:

- Ground floor properties;
- Lift accessible properties which are all on the one level;
- Properties which have been substantially adapted;
- Properties with wet rooms/level access showers.

Deterioration of Medical Condition

If an applicant is allocated a property that has been adapted for their health needs and their medical condition deteriorates after moving in, to the extent that they now need a wheelchair and are in unsuitable housing, the tenant should be offered the opportunity to transfer to more suitable housing and given an urgent medical priority.

12.0 Appeal/Complaints Procedures

Where the applicant is dissatisfied with the Association's decision, they have a right to appeal.

Any applicant whose application is cancelled or suspended will be notified in writing stating the grounds on which the decision has been made. Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the way this policy has been implemented or is appealing against a decision that has been made, he/she should contact the Customer Services Manager within 15 working days of receipt of the decision letter. The Customer Services Manager will then review the case and respond to their enquiry within 15 working days. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal/complaint, they can refer to the Association's formal Complaints Procedure. A copy of this is available from the Association and gives details of the next steps available.