



REIDVALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Allocations Policy

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Author	Housing Manager

Policy Summary

Purpose:	To set out Reidvale Housing Association's approach to the Allocation of properties.
Guidance:	Statutory Guidance The Scottish Social Housing Charter Requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator
Regulatory Compliance	<p>Standard 1: The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.</p> <p>Standard 2: The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.</p> <p>Standard 3: The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.</p> <p>Standard 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.</p> <p>Standard 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.</p>
Financial Impact	Low
Risk Assessment	Medium
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1. INTRODUCTION

Reidvale Housing Association (RHA) is a community based housing association operating in the South Dennistoun area of the east end of Glasgow with the aim of providing good quality, affordable, rented accommodation for those in housing need whilst promoting a balanced community.

The Association is controlled by a Management Committee who are unpaid volunteers. Responsibility for the content of this policy rests with the Committee. Responsibility for all aspects of its implementation, however, rests with the Association staff.

The Association owns 898 properties within the area shown on the enclosed map (see Appendix 1). The majority of our properties consist of rehabilitated tenemental flats with a smaller proportion of properties build circa 1990. More than half of the Association's properties are two apartment in size.

2. LEGAL AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

Compliance with Law and Regulation

This policy complies with all relevant legislation and regulation (see Appendix 2). It has been developed in line with regulatory requirements and practice recommendations from the Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). These include:

- The Legal Framework for Social Housing Allocations, Statutory Guidance for Social Landlords. Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Minimum Period for Applications to remain in force – Suspensions Under Section 20B of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987. Statutory Guidance. Housing Scotland Act 2014.

The SHR regulates landlord services provided by local councils and RSLs and statutory homelessness services provided by local authorities. The SHR's statutory objective is to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants, homeless people and other people who use services provided by social landlords.

RHA is registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) as a Registered Social Landlord (RSLs). RSLs are independent housing organisations. As the organisation responsible for Statutory Homelessness Services, Glasgow City Council is also regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The SHR monitors and reports on a social landlord's performance and requires landlords to collect and provide key information on their performance. Where appropriate, they intervene to secure improvement and protect the interests of tenants and other service users. RHA is required to provide information to, and is regulated by, the SHR.

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The SHR use the outcomes and standards in the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) to assess the performance of social landlords. The outcomes and standards that have been considered in the development of this policy are outlined below:

Outcome 1: Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Outcome 2: Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Outcome 3: Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable.

Outcome 7: People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.

Outcome 8: Tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.

Outcome 9: People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.

Outcome 10: People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.

Outcome 11: Social landlords ensure that 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.

Outcome 12: Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

3. AIMS OF THE POLICY

RHA recognises that being well housed is one of the most important aspects of peoples' lives and that housing can have a major impact on health and wellbeing. As a community based housing association, formed to retain and rebuild a community, the Association seeks to balance community needs against those of individual applicants. As far as possible, RHA aims to provide sustainable housing for applicants within a stable community. We aim to achieve this by:

- Providing quality affordable housing to applicants who have been assessed as being in housing need.
- Allocating housing fairly and objectively.
- Allocating homes to people who are living in unsatisfactory housing.
- Contribute to the prevention of homelessness.
- Ensuring that access to the allocations process is open at all times to all sections of the community.
- Making the best use of available houses and using the allocations process to assist in the creation of and maintenance of balanced, stable communities.
- Ensuring a proportion of houses are allocated to existing tenants with a wish to move to alternative accommodation.
- Liaising effectively with Glasgow City Housing and Social Care Partnership and other relevant agencies to ensure that a proportion of its stock is allocated to applicants referred by these various agencies.

To help deliver these aims RHA will:

- provide an easily accessible housing list for all customers.
- use a simple, transparent system for allocating available properties.

RHA's approach focuses on providing easily accessible, high quality housing advice and information to all and making it as easy as possible to find suitable housing in our community. Applicants looking for housing in the social rented sector in the Reidvale area can apply by completing an application that is assessed by RHA using our allocations policy. An application can be obtained by contacting RHA's office in person, phone call, email, text message or website at <https://reidvale.org.uk> .

3.1 About Reidvale Housing Association and relationship with Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (GCHSCP)

Glasgow City Council is the strategic housing authority with statutory obligation to develop and deliver the Local Housing Strategy. The Council does not have homes available for rent in Glasgow but does have responsibility for assessing applications from customers who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Council has a duty to find suitable housing for households that it assesses as being unintentionally homeless and with a local connection to the Glasgow area. The rules for assessing homelessness are laid out in national legislation are not the same as those for assessing housing need under this policy. Further information is available from <https://glasgow.gov.uk> .

3.2 Partnership Working (GCHSCP & third sector organisations)

This policy has been developed by RHA with the aim to simplify and maximise access to housing. RHA will continue to work together with other organisations to identify and alleviate housing need.

3.3 Transparency and Accountability

RHA will apply this policy in a consistent and transparent manner and treat all applicants in the same way.

This policy will be a published document and is available from RHA's website at: <https://reidvale.org.uk> .

RHA will offer all applicants the opportunity to discuss their application and the allocations process where necessary.

Applicants will also be informed of RHA's complaints policy and process. The complaints policy is available from RHA's website at <https://reidvale.org.uk> .

RHA will maintain clear audit trails which will allow us to demonstrate how and why any given allocation was made to a particular household, whilst also taking account of GDPR Regulations and data protection legislation. RHA will report on their performance to the SHR.

3.4 Consultation

Consultation and discussion is invaluable in allowing us to achieve a policy and working procedures that will, as far as possible, reflect our customers' needs and aspirations. We will consult with service users on all reviews of this policy in accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 and RHA's Tenant Participation Strategy.

3.5 Housing Options

Social housing is one of a range of housing options available. RHA will provide high quality housing options information and advice to ensure that applicants are fully informed of the range of choices available to them.

4. APPLYING FOR A HOUSE

4.1 How to Apply

Anyone aged 16 or over can apply for a house with RHA. In the case of accommodation within our retirement complex, applicants must be aged 60 years or over.

Staff from RHA are available to provide assistance with the completion of the application if required by the applicant. If it is not possible to download an application online, paper forms can be made available on request from RHA's office in person, phone call, email, text message or website at <https://reidvale.org.uk>.

Forms can also be provided in alternative formats on request. If required, applicants can also be provided with translation services to assist them in completing their application. All applications will be processed and recorded on RHA's Allocation Register.

We will accept housing applications from asylum seekers and others subject to immigration control. However, we will suspend these applications until the applicant has received a positive decision on their leave to remain from the UK Borders Agency.

Applicants will be placed on one of the following lists:

'A' List – access to this list will be open to all applicants.

'B' List – access to this list will be open to applicants who possess economic or social characteristics which are under represented within the community.

'C' List – access to this list will be open to applicants who require to move to the Reidvale area to receive or provide support from a relative. Applications will also be considered from those who are making a positive contribution to the community i.e. regular / voluntary community activity or who are in full/part time further education.

Details of the criteria for acceptance onto the lists are contained in Appendices (3A, 3B and 3C)

Whilst there is continuous opportunity for applicants to apply and be assessed, due to the demand on our waiting list we will not be able to rehouse all applicants. Applicants will be advised accordingly at the time of their application.

RHA will place applicants on the list where they are most likely to be housed in the shortest timescale.

4.2 Applicants who are Tenants of RHA (Transfer Applicants)

Tenants of RHA can apply to transfer to another property which better meets their needs. As with new applicants, transfer applicants can apply by completing an application that is assessed by RHA using our allocations policy. An application can be obtained by contacting RHA's office in person, phone call, email, text message or website at <https://reidvale.org.uk>.

Tenants of Reidvale Housing Association seeking a transfer will be assessed in one of two ways:

- Applicants whose housing is inappropriate or unsuitable for them
- Applicants who are seeking an aspirational move must have resided in their present home for at least three years before they can be admitted on to the list and will have their application dealt with in date order. The exception to this is where a tenant's home has a recess kitchen. In such cases tenants will be eligible for access to the Aspirational List where they have resided in their home for at least 2 years.

RHA will not offer an alternative property that would worsen the tenant's current housing circumstances.

In order to make best use of housing stock, RHA aims to make a number of their vacant properties available to transfer applicants. The number of properties that are made available for transfer may change over time and differ.

4.3 Relationship Breakdown

We will consider all applicants in the event of the breakdown of a relationship in accordance with our Relationship Breakdown Policy provided that such applicants have held a tenancy for one year. The applicant would be placed on the Association's 'C' list.

4.4 Retirement Housing

The Association has 44 retirement flats. All applicants must be aged 60 years or over. A separate retirement housing list is maintained due to the nature of this type of accommodation.

4.5 Adapted Properties

The Association has a small number of adapted properties which are suitable for people with mobility problems. Allocation of these properties will be made to applicants who can benefit from the facilities provided.

4.6 Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership Homeless Persons Referrals

In addition to accepting direct applications, Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty upon the Association to comply with requests from GCHSCP to rehouse homeless people.

The Association carries out this statutory duty in accordance with the terms of the Homelessness Duty Protocol for Glasgow, which was developed through discussions between representatives of Glasgow City Council, the Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum and Housing Associations and the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations.

4.7 Referrals

RHA has arrangements with specific agencies to take referrals (see appendix 4). Such arrangements are subject to a specific quota of lets.

Referrals are made when the referring agency considers that a household or someone within it could benefit from living in a particular type of home.

4.8 Mutual Exchange

A Mutual Exchange is when tenants, with the approval of their landlords, agree to swap houses. The exchange can be with another tenant of the same landlord or with a tenant of another landlord, other RSLs both locally and nationally, and local authority tenants throughout the UK.

We recognise that people often need to move from one area to another. RHA will provide assistance to tenants who wish to exchange with a tenant of another landlord in terms of our mutual exchange procedures.

RHA will consider any request for an exchange, unless there are reasonable grounds to refuse the request such as:

- the property is subject to proceedings for recovery of possession
- the property has been designed or adapted for occupation by a person with particular needs and, if the exchange took place, there would no longer be a person with those needs occupying the house
- the exchange would lead to either overcrowding or one household living in a property substantially larger than required
- the exchange would result in tenants being accommodated in a property which is not suitable to their needs.

4.9 Quotas

To ensure reasonable opportunities regarding allocations the Association has adopted quota targets. Under this policy the Association will endeavour to ensure that, over a period of a year, allocations will be made in accordance with the agreed quotas. The quotas will be reviewed and agreed on an annual basis based on an analysis of the demands and performance of allocations.

4.10 Information Provided by the Applicant

In order to assess an application properly, it is important for us to have accurate and up to date information on the applicant's circumstances. Where an applicant fails to provide information to support their application, this may mean that the application cannot be fully assessed, and placed on the appropriate list.

Any required information will be requested from the applicant and their application will be re-assessed once that information has been received. However, we will not ask an applicant to provide information where there is a significant financial cost attached to obtaining it.

Should an applicant's circumstances change this may have an impact on their housing application and they must update their application by notifying RHA. An applicant should also update their application if they want to change any of the areas or property types they have selected. Changes in circumstances may have an impact on the list the application is placed and any change will take effect from the date that we are informed of these changes. This will ensure the applicants are appropriately placed on the waiting list.

An applicant should contact RHA if they require assistance with their application.

4.11 Verifying an Applicant's Circumstances

Applicants may be asked to provide information in support of their application and to provide verification of their circumstances. **The** information that may be required is outlined in the table below.

Circumstance	Proof required
All applicants	Proof of identity, such as passport, birth certificate or driving licence
All household members	Proof of residency, such as utilities bill or bank statement
Homeless or threatened with homelessness	Assessment undertaken by Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership
Given Notice to Quit or a Notice to Leave* at current accommodation	Copy of valid Notice to Quit or a Notice to Leave
Moving to be near employment	Letter from employer/future employer. Confirmation of employment
Moving to provide/ receive support	Letter from service providing support and/or professional recommending the need for support Letter from the person providing/ receiving support
In need of rehousing as health is affected by current housing circumstances	Health and housing needs assessment will be undertaken
Access to children	Letter from child's other parent or letter from lawyer

Foster carers	Letter from Fostering Agency
Member of household temporarily living away from home	Letter from household member confirming that they wish to be part of the household and have not submitted a separate application for housing to RHA
Domestic Abuse	Position of belief – further information not required
Experiencing harassment	Corroborating evidence from Police, current landlord, Community Relations Unit, Victim Support or other relevant agency.
Pregnancy	Form MAT B1 or similar

* A Notice to Leave should be used to terminate any private residential tenancy which began on or after 1 December 2017

We recognise that some of the information required may be sensitive and personal in nature. We also recognise that where applicants are vulnerable and/ or have an unsettled housing history – for example if they are fleeing violence - they may not be able to provide as much information in support of their application. We will therefore treat each case on its merits and will adopt a position of belief and trust.

All applicants will also be asked to provide their National Insurance (NI) number. This will be used as a unique identifier for each applicant. As not everyone will have an NI number, providing this information will not be a requirement of making an application, and another identifier will be used for these applicants.

4.12 Tenancy References

We will usually require contact details for previous landlords in the past five years. Landlords will be contacted and asked to complete a tenancy reference form. If this reference identifies rent arrears, anti-social behaviour or breach of tenancy agreement, applicants may be suspended according to this policy. Further information on suspension from the housing list is provided in section 8 of this policy.

4.13 Employees and Committee Members

We do not exclude any employee, former employee, committee or board member, former committee or board member or close relatives of employees, former employees, committee or board members or former committee or board members from applying for a tenancy, transfer of tenancy or mutual exchange. These individuals must apply through the normal application process, will be subject to the same assessment procedure and will be allocated housing based on their housing need as assessed through the allocation policy. The application will be handled by a member of staff that has not had a previous connection to that applicant.

4.14 Review of the Housing List

The housing lists will be reviewed on an annual rolling basis, with all applicants asked to confirm that the information held by RHA is accurate and that they wish to stay on the housing lists.

Applicants will be offered a range of ways in which to provide up to date information e.g. by telephone, by letter or email etc. They will also be offered the opportunity to meet with a member of staff to discuss their housing application.

Where applicants fail to respond to this review within a certain period of time, they will be removed from the housing list. All applicants will be informed of the implications of failing to respond to the review. Circumstances in which an application can be removed from the housing list are outlined in section 8 of this policy.

5. HOUSING ADVICE AND INFORMATION

5.1 Advice and Information

We aim to ensure that all applicants and existing tenants receive high quality information and advice which enables them to make informed choices about their housing. We will give advice to applicants on issues such as:

- how to apply for housing and how the application will be dealt with
- timescales for processing and assessing applications
- the role of applicant and what information they are expected to provide
- the Association's housing stock
- contact details for other 'local' housing providers.

All potential applicants will be informed of their right to be admitted to the housing list and have their housing needs fully assessed as a result of their application. No applicant will be discouraged from making an application to the Association.

All information and advice will be provided in an accessible format which meets the needs of individuals. All written information will be simple, easily understood and in plain English. Information and advice will also be available on request in a range of other languages and formats to meet the needs of individuals.

5.2 Where You Want to Live

The Association will aim to match applicants with a home that meets their needs. As part of each applicant's housing interview, we will discuss which areas within the Reidvale area they would be interested in. Applicants can choose as many areas as they wish. They will be encouraged to choose only those areas in which they would give real consideration to an offer of housing.

Information on areas, types of housing and how often properties usually come up for let is available from RHA, upon request, and this should help applicants make informed choices about their application.

5.3 Types and Size of Housing

We aim to make best use of our housing stock and the size of property an applicant is eligible for will depend on the number and make up of people on the housing application. The number and size of bedrooms an applicant will be entitled to is set out in the table below.

Household size	Reasonable Minimum accommodation size
Single person	1 bedroom (one double room)
Couple	1 or 2 bedrooms (1 double room) or (minimum of 1 double room and 1 single room)
Single parent with one child	2 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 1 single room)
Couple with one child	2 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 1 single room)
Single parent with two children of the same sex	
- both aged under 16	2 bedrooms (minimum of 2 double rooms)
- both aged under 16, but more than 6 years age difference	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double and 2 single rooms)
- one or both aged 16 or over	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 2 single rooms)
Couple with two children of the same sex	
- both aged under 16	2 bedrooms (2 double rooms)
- both aged under 16, but more than 6 years age difference	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 2 single rooms)
- one or both aged 16 or over	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 2 single rooms)
Single parent with two children of opposite sex	
- both aged under 8	2 bedrooms (minimum of 2 double rooms)
- one or both aged 8 or over	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 2 single rooms)
Couple with two children of opposite sex	
- both aged under 8	2 bedrooms (minimum 2 double rooms)
- one or both aged 8 or over	3 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 2 single rooms)

Single parent with three children	
- if two able to share a room (under 16 and same sex/ under 8 and opposite sex)	3 bedrooms (minimum of 2 double rooms and 1 single room)
- none able to share a room	4 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double and 3 single rooms)
Couple with three children	
- if two able to share a room (under 16 and same sex/ under 8 and opposite sex)	3 bedrooms (minimum 2 double rooms and 1 single room)
- none able to share a room	4 bedrooms (minimum 1 double room and 3 single rooms)
Single parent with four children	
- if all children able to share rooms	3 bedrooms (minimum of 3 double rooms)
- if two children able to share a room	4 bedrooms (minimum of 2 double rooms and 2 single rooms)
- if none able to share a room	5 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 4 single rooms)
Couple with four children	
- if all children able to share rooms	3 bedrooms (minimum 3 double rooms)
- if two children able to share a room	4 bedrooms (minimum of 2 double rooms and 2 single rooms)
- if none able to share a room	5 bedrooms (minimum of 1 double room and 4 single rooms)

Reidvale Housing Association appreciates that applicants' circumstances can vary and that some households may want a larger property. The types of circumstances under which we might consider offering an extra bedroom might include:

- Where there is a health reason for requiring a separate or additional bedroom – this will be considered on an individual basis through the housing need assessment process and on occasion with specific professional confirmation.
- Where a separated partner has access rights to a child/children – this will be considered on an individual basis through the housing need assessment process to assess if it is appropriate to allow the applicant one additional bedroom to be used by the child/children during access visits. Individual circumstances can be taken into account.
- Where a member of the applicant household is pregnant – and if the household would require a further bedroom once the baby has arrived.
- Where applicants request an extra bedroom – applicants may request a property one size larger than they are eligible for. This will result in lower priority for this house size, with those who **need** this size of property being considered before those who **choose** to request an extra bedroom but do not actually need it. Applicants will be advised that they are less likely to be offered accommodation if they request a larger size than they are entitled to under our policy.

It is also important to ensure that households are able to afford any accommodation offered and we will discuss affordability with the applicant as part of their housing interview. This will include giving information and advice on the housing element of universal credit and the Department of Work and Pensions rules on numbers of bedrooms.

There is usually no restriction on the location or type of accommodation for which an applicant may apply. However, some types of housing are designed for a particular client group, and it would only be people from that group who could apply for that particular housing.

6. PRIORITISING APPLICATIONS

6.1 Assessing Applications for Housing

This policy has been developed to give priority to those in housing need and all applications will be assessed in accordance with this policy. The system that will be used by RHA to assess and prioritise applications is outlined in this section.

Reasonable Preference

The Housing (Scotland) 2014 Act amends section 20 of the 1987 Act and sets out three categories of applicants who should be given reasonable preference. These are:

- 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, which the social landlord selecting its tenants considers to be under-occupied.

We have taken these reasonable preference categories into account in the development of this policy.

6.2 Unmet housing needs

The first two of the reasonable preference groups (homelessness and unsatisfactory housing conditions) are subject to the qualification that the applicant should also have unmet housing needs which are not capable of being met. As part of our housing advice work with the applicant we will look at

- the applicant's circumstances; and
- the existing housing options which are available and accessible to them.

If an applicant is able to meet their own housing needs, we may not give them priority. An example might be if the applicant's current home can be adapted to meet their mobility needs. However, if a waiting list or transfer applicant is placed on the housing list under this policy we would generally consider them to have an unmet housing need.

Glasgow City Housing and Social Care Partnership will make the assessment of whether a statutorily homeless applicant has unmet housing needs as part of their assessment process.

6.3 Homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs

Statutory homelessness assessments are carried out by Glasgow City Housing and Social Care Partnership. If someone has been assessed as homeless no further assessment of need will be carried out and their application will be given a statutory homelessness priority on RHA's waiting list.

6.4 People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions and tenants of a social landlord who are under-occupying

All applications (excepting statutory homelessness applications) will be assessed and placed on the appropriate list according to their current housing situation and personal circumstances. The categories used are explained in Appendix 3A,3B and 3C.

6.5 Unstable and insecure housing circumstances

This category covers situations where, for some reason, the applicant is either at risk of losing their current accommodation or their current housing is temporary.

6.6 Agreements with other agencies or services

This category is for applicants who are currently being looked after by the local authority or are in specific supported accommodation and are ready to move into their own accommodation.

We want to ensure that Looked After and Accommodated Children subject of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, and other applicants who are currently being supported by other agencies, are given the best possible opportunity to make the transition from a care setting to their own tenancy. We aim to support people in making that transition as easy as possible.

6.7 Domestic abuse or harassment

6.7.1 Domestic Abuse

Where people are experiencing domestic abuse, we recognise that this presents an immediate housing need and priority is awarded on this basis. We also recognise that housing need is likely to continue to be significant when someone has left their home because of domestic abuse and has not gone down the statutory homeless route.

Applicants affected by domestic abuse will be advised that they may seek assistance from Glasgow City Housing and Social Care Partnership's Homelessness Service. Applicants may also be signposted to other sources of support such as Women's Aid and other relevant organisations which are able to provide assistance and support. The safety of the applicant will be our first priority, with confidentiality of information provided being particularly important in these cases.

We understand that the victim may prefer to stay in their home and there may be circumstances under which the perpetrator could be required to leave or not return to the home. If this is the victim's preference, we will work with them to maximise their chances of being able to remain in their home.

6.7.2 Harassment

Harassment at or near the home is a serious problem and includes not only physical attacks and damage to property, but also verbal abuse and other behaviour which deprives people of the enjoyment of their home on the grounds of a personal attribute such as gender, racial origin, sexuality, age, disability or other factor. Victims of harassment will also be signposted to other relevant sources of support and advice, such as the local authority, the police and voluntary and community organisations.

All applicants whose household is specifically affected by harassment will be assessed on an individual basis. The level of priority will reflect the severity of the harassment and the risk to the household.

6.8 Housing related health or disability needs

When deciding on health or disability-related priority we will consider two factors:

- The severity of the person's condition or the degree of incapacity; and
- The extent to which re-housing will benefit the person concerned.

Priority will only be awarded if the applicant's current home does not meet their health or disability-related needs and a move could allow those needs to be met.

If an applicant's current home could be adapted to meet their needs, we would discuss this option with the applicant, and we may not award priority if an adaptation which meets the needs of the applicant can be made. The availability of funding for any adaptation would also be considered.

Where the applicant or a member of the applicant's household has a health issue that is adversely affected by their housing circumstances, advice may be sought from a relevant health professional.

6.9 Home is too big or too small for your needs

We wish to ensure that households are living in homes that are an appropriate size for their needs. This also makes the best use of RHA's housing stock.

6.9.1 Overcrowding

Applicants will be deemed in housing need in this category if their current accommodation does not meet the standards. These standards are outlined in Appendix 5.

6.9.2 Under Occupation

Applicants will be deemed in housing need if they have more bedrooms than they require according to the standards. These standards are outlined in Appendix 5.

6.10 Home does not meet the tolerable standard

We want to ensure that people do not live in homes that are not suitable for them to occupy.

An applicant will be deemed in housing need if the applicant's current home does not meet the tolerable standard or has other significant issues with condition. The tolerable standard is defined in law and details are included at Appendix 6.

6.11 Social Reasons

An applicant will be deemed in housing need where they need to move for social reasons. This could be because they need to move to be closer to support services that they require, such as non-residential support for a chronic health condition. This could include physical and/or mental health conditions if use or continued use of the service has been recommended by relevant professionals as being necessary or beneficial to the applicant's health or other social care issue.

Housing need will be recognised if significant informal long-term support is needed, such as being closer to a person or social network that is helping someone manage their health condition. Housing need will be recognised if someone does not require regular formal support but would benefit from non-professional assistance. It would also include situations where the applicant will be providing support for a family member or friend, such as providing informal but regular care required to enable someone to live independently.

6.12 Two households joining together

If two households who are both currently tenants of RHA wish to give up their current homes to form one household in a different property the following approach will be taken.

When assessing the application, RHA will consider all members from both households as one household. The size of this new household will then be compared with the size of the larger of the two properties to see if it is large enough for the new household to move into. If the property is not large enough, housing need will be recognised under the overcrowding criteria. The household will also be assessed under other criteria and the application placed on the list where the applicants are most likely to be housed in the shortest timescale. As both households are RHA's tenants, the application will be placed in the transfer group.

6.13 Management Reasons

In exceptional circumstances, there may be households who do not meet any criteria for housing in any of these categories but in the opinion of RHA need to be rehoused urgently. An example of this would be where the applicant's current home requires emergency structural works. The allocation of housing will only be awarded following authorisation by a minimum of two members of the senior staff team of RHA.

6.14 Factors that are not taken into account

We will not take any account of the following when allocating houses:

- length of time applicants have resided in our area of operation (unless applying under the terms of the current homelessness legislation)
- any non-housing debts, such as Council Tax
- tenancy related debts, such as rent or service arrears, rechargeable repairs, which are less than 1/12th of annual amount payable, or which are no longer outstanding, or where a repayment plan has been arranged and kept by the applicant for at least three months;
- household debts for which the applicant/s are not liable
- the income of the applicant and their family (including welfare benefits).
- the age of the applicant, except in the allocation of houses which have been designed or substantially adapted for occupation by persons of a particular age group, such as retirement housing.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 removes the previous prohibition on taking ownership of property into account when allocating social housing. RHA will gather information from applicants to inform a future decision on this issue.

7. HOW HOMES ARE ALLOCATED

7.1 The Quota System

In order to further its aim of supporting sustainable and balanced communities RHA divides applicants into four groups and allocates properties to these groups.

- Direct Applications
- Homeless Persons Referral by Glasgow City Council
- Transfer Applicants
- Referrals from Other Agencies

We will publish information about the proportion of allocations we aim to make to each of the above groups on RHA's website.

7.2 Property Matching

When a property becomes available, it will be matched with the applicant in the relevant group and has requested a property of that type in that area.

7.3 Using discretion and sensitive lettings

In the interest of achieving balanced and sustainable communities and making best use of housing stock, the process of matching applicants to properties will require a level of discretion in order to:

- match people with appropriate properties – for example to ensure that physical mobility needs are met and adapted properties allocated appropriately. This will include mainstream properties that have been adapted to meet the needs of a previous tenant, for example through the adaption of the bathroom;
- house people in appropriate locations
- avoid potential clashes of lifestyle - based on analysis of the circumstances of individual applicants rather than generalisations;
- avoiding over concentrations of household type – for example avoiding high levels of child density or unduly high proportion of vulnerable people in one area, street or close;
- ensure the quotas are being achieved between the four lists – for example, discretion has to be exercised in deciding which list to allocate a vacancy from.

7.4 Verification of Application

All applicants will be contacted by RHA and visited prior to an offer of housing being made. The purpose is to verify the information submitted in the application and to provide any housing information and advice. If the applicant's circumstances do not match the information provided in the application, then the application will be reassessed. This may result in a change of the list the applicant is placed. If the applicant fails to make contact following a request, this may affect any offers made. Where it is not geographically possible to carry out a home visit a statement from the tenant's landlord will be obtained.

7.5 Making an Offer

When an appropriate match between an applicant and a property has been made, an offer letter will be sent to the applicant. This letter will set out the arrangements for the applicant to view the property, and will also include information regarding rent, service charges and housing benefit/universal credit. The applicant will be advised that they must respond to the offer within three working days. However, in order to ensure that the applicant is given the best opportunity to respond to the offer, RHA will also attempt to make contact with the applicant by other methods, such as the telephone, email or by text.

7.6 Accepting or Refusing an Offer

All applicants who have been offered a home will be given the opportunity to view the property accompanied by a member of RHA's staff. Once the property has been viewed by the applicant, they have 24 hours to inform RHA whether they wish to accept the offer. If accepted, the applicant will be formally signed up, the next working day, as a tenant and given appropriate advice and information.

If the offer is refused, the applicant will be advised to review and update their preferences in order that suitable offers can be made in the future.

RHA will make a maximum of two offers of accommodation to applicants on the basis of their current position on the housing List. Applicants will only be offered properties which match their stated preferences. RHA will endeavour to maximise choice so, whenever possible, an applicant will be made the offer of two void properties at the same time.

Where applicants have refused two offers of accommodation, whether made separately or simultaneously, they will be asked if they wish to reapply to the housing list. The applicant's effective date of application will then become the date when the applicant has confirmed that he/ she wishes to be readmitted on to the housing list.

8. REMOVING, DEFERRING OR SUSPENDING APPLICATIONS

8.1 Removing an Application

Applications can only be removed from the housing list under certain circumstances. These are:

- where the applicant has died, or
- has requested removal from the list, or
- fails to respond to the review of the housing list e.g. mail returned and no further contact details available.

Applications which are cancelled due to a housing list review can be reinstated as at the original application date if the applicant successfully appeals the cancellation within one month. Otherwise, a new RHA housing application would have to be completed.

8.2 Deferring an Application

An application may be deferred under certain circumstances. During the period of the deferral, the applicant will not receive offers of housing. An application may be deferred in the following circumstances:

- necessary support is not in place – with the consent of the applicant, the application may be deferred until such times as the support is available
- at the request of the applicant because they do not wish to move at this time but wish to remain on the housing list. The application will be reinstated when the applicant advises that they now wish to be considered for offers of housing.

8.3 Suspending an Application

RHA will use non-statutory suspensions.

Suspension from the housing list can only occur in certain circumstances. An applicant will not be offered accommodation while suspended, even if they demonstrate housing need. The decision to suspend will be taken by at least 3 officers and details of this will be recorded on the applicant's application form. The circumstances which may result in an application being suspended are:

- where there are significant, outstanding and unresolved tenancy-related debts and until such debts are either cleared, fall below 1/12th of the monthly rent charge or an agreement has been set up and adhered to for a period of at least 3 months
- where there is evidence of previous serious anti-social behaviour or harassment being perpetrated. Each case will be treated individually, and account will be taken of the severity of the behaviour, when it happened and any mitigating factors. Suspension under this category will be to a maximum of 3 years but there will not be a set time limit and applicants will be notified individually of time scales. Time scales will be reviewed in the event of a change of the applicant's circumstances
- where deliberately false or misleading information has been provided suspension will be for 6 months

- if applicants have deliberately worsened their housing conditions, suspension will be for no longer than 6 months. If the applicant's circumstances change during the period of suspension their suspension will be reviewed
- where an applicant has previously had their own secure accommodation and has lost it as a result of being evicted. Suspension under this category will be for a period of 3 years from the date of eviction. This will be dependent on evidence of a change in behaviour, such as a new tenancy report or no further anti-social misdemeanours.
- if the condition of a transfer applicant's current property breaches their tenancy agreement, the suspension will be in place until the breach has been remedied
- any violence or aggression towards staff will be dealt with according to the policies of RHA and may result in suspension to a maximum of 3 years.
- Where an applicant has previously had their own secure accommodation and has lost it as a result of the property being recovered by the landlord through abandonment procedures the application will be suspended for a period of 3 years from the date the former property was recovered.

8.4 Reviewing Suspensions

If an application has been suspended, the suspension will be reviewed on a monthly basis by RHA.

Every applicant who is suspended will receive a letter detailing why they have been suspended, the length of their suspension, the date the suspension will be reviewed and how they can appeal against the suspension. The letter will also set out any action the applicant can take to have the suspension removed before the review date.

9. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

9.1 Creating Balanced Communities

This policy has been developed to ensure that Reidvale's community is safe and sustainable, that those in housing need are given priority and applicants are given the opportunity to move to or within our community. We also wish to ensure that applicants have the best chance of success in their new home and are therefore housed appropriately.

RHA manage allocations to high risk offenders at a senior level and in consultation with relevant agencies such as the Police and Social Work Services. All offers of housing to high risk offenders will be dealt in line with MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) Protocols.

9.2 Supporting Independent Living

We are committed to providing accommodation which supports independent living and the integration of people with particular needs into the community. This could include people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health issues, dependency (such as drug and or alcohol) issues and vulnerable young or older people. In all cases we will work jointly with appropriate agencies and organisations to ensure that applicants receive appropriate support to sustain their tenancy.

RHA has a range of properties designed for people with particular needs. This includes:

- Retirement housing
- Housing for people with physical disabilities
- Housing with aids or adaptations

Applicants apply for all types of housing using RHA's application form and are prioritised according to this allocation policy.

9.3 Gathering Information on Support Needs

If the applicant indicates that accommodation with assistance is required, we will work with each individual to determine the availability of this support. This may also involve liaison with other agencies as appropriate. In particular, a social care assessment by Glasgow City Housing and Social Care Partnership will be required to establish need for and availability of support.

9.4 Housing Support

RHA works with a number of public and voluntary agencies to provide accommodation to households in need of support.

Although every effort will be made to work with other agencies to ensure that support is in place, applicants assessed as in need of support but without a support package may be deferred until such a time as the support is available.

10. CUSTOMER SERVICE

10.1 Confidentiality and Information Sharing

The confidentiality of information gathered as part of the allocations process is recognised, and all applicants will be informed clearly of the way in which the information provided will be used and of their right to inspect any record kept by RHA in relation to their application.

Applicant information may be shared between RHA and other agencies (such as the GCHSCP or the NHS) in order to ensure that the applicant's housing and housing support needs are assessed in line with this allocations policy. RHA may also make tenancy, financial, medical, legal and other enquiries deemed necessary to obtain confirmation from previous landlords, Social Work agencies, the Police or health professionals, in order to verify information provided by the applicant.

All applicants will be made aware of this at the point of application and asked to give their consent for this information to be shared or sought.

10.2 Service Standards

We aim to ensure that the allocations policy meets the needs of those seeking housing, and that all applicants are satisfied with the quality of service they receive throughout the application and allocation process. Reidvale Housing Association is committed to:

- Delivering our services in a professional and welcoming manner and treating our customers equally and with courtesy and respect
- Being efficient, effective and timely when dealing with housing applications and allocations
- Providing high quality information and advice
- Handling all information provided to us with due care
- Accommodating any special needs where possible, including by communicating and providing information in ways that meet our customers' needs.

11. MEASURING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE

We will undertake regular reviews of our performance to assess whether the stated objectives are being achieved and will produce an annual performance report which we will publish on the RHA's website. The Management Committee will be presented with quarterly performance reports on the allocations processes and an annual review of the outcomes of this policy including analysis of the demand from various sources for our stock and establish whether the policy is being effectively put into practice and establish whether the policy itself requires amendment. Our performance reporting will monitor our performance against the relevant outcomes and standards in the Scottish Social Housing Charter (as set out in Section 2 of this policy).

In particular, we will monitor whether our applicants consider:

- that they were treated fairly and with respect, received fair access to housing and housing services
- that we communicated well with them
- that we provided high quality information and advice that helped them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them and on their prospects of being made an offer of housing.

RHA will also produce and report on a range of performance information including time taken to process an application, average time to let and numbers of offers refused.

We will also consider the contribution RHA is making towards the prevention of homelessness and creation of sustainable tenancies.

12. APPEALS

If any applicant is unhappy regarding the outcome of their housing application they may appeal to the senior management team of RHA to request a review of their application.

13. FALSE INFORMATION

Should the Association discover that a tenancy has been granted on the basis of false information then the Association may commence legal action with a view to repossessing the tenancy.

14. STAFF TRAINING

Reidvale Housing Association will ensure that all staff who are required to undertake work in the allocation process receive appropriate and regular training.

Clear procedures and guidelines will be maintained to ensure consistent and equitable treatment of applicants seeking a tenancy with RHA.

15. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Reidvale Housing Association is an equal opportunities organisation and is committed to equality opportunity in line with the Equality Act (2010). We are committed to providing an environment of respect, understanding, encouraging diversity and eliminating discrimination. In developing this policy, we have considered the impact it could have on those within one or more of the nine protected characteristics groups set out in the Equality Act (2010). These are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

No person or group of persons applying for housing and housing services will be treated less favourably than any other persons or groups of persons because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

RHA will make this policy available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille or audio on request. Translation services for other languages will also be made available if required.

We have also considered the public-sector equality duty (PSED). The PSED requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy has been the subject of an equalities impact assessment.

16. COMPLAINTS

Although we are committed to providing high levels of service, we accept that there may be occasions where a service user may not be satisfied with the service received from the Association. We value all complaints and use this information to help us improve our service. Any service user, complying with the procedure, but remaining dissatisfied with any aspect of the service they have received have the right to submit a complaint to the Association in accordance with the Complaints Handling Procedure.

17. GDPR

Reidvale Housing Association will treat personal data in line with our obligations under the current General Data Protection Regulation and our Privacy Policy. Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in our Fair Processing Notice.

18. POLICY REVISION

The Association undertakes to carry out a comprehensive review of all aspects of this policy at least every three years. The review will take account of legislative changes, new policy guidance, best practice advice and the views of service users.

APPENDIX 1 – AREA OF OPERATION



REIDVALE HOUSING ASSOCIATION's boundaries are the south side of Duke Street (No.'s 290-502) as far back as Reidvale Street (No's 1-207) and from 10 Millerston Street to Bellgrove Street (No's 78-94).

APPENDIX 2 – KEY LEGISLATION

The Reidvale Housing Association allocation policy takes account of all relevant legislation, including:

- Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2006
- Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003
- Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 ("GDPR")
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995 as amended by Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended)

APPENDIX 3A – ELIGIBILITY FOR THE 'A' LIST

- CATEGORY 1: HOMELESS PERSONS AND PERSONS THREATENED WITH HOMELESSNESS AND WHO HAVE UNMET HOUSING NEEDS.**
- CATEGORY 2: UNSATISFACTORY HOUSING & HAVE UNMET HOUSING NEEDS**
- CATEGORY 3: UNDEROCCUPATION**
- CATEGORY 4: MEDICAL**
- CATEGORY 5: ASPIRATIONAL**

An applicant's position on the list will be determined by the length of time they have been on the list.

CATEGORY 1: HOMELESS (Homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs.

a. Statutory Homeless

Applicants who are homeless under the terms of the current Housing Act. Applicants must have a priority need and should not have made themselves "intentionally" homeless.

b. No Security of Tenure

e.g. Lodgers, caravan dwellers or those living in tied accommodation.

c. Insecure Tenancy

e.g. Sub-tenants, tenants of private landlords, those in temporary furnished accommodation.

CATEGORY 2: UNSATISFACTORY HOUSING CONDITIONS & HAVE UNMET HOUSING NEEDS

a. Condition of Property

Where the applicants' accommodation is below tolerable standard;

Or in need of significant repair and improvement;

Or property which requires upgrading.

b. Overcrowding

Applicants whose present accommodation is considered to be overcrowded as set out in Section 6 of this policy.

c. Lacking Amenities

i.e. A fixed bath or shower, a piped supply of hot water, an inside w.c. for the exclusive use of the applicant, adequate cooking facilities, central heating.

d. Sharing Amenities

i.e. Applicants who do not have their own home and who are sharing the following;

Bath
Shower
W.C
Living area
Kitchen area

e. Social Factors

i.e. Applicants who have a serious social problem such as racial harassment or domestic abuse which can only be resolved by moving to alternative accommodation.

CATEGORY 3: UNDEROCCUPATION

Underoccupying

Applicants whose present accommodation is considered to be underoccupied as set out in Section 6 of this policy

CATEGORY 4: MEDICAL

Where the present accommodation is worsening an applicant's medical condition.

CATEGORY 5: ASPIRATIONAL

Where applicants aspire to obtain a Reidvale Housing Association tenancy but do not qualify for access to any of the other lists. This list represents the lowest form of priority within the housing list system.

APPENDIX 3B – ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ‘B’ LIST

Access to this list is open to applicants who possess economic or social characteristics which are under represented within the community.

Applicants will be accepted on to this list on the basis of the eligibility criteria detailed below. An applicant's position on the list will be determined by the length of time they have been on the list.

Employment

Applicants must have been working for at least the previous year in part time or full time paid employment or where it can be demonstrated that moving to Reidvale would make it easier for the applicant to take up/remain in employment.

Socio-Economic Imbalances Within the Area

Ongoing monitoring of this section of our community is required to sustain a balanced community.

APPENDIX 3C – ELIGIBILITY FOR THE ‘C’ LIST

Access to this list is open to applicants who require to move to the Reidvale area to receive or provide support from a relative. Applications will also be considered from those who are making a positive contribution to the community i.e. regular/voluntary community activity or are in full /part time education.

Applicants will be accepted on to this list on the basis of eligibility criteria detailed below. An applicant's position on the list will be determined by the length of time they have been on the list.

1. Applicants Residing c/o Reidvale Resident

Applicants who are presently residing c/o Reidvale resident, with the written consent of the Association where appropriate and are seeking their own flat.

2. Family Support

Where it can be demonstrated that it would be beneficial for an applicant to move to Reidvale to enable the applicant to receive support from, or provide support to, a relative in Reidvale. Access will usually be restricted to immediate family relations - parent, child and brother/sister.

It is only possible for a Reidvale resident to nominate one family member under this criteria.

In seeking to create and sustain social, community and family networks the Association will adopt a broad interpretation of social support.

3. Applicants Involved in Local Voluntary/Community Activity

Applicants who provide or organize some form of regular voluntary/community activity for at least the previous year eg. running youth club, etc.

Each case will be decided on its own merits.

4. Further Full / Part Time Education

Where it can be demonstrated that moving to Reidvale would make it easier for the applicant to take up/remain in a course of full or part time further education.

5. Relationship Breakdown

The Association recognises that relationships breakdown can be a major cause of homelessness.

We will respond sympathetically to requests from parties who are subject to any relationship breakdown.

Applicants must have resided within the property for a minimum period of 1 year.

An applicant's position on the list will be determined by the length of time they have been on the list.

APPENDIX 4 – REFERRAL AGENCIES

The Association accepts referrals from the following organisations;

Key Housing Association
Social Work Services
Young Persons Protocol
Womens Aid

APPENDIX 5 – ROOM STANDARD AND SPACE STANDARD

Part VII of the 1987 Act defines "overcrowding". When the number of people sleeping in a house breaches the room standard or the space standard (both of which are set out below) a house is overcrowded.

Under the room standard, if the number of people sleeping in the house and the number of rooms available as sleeping accommodation (that is rooms normally used in the locality as a bedroom or living room) mean that two people of the opposite sex have to sleep in the same room then the accommodation will be overcrowded unless:

- the two people are living together as husband and wife; or
- one or both of them is under 10 years old.

The space standard determines the number of people who are permitted to sleep in a home based on:

- the number of rooms available as sleeping accommodation. Rooms that are counted are rooms normally used in the locality as a bedroom or living room;
- the size of those rooms. Rooms under 50 square feet (4.645m²) are ignored;
- the ages of people who live there. Children under 1 year old are not counted and children over 1 and under 10 count as a half.

You can calculate the permitted number of people in a property by looking at both of the tables below. Table 1 tells you how many people can sleep in the house according to the number of rooms. Table 2 tells you how many people can sleep in each room according to the size of the room and the total for each room, when added together, tells you how many people can sleep in the house. You need to look at both tables and the smaller of the two numbers produced is the permitted number of people that may live in that house. If the permitted number is exceeded, the house is overcrowded.

Table 1

Number of rooms available for sleeping	Number of people who can sleep in the property
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7½
5 or more	2 for each room

Table 2

Floor area of room	Number of persons who can sleep there
110 sq ft or more (10.219m ²)	2
90 sq ft (8.361m ²) or more but less than 110 sq ft	1½
70 sq ft (6.503m ²) or more but less than 90 sq ft	1
50 sq ft (4.645m ²) or more but less than 70 sq ft	½

APPENDIX 6 – TOLERABLE STANDARD

The Tolerable Standard is as defined by section 86 of the 1987 Act and amended by section 102 of the 2001 Act and section 11 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006.

A house meets the tolerable standard if it:

- is structurally stable;
- is substantially free from rising or penetrating damp;
- has satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and for heating;
- has satisfactory thermal insulation;
- has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water available within the house;
- has a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water within the house;
- has a water closet or waterless closet available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house and suitably located within the house;
- has a fixed bath or shower and a wash-hand basin, each provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water and suitably located within the house;
- has an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water;
- in the case of a house having a supply of electricity, complies with the relevant requirements in relation to the electrical installation for the purposes of that supply;
- has satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food within the house; and
- has satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings.
- has satisfactory equipment installed for detecting, and for giving warning of, fire or suspected fire;
- has satisfactory equipment installed for detecting, and for giving warning of, carbon monoxide present in a concentration that is hazardous to health.