



**TRUST HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED**

<b><u>Title of Policy:</u></b>	<b>HOUSING ALLOCATIONS, ISLE OF ARRAN HOMES</b>
<b><u>Date of Adoption or Last Review:</u></b>	<b>1 JULY 2005</b>
<b><u>Lead Officer:</u></b>	<b>MANAGER - IOAH</b>
<b><u>Date of Review:</u></b>	<b>October 2008</b>
<b><u>Performance Standard:</u></b>	<b>AS1.1: We ensure that people have fair and open access to our housing list and assessment process. We work with others to maximise and simplify access routes into our housing.</b> <b>AS1.2: We let houses in a way that gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need; makes best use of available stock; maximises choice; and helps to sustain communities.</b>

# Isle of Arran Homes

## Housing Allocation Policy Procedure

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## **1 INTRODUCTION - ISLE OF ARRAN HOMES**

- 1.1 Isle of Arran Homes (IOAH) was formed in 2000 as an initiative of Trust Housing Association Limited (formerly Kirk Care HA Ltd). It is an integral part of Trust Housing Association and not a separate legal identity. It is managed by a local committee.
- 1.2 Trust is a national housing association and has stock located throughout Scotland. The majority of Trust's accommodation is rented; it is mainly provided for older people, although on Arran the greatest number of houses is general needs, together with a smaller number of amenity, sheltered and shared ownership properties.
- 1.3 This policy applies solely to Isle of Arran Homes, which is a separate initiative of Trust Housing Association Limited.

## **2 OBJECTIVES OF THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

- 2.1 IOAH's Allocations Policy has the following objectives:
- To ensure its general needs houses are allocated on the basis of housing need.
  - To ensure its housing for older people is allocated on the basis of both housing support need and housing need, with the emphasis being on housing support need.
  - To be fair and consistent in making allocations.
  - To make best use of the housing stock and ensure not only that an applicant's needs be met appropriately, but that their needs are matched to the accommodation and housing support services available.
- 2.2 In devising the policy, IOAH has taken into account the requirement to comply with:
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (in particular sections: 5 & 6 – accommodation duties of Registered Social Landlords; 9 – access to housing lists; & 10 – allocation of housing).
  - Communities Scotland Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions – Activity Functions (*November 2006*)
  - SFHA Raising Standards – Chapter 1 - Allocations

## **3 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 3.1 IOAH aims to comply with the following legislation in terms of equal opportunities:

- Race Relations Act 1976
  - Sex Discrimination Act 1975
  - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
  - The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Part 7, section 106).
- 3.2 IOAH aims to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for all applicants, irrespective of race, colour, culture, ethnic or national origin, religion, class, gender, disability, mental health, age, sexual orientation, family circumstances or marital status.

#### **4 CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 4.1 In compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, all information provided by an applicant will be treated as strictly confidential. It will be used for the purpose of assessing their application for housing.
- 4.2 IOAH may require to share the information with other agencies, e.g. the Council, NHS Providers, for the purposes of determining an applicant's housing support needs; or where IOAH is participating in a Common Housing Register scheme when applicants' details will be held centrally by the group responsible for administering the scheme, and can be accessed by all other housing organisations taking part.
- 4.3 Applicants have the right to access the information held about them by IOAH

#### **5 TYPES OF HOUSING**

- 5.1 The types of housing provided by IOAH can be broadly divided into two main categories: general needs housing; and housing for older people. In addition to these main categories, IOAH has some Shared Ownership properties.
- 5.2 General Needs Housing is designed for people with no special support requirements.
- 5.3 Housing for Older People is designed to meet the needs of older people, providing varying levels of housing support depending on the accommodation type:
- **Amenity Housing** – has no on-site staff or communal facilities. Housing support is provided through an emergency alarm system with the exception of the former North Ayrshire Council amenity houses.
  - **Sheltered Housing** – has communal facilities and a Co-ordinator/Assistant Co-ordinator who provides on-site housing support, with an emergency alarm system for off duty hours.

#### 5.4 **Shared Ownership:**

- Where the sharing owner purchases an agreed share of the property, and rents the remainder.
- For access to Shared Ownership properties, please refer to Trust's/IOAH Shared Ownership Policy and explanatory guidance booklet.

5.5 Allocations for all IOAH properties described in 5.2 and 5.3 are made according to this policy. As per section 5.4, the policy does **not** apply to Shared Ownership or Shared Equity Housing (Homestake).

5.6 General Needs Housing will be allocated solely according to housing need. An applicant's housing need will be determined by a points system which addresses various aspects of housing need (see section 7 – Assessment, and Appendix I – The Points System).

5.7 In the case of Housing for Older People, as well as housing need, the Association aims to allocate to applicants who require, as a minimum, the level of housing support which is provided by the Association in the various accommodation types. Again this will be determined by a points system (detailed in Appendix I).

## 6 **ACCESS TO HOUSING LIST**

6.1 Under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, anyone over the age of 16 years is free to apply for any IOAH property and be added to the housing list.

6.2 With reference to Section 10 of the Act regarding specially designed housing, the Association's policy normally is to allocate its Housing for Older People to applicants aged 60 years and over. In exceptional circumstances, younger applicants with similar identified housing support needs, may also be allocated this type of property.

6.3 Adapted/Wheelchair Accommodation – the Association will always seek to allocate such properties to applicants with an identified requirement for this type of accommodation.

6.4 There is no limit to the number of settlement areas for which someone can apply. Applicants are asked to indicate their preferred areas of choice on their application form. Where an applicant's needs cannot be met by one or more of their preferred choices (e.g., because of the physical characteristics of the properties), or where an applicant does not have the required housing support needs for a particular development, they will be advised of alternative settlement areas more appropriate to their needs.

6.5 In accordance with Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, IOAH has an agreed Protocol for homeless person referrals with North Ayrshire Council in whose area it operates.

## 6.6 **Nominations arrangements:**

Isle of Arran Homes is the sole provider of social rented housing on the Isle of Arran. North Ayrshire Council no longer has rented housing stock on the island but maintains a waiting list for applicants requesting housing on Arran. Arrangements have been entered into by written agreement with North Ayrshire Council whereby for every second vacancy which occurs IOAH will invite the Council to nominate from its own housing list. Applicants are then assessed according to IOAH policy.

Applicants nominated by the Council under the terms of the nomination agreement shall normally be accepted provided that they are assessed as having a housing need in terms of the allocation policy. This assessment will be carried out by means of a home visit by a member of the Association's staff. The Association's guidelines on medical conditions shall apply equally to nominated applicants.

The Association reserves the right to refuse any applicant nominated by the Council. However it shall only do so in exceptional cases, with good reason and in accordance with legislation. The Association shall provide its reason(s) for any refusal to the Council. Unsuccessful local authority nominees visited by the Association's staff will be advised of the outcome of the nomination.

6.7 In accordance with Section 8 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, the Association supports the development of a National Common Housing register for older people. The Association also aims to be involved in other initiatives with regards to Common Housing Registers, where appropriate, with the purpose of improving access to housing. Allocations are, however, still made according to the Association's policy.

6.8 Where an applicant's need for rehousing is being considered on grounds of overcrowding the Association shall take account of the number and size of bedrooms which the applicant has sole use of, that is bedrooms which the applicant does not have to share with anyone else who is not part of the application.

The Association considers that a double bedroom can be occupied by two people who are members of the same household only under the following circumstances:

- Couples aged 16 years and over
- Two children, each of a different sex, under the age of 6 years
- Two people of the same sex under the age of 16 years where there is an age difference of 4 years or less.

## 6.9 **HM Forces Applicants.**

Applications for rehousing will be accepted from people leaving the Armed Forces. Applications from ex-service personnel will be given fair and

sympathetic consideration but we will not afford them priority over other applicants with a similar level of need.

No residential qualification will be imposed which put Service personnel and/or former spouses/civil partners who have to vacate Military provided property, at a disadvantage compared with other applicants; and those personnel returning after several years absence to a locality in which they lived before joining the Forces have a special claim to no less sympathetic consideration than any other application.

Services personnel will be encouraged to provide the Association with as much notice of the intended date of retiral as possible and in normal circumstances this should be no less than six months. In the event of the applicant's engagement being terminated earlier than the planned release date i.e. medical discharge/injury/disability etc similar sympathetic consideration will be given to the application.

Applications from a spouse/civil partner of ex service personnel who have been killed in action or dies before the date of discharge will also receive special consideration. This will be dealt with under Management Allocations part of the Allocation Policy.

#### **6.10 Asylum Seekers**

The Immigration & Asylum Act 1999 (applicable from 2000) prevents local authorities from allocating a house to a person "subject to immigration control". In practice, housing for asylum seekers is arranged centrally by the National Asylum Support Agency via contracts with housing providers. If asylum seekers are granted leave to remain, they will become eligible for a tenancy

Applications from asylum seekers will be accepted onto the waiting list at any time. The application will be suspended until a decision on the asylum application has been confirmed unless the applicant can demonstrate that they have a source of income that would allow them to sustain a tenancy. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the evidence to the Association.

#### **6.11 Migrant Workers with no "Recourse to Public Funds"**

Migrant workers from the "new" European states are eligible to apply for housing with the Association and will be accepted onto the waiting list. They may not, however be entitled to Housing Benefit during the first 12 months stay in the UK. The Association will ensure that every applicant is able to sustain a tenancy. Migrant workers will therefore have to demonstrate that they have a visible means of support to enable them to sustain a tenancy.

The Association will ensure that applications in this group are aware of the responsibility to pay rent etc and that they may not be entitled to benefit. The Association will suspend any application where the applicant is unable to demonstrate a visible means of support.

#### **6.12 Notifying Applicants of a Suspension**

We will write to any applicant that has been suspended from the waiting list. The letter will detail:

- The reason for the suspension
- The length of the suspension
- How they can appeal against the suspension.

#### 6.13 **Removal of an Applicant from the Waiting List**

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

- The applicant has requested in writing 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.

## 7 **ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The Association's housing is allocated on the basis of housing need and, in the case of Housing for Older People, housing support need. A points system is the tool used to assess and prioritise an applicant's need (See Appendix I).

7.2 The length of time an applicant has been on the list is not taken into account.

7.3 All applicants must complete IOAH's standard housing application form. As well as gathering basic applicant and household details, the form enables an applicant's need for housing to be assessed under the following headings:

- Tenure
- Sharing Facilities
- Overcrowding/Under Occupation
- Condition of Property
- Social Factors
- Health & Mobility Factors (separate points apply in the case of general needs applicants only. Please refer to points scheme in Appendix 1)
- Housing Support Needs (See 7.7 for details)

7.4 Points are allocated in the above categories according to the information provided in the housing application form. The total number of points awarded will be in accordance with the points system (see Appendix I for details).

7.5 Housing need points will only be awarded where the Association can alleviate or improve an applicant's circumstances. e.g. an applicant living in a three bedroom property but requiring four bedrooms would not be awarded overcrowding points, because the Association can only provide the same size of accommodation and, therefore, would not be improving upon the applicant's current circumstances.

#### 7.6 **Medical Needs**

The Allocation Policy takes account of an applicant's health and mobility needs and points are awarded to special needs applicants as stated within Appendix 1 – The Points System. In the case of general needs applicants, they are required to submit a separate confidential medical application for an independent medical assessment to be carried out by the Community Medical Officer. The Medical Officer will prioritise the applicant's medical needs by awarding a range of points. The Medical Officer will also recommend the type of accommodation most suitable to the applicant's needs e.g. ground floor, sheltered etc. Applicants who choose to disregard the type of accommodation recommended by the Medical Officer will not receive the points.

### 7.7 Housing Support Needs

- In the case of Housing for Older People, the most important factor is housing support need. In normal circumstances, applicants must be assessed as requiring, as a minimum, the level of housing support which is provided by the Association, and have been awarded points in the Housing Support Needs category to reflect this. For this reason, the points are weighted towards support, with 68% of the total available points being allocated for housing support need.
- Applicants assessed as having very high housing support needs may only be offered housing where an appropriate support/care package, deemed necessary to meet these needs and enable an applicant to sustain a tenancy, is put in place. In such cases, with the applicants' consent, the Association will liaise with other appropriate agencies, such as the local Social Work Department, to determine how and by whom these needs will be met.
- If the Association considers that an appropriate level of housing support is **not** available, then a decision may be taken not to actively consider the application. The applicant would be advised of any such decision and the reasons for it. The applicant would have the right to appeal against such a decision (see Section 10 – Appealing a Decision)

7.8 **Home Assessments:** - the purpose of the home assessment is to verify points which have been awarded and to ensure no information pertinent to an application has been omitted. Home assessments will be carried out to:

- Applicants placed in the top 10 of the housing list for each area.
- All applicants being considered for a vacancy, as no offer of accommodation will be made without one.
- Where a home assessment is more than one year old, if the applicant is still in the top 10 of the housing list, or is being considered for a vacancy, then an updated assessment will be carried out. This is to ensure the information is still accurate and to check for any changes in circumstances, which may be relevant to an application.

- The Association recognises that additional information may be required in relation to applicants suffering from dementia, to determine that their support needs can be met and a tenancy sustained. Such applications will be processed in line with the Association's Procedure: "Allocations: Applicants with Dementia, Evaluation Checklist".
- 7.9 Tenancy references from current/previous landlords will be sought where, in the Association's judgment, it is appropriate to do so. The purpose of requesting a tenancy reference would be to establish whether there have been any breaches of a current or previous tenancy which may affect the Association's assessment of the application. Character references will not be sought under any circumstances.
- 7.10 Applicants who are applying for housing accommodation because they are unable to meet mortgage or private renting costs will be required to provide proof of their financial circumstances so that the issue of affordability of their current accommodation may be assessed.
- 7.11 **Anti-Social Behaviour:** - applications from people who have been previously evicted for anti-social behaviour, whose current or previous landlord has indicated (through references) persistent or serious breaches of the tenancy in the relatively recent past, or where an Anti Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) may have been granted within the last 3 years, will be assessed individually.
- The Association may decide that no offers should be made to an applicant for a period of one year, having taken account of the nature, frequency and duration of the conduct; the effect the conduct is/was having on other people; and the date of the last recorded incident.
  - After this period the situation will be reviewed and, assuming there have been no records of any further similar incidents, the applicant can be considered for any suitable properties which may arise.
  - Where there has been further anti-social conduct during this time, the suspension of offers will continue for another one year period and reviewed again after this time.
  - Any applicant who falls into these categories will be given a full written explanation of the decision and will be advised of their right to appeal against it.
- 7.12 **Applications from Prisoners** – the Association will assess applications from prisoners in accordance with this Allocations Policy and will co-operate with prison and support staff to ensure the required information is available.
- 7.13 **Applicants who are Convicted Sex Offenders** - the Association will assess applications from convicted sex offenders in line with its Policy: "Housing of Sex Offenders".
- 7.14 In accordance with the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, **no** account will be taken of the following factors:

- Length of time that an applicant has resided in the area
- Any outstanding liability for a house of which the applicant was not the tenant
- Any rent or other arrears accrued by the applicant on a previous tenancy which are no longer outstanding
- Any rent or other arrears which are outstanding but are less than one month's rent and service charges
- Any rent or other arrears which are outstanding but where the applicant:
  - has agreed an arrangement with the landlord for payment of the sum outstanding
  - has made payments in accordance with that arrangement for at least 3 months
  - is continuing to make such payments
- Any outstanding debts (including Council Tax arrears) of the applicant, or of anyone who will reside with the applicant, which do not relate to the tenancy of a house
- The age of the applicant, provided that the applicant is 16 years or over (see section 6.2 regarding access to housing designed for older people).
- The income of the applicant and their family
- Any history of home ownership of the applicant or any member of the applicant's family

7.15 **Residency** - applicants are free to apply for housing in any area; they will not be excluded through not being resident in an area or having no connection to an area. Points can however be awarded where an applicant: -

- Is employed, or has been offered employment in a particular area
- Wishes to move into a particular area to give or receive support
- Wishes to move into a particular area because of harassment
- Wishes to move into a particular area because he or she runs the risk of domestic violence

7.16 Applicants who have worsened their housing circumstances without good reason, e.g. by giving up a secure tenancy and moving into insecure accommodation immediately prior to applying for housing, will be admitted to the list, but will have their application suspended for a period of up to twelve months from the date upon which their previous tenancy or occupation of a

property was terminated. An exception to this rule may apply where the applicant has obtained secure employment on the island.

If a tenancy is granted and subsequently, information comes to light that a false declaration has been made by the applicant, legal action may be taken which could result in the applicant losing their new tenancy.

- 7.17 All applications will be acknowledged in writing within one week of receipt of the form. Within four weeks from acknowledgement of their application, and, where applicable, from receipt of all further relevant information, all applicants will be pointed according to the policy; placed on the relevant housing list(s); and will receive written confirmation of their points total.
- 7.18 All applicants on the list will be contacted annually to verify whether they wish to remain on the housing list. This also provides the opportunity to check for any changes in an applicant's circumstances which may affect their application. This letter offers an applicant the opportunity to advise IOAH of any change in circumstances.
- 7.19 Being placed on the Association's housing list provides no guarantee that an offer of accommodation will be made to an applicant.

## **8 ALLOCATION**

8.1 When a vacancy arises in a settlement area, it will normally be offered to the applicant with the highest points who has indicated a preference for that area, subject to the following: -

- a home assessment has been carried out within the last year.
- the vacant property is suitable for the applicant in terms of size. The occupancy standard to be adopted is:
  - ❖ 1 bedroom for each single applicant
  - ❖ 1 bedroom for each couple (living as husband and wife, including same sex couples)
  - ❖ 1 bedroom for every other person aged 10 years or over
  - ❖ 1 bedroom for each pair of children under 10 years
  - ❖ 1 bedroom for each remaining child under 10 years.

(Where an applicant's existing accommodation does not meet these standards, points will be awarded for overcrowding, in accordance with the points scheme in Appendix 1.)

- the vacant property is suitable for the applicant in terms of accommodation type and the facilities/housing support provided

8.2 Where the highest points are shared by two or more applicants, the following factors may be taken into account:

- In the case of General Needs Housing - the number of points awarded to each applicant in the five statutory categories noted in Section 10 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, for which landlords must give a reasonable degree of priority, i.e. applicants who:
  - i. are occupying accommodation which does not meet the tolerable standard
  - ii. are occupying overcrowded accommodation
  - iii. have large families
  - iv. are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
  - v. are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- In the case of Housing for Older People - the applicant with the greatest housing support needs.
- The applicant to whose needs the vacant property is most particularly suited, as assessed by the Association.

8.3 An applicant's choices will, as far as possible, be taken into account. An applicant will be advised however, if they are restricting their options by their choices (e.g. in the case of Housing for Older People, only being willing to consider two bed-roomed properties. These properties are of limited availability in this house type, and priority would be given to applicants with a need for this apartment size). The Association can give no guarantee that an applicant will be offered their preferred choice of accommodation.

#### 8.4 **Transfers:**

- Association tenants may apply at any time to transfer to another property, either within their own or in another settlement area.
- There is no limit to the number of internal transfers which can be granted, however requests to transfer to a property in another development will be granted on a quota system of one vacancy in ten, or one per year, whichever is less. A tenant applying to transfer to another development must satisfy the needs criteria for that particular development.
- Transfers to larger properties normally will only be approved when the tenant's current accommodation is overcrowded.
- If there are no applicants on the list requiring the larger sized accommodation, then a transfer request on aspiration grounds may be considered.
- A tenant requesting a transfer to another property, of the size they require, in the same settlement area will normally be given priority over applicants on the list. An exception to this principle would be made where the highest pointed applicant on the list had a greater need for that particular vacant property and this need would not be met equally by the vacancy resulting from the internal

transfer. For this reason, the highest pointed application on the list must be reviewed prior to an internal transfer being granted.

- Similarly, a tenant requesting a transfer to a property, of the size they require, in another settlement area will normally be given priority over applicants on the list for that area, working within the quota arrangements noted previously. An exception to this principle would be made where the highest pointed applicant on that list had an urgent need to be housed at that time and in the Association's opinion this should not be delayed until the next vacancy. For this reason, the highest pointed application on the list must be reviewed prior to an external transfer being granted.
- Where there is more than one tenant requesting a transfer to a particular property, the transfer will normally be granted to the tenant who in the Association's opinion is in greatest need of the transfer, or whose needs the vacant property best fulfils.
- Tenants should be made aware of the following conditions before a transfer will be approved: -
  - Any rent arrears will be treated in the same way as external applicants, detailed in Section 7.14;
  - The decorative condition and cleanliness of their existing property must be acceptable to the Association and allow it to be relet without redecoration costs to the Association. Where this is not the case, tenants may be asked to either redecorate, partly or fully, or to agree to pay a sum towards redecoration costs;
  - The existing property must be left in a clean and tidy condition, clear of any furniture, personal effects, floor coverings, etc.

Any garden attached with the tenant's house must be kept in a cultivated condition and the grass cut regularly and well maintained.

**8.5 Mutual Exchanges:** - IOAH will consider requests for mutual exchanges from existing tenants who wish to exchange properties with:

- a) another tenant of the Association
- b) a tenant of a local Council
- c) a tenant of another housing association

The following conditions must be satisfied before a mutual exchange will be granted:

- Where applicable, both landlords must be agreeable to the exchange.
- Both parties must have lived in their present accommodation for at least 12 months prior to the application.

- Both tenancies must, in the opinion of the Association, have been conducted in a satisfactory manner.
- Any rent arrears will be treated in the same way as external applicants, detailed in Section 7.13.
- Applicants applying to exchange into an Association property must have a suitable family composition (i.e. the exchange must not lead to overcrowding or under occupation).
- Applicants applying to exchange into an Association property must meet the needs criteria for that property.
- Both parties must intend to occupy the accommodation on a permanent basis. If it comes to light that either or both parties requesting a mutual exchange offer a financial inducement to the other to exchange their home, action will be taken to cancel the mutual exchange and if necessary take legal action to rescind any new tenancy created.
- Any repairs required to an Association property, which in the Association's opinion have been caused by a Trust/IOAH tenant's negligence, will be instructed but rechargeable to the outgoing tenant. The account must be paid in advance of the exchange taking place.

It should be noted that Trust will not be responsible for any redecoration; therefore an incoming tenant must be satisfied as to the decorative condition of the property they hope to occupy.

**8.6 Local Letting Plans** - From time to time, in order to meet a specific objective, IOAH, in partnership with other bodies, may use different criteria for the allocation of properties from those described in the points system (Appendix I). A local letting initiative may be established in consultation with North Ayrshire Council to ensure the best use of the available housing stock and to use the allocation process to assist in the creation and maintenance of balanced stable communities. Sometimes, this may involve giving priority to people who are involved in a particular initiative (e.g., hospital discharge, accommodation for vulnerable groups, locally based employment etc). Local lettings initiatives shall be developed where the Association is convinced that specific targeted action is required to try to achieve balance and stability in particular communities or to achieve the aims of a specific development. Prior to the introduction of a local lettings plan, a report shall be submitted to IOAH Committee for its consideration and approval.

**8.7 Management Allocations** - discretion is reserved to make an allocation to an applicant who does not have the highest number of points where, in the opinion of the Association, the circumstances are sufficiently unusual/urgent to warrant this. Such a decision would be taken by IOAH Manager in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of IOAH and the facts leading to the allocation would be fully documented. This discretion is intended only for infrequent use and the circumstances must be reported to the next meeting of Isle of Arran Homes Sub Committee following the allocation.

## 8.8 Connection with IOAH/Trust Housing Association

- Where the Association is proposing to offer a tenancy, in accordance with the allocations policy, to a member of the Committee of Isle of Arran Homes or a Trust/IOAH employee, or to a member of their immediate family<sup>1</sup>, this must be jointly approved by the Chair and Vice Chair of Isle of Arran Homes Sub Committee, or another Committee Member in their absence. The decision must be reported to the next meeting of IOAH Sub Committee. Records of all such allocations will be entered in the appropriate register held by the Association.
- A Trust/IOAH employee who is required to reside in tied accommodation can apply to the Association to be housed after retirement or cessation of employment for any other reason. Such an application will be considered in accordance with this policy, and advice and assistance in obtaining accommodation from other sources will also be offered to the employee. Where a co-ordinator retires or resigns from their position and applies to be housed by Trust/IOAH, it is the Association's preference that they do not apply for the same development in which they were employed.

## 8.9 Refusals

- No penalty will normally be imposed by the Association for refusals of offers where an applicant has clear grounds for doing so.
- The Association will have regard to previous grounds for refusal - e.g. where an applicant has specified that they will not consider a particular area; a particular floor level; etc. - when considering any future offers of accommodation.
- Where an applicant is found to be consistently refusing offers of properties, which the Association considers as matching both the applicant's needs and choices, then the applicant will be contacted to discuss their application.
- If, after such discussions, an applicant continues to refuse offers of suitable property without what the Association considers to be valid reasons, then their application will remain on the list, but no further offers will be made to them for a period of one year. The applicant will be informed of this decision and the reasons for it in writing. Advice will also be provided on what action could be taken by the applicant to end the suspension of offers; and on their right to appeal against the decision. After this period, the applicant can be reconsidered for any suitable properties which may arise.
- Where an applicant is on the list, but is not ready for or actively seeking a move, then they will be encouraged to withdraw their application and to reapply when they are ready to be housed. Given that no account is taken of, nor priority awarded for, the length of time an applicant has been on a list, this would not disadvantage their application.

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<sup>1</sup> 'immediate family' refers to a partner; parent; child; or sibling.

## **9 FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION**

- 9.1 Applicants must complete a declaration on the application form confirming that all of the information they have provided is correct. If any of the information is proved to be false or misleading, or relevant information has been withheld, then the Association will remove the appropriate points, and the application may be suspended for up to one year.
- 9.2 If the Association becomes aware that a property has been offered on the basis of false or misleading information, then the offer may be withdrawn.
- 9.3 If the Association becomes aware that a property has been allocated on the basis of false or misleading information, action may be taken to terminate the tenancy and recover possession of the property.

## **10 APPEALING A DECISION**

- 10.1 Anyone enquiring about or applying to the Association for housing is entitled to appeal against any decision taken regarding their enquiry or application. Appeals should be made in the first instance to the Manager of IOAH.
- 10.2 If an applicant is still dissatisfied after this stage, then they have the right to take their appeal further following the Association's complaints policy and procedure, which is available on request.
- 10.3 Where a complaint remains unresolved, then the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman can be contacted at 4 Melville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NS. Tel: 0870 011 5378. E-mail: [enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk)

## **11 INFORMATION & ADVICE**

- 11.1 The Association aims to ensure that its allocations policy is strongly supported by information and advice. This will enable all applicants to have access to informed decision making and should ensure the transparency of the policy operation.
- 11.2 The availability of IOAH/Trust's housing and services will be publicised as widely as possible to ensure it is open to the widest possible group of potential applicants.
- 11.3 Similarly, application forms and information leaflets will be made widely available to encourage and facilitate applications from as extensive a group as possible.
- 11.4 Means of promoting the Association's housing and allocations policy include:
- producing information leaflets and application forms in a variety of languages appropriate to the communities within which the Association operates;
  - providing access to interpreter services for applicants whose first language is not English, or for applicants with hearing impairment;

- posters/leaflets in community facilities (e.g. libraries, health centres) and shops;
- open days;
- newspaper advertisements;
- provide information on relevant internet websites.

11.5 The Association will ensure that relevant agencies are aware of the housing and services it provides and how they can be accessed. Application packs and copies of the allocations policy will be provided to:

- Councils in its areas of operation.
- Social Work Departments in its areas of operation.
- Local advice centres.
- Health centres.
- Other appropriate agencies.

## **12 MONITORING THE POLICY**

12.1 Association staff has the task of ensuring that allocations are made in accordance with the allocations policy. Performance will be monitored and reports produced on: -

- applications received
- numbers of applicants on a list
- allocations made
- nominations and Section 5 Referrals
- void times
- any management allocations
- ethnic mix of applicants and tenants

## **13 REVIEWING THE POLICY**

13.1 IOAH will review the Allocation Policy every three years so that we can determine the effectiveness and assess whether any changes are required. Feedback and comment from individuals and organisations on the operation of the Allocations Policy will be taken into account during the policy review.

13.2 In accordance with its Tenant Participation Strategy, as well as staff members, the Association will involve tenants and tenant groups in any review.

## **14 CONSULTATION**

14.1 A process of consultation with Trust tenants has been undertaken in the developing of this policy. In order to gauge as much opinion as possible a wider consultation process was undertaken in the review of the allocation policy. Comments were invited from Arran Community Council, Arran Council for Voluntary Service and HIFAR (Housing Initiative for Arran Residents).

## APPENDIX 1

### THE POINTS SYTEM

**PLEASE NOTE: POINTS ARE ONLY AWARDED WHERE THE ASSOCIATION CAN ALLEVIATE OR IMPROVE AN APPLICANT'S SITUATION.**

*(Please note that the term "applicant" refers to the applicant and/or anyone to be housed with him/her.)*

<b>A <u>Tenure</u></b>	<b><u>Points</u></b>
• Statutorily Homeless - (Where the applicant is homeless as defined by current legislation)	20
• Threatened with Homelessness - Where it is likely that the applicant will become homeless within two months.	20
• Insecure Accommodation - where the applicant is living:	
- In lodgings	20
- With another household outwith their immediate family	20
- With immediate family but in an unsatisfactory or stressful arrangement	20
- In temporary accommodation	20
- as a sub-tenant	20
- in a caravan	20
- in a residential or non-domestic care setting but is capable of sustaining a tenancy	20
- in tied housing	20

Points will be awarded to applicants who have experienced this housing need for two years or more - 2 points per year up to a maximum of 10 points may be awarded.

*Insecurity of Tenure points cannot be awarded in conjunction with Homelessness points.*

*(A maximum 30 points can be awarded in this section)*

### **B Sharing Facilities – One-off award of Points**

Points will not be awarded for sharing with immediate family, unless that family can be regarded as forming a separate distinct family unit, e.g. a parent sharing with a child and that child's own family; a brother or sister sharing with a sibling and their family. Where there is/are no child(ren) to be rehoused only 1 point will be awarded.

• does not have separate/exclusive use of WC	3
• does not have separate/exclusive use of bathing facilities	3
• does not have separate/exclusive use of kitchen facilities	3
• does not have separate/exclusive use of living room	3

Where an applicant is sharing a bedroom, points will be awarded in the overcrowding section.

### **C Overcrowding/Under Occupation**

Section 8.1 of the Allocations Policy describes the standards which the Association regards as acceptable for sharing a double bedroom

- For each bedroom which is lacking in the applicant's current accommodation 5
  - For each bedroom which is surplus in the applicant's current accommodation 1
- (Up to a maximum of 15 points can be awarded in this section)*

### **D Condition of Property – Accumulation of Points**

The following points are awarded to adult(s) with child (ren) less than 16 years  
In the case of adult(s) without child(ren) 2 points will be awarded in each case except in the case of partial central heating and solid fuel heating which is awarded 1 point.

- suffers from dampness/condensation 5
- lacks hot or cold running water 5
- has no inside WC 5
- has no bathing facilities 5
- has no kitchen facilities 5
- has no living area 5
- has no central heating 5
- has only partial central heating 2
- has solid fuel heating 2
- has no electricity supply 2
- is in serious disrepair- 5  
e.g. structural problems; dry rot; wet rot; ill fitting windows; drainage problems

*(Up to a maximum of 25 points can be awarded in this section)*

### **E Social Factors**

- The applicant is applying for a house because they need to live nearer to friends or relatives to give/receive support or care 5
- The applicant has been living in a relationship which has broken down and is required to seek alternative accommodation 5
- An applicant is the victim of harassment, including racial harassment or domestic abuse 5

- The applicant cannot continue to meet mortgage or costs of private renting due to their financial circumstances 5
- The applicant has been offered employment in the local area 10
- The applicant is finding it difficult to travel to work because of financial or locational reasons 5
- The applicant's current accommodation is remote from adequate transport links and he/she does not have access to a car 1
- There are no facilities such as shops, post office, in the applicant's local area 1
- The applicant is affected by disturbances in their area, e.g. noise, vandalism 1
- The applicant's accommodation has been broken into within the last 5 years 1

## F Health & Mobility Factors Points

### Sheltered and Amenity Applicants only:

- The applicant is registered blind 5
- The applicant is profoundly deaf 5
- The applicant has difficulty using their current bathing facilities 2
- The applicant uses a wheelchair indoors and their current accommodation prevents or makes use of this difficult 3
- The applicant has stairs in or leading to their home and can manage them:
  - with difficulty 2
  - only with help 5
- The applicant has stairs separating the toilet and living room, or toilet and bedroom 2
- The applicant is responsible for their garden maintenance but is unable to carry this out themselves 2

### General Needs Applicants only - Medical Points:

Grade 1	5
Grade 2	10
Grade 3	15
Grade 4	20

## Housing Support Needs

### Housing Support Self Assessment

In this section, the aim is to determine whether an applicant has a need for housing support; and to distinguish and prioritise between met need and unmet need. 'Core' points will be awarded in each of the housing support categories where the applicant requires support. Where the applicant requires housing support but is not receiving it, then additional or 'Enhanced' points will be awarded.

	<u>Core Points</u>	<u>Enhanced Points</u>
• Safety & Security	15	30
• Care of House	15	30
• Managing Money	15	30
• Daily Living	15	30
• Getting Out & About	15	30
• Socialising	15	30
• General Welfare & Communication	15	30

**Total available general housing needs points**

**141**

<b>Total available special needs housing points</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Total available 'Core' housing support needs points</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Total available 'Enhanced' housing support needs points</b>	<b>210</b>

**Isle of Arran Homes is an initiative of Trust Housing Association, which operates on the Isle of Arran. For more information on housing on Arran, contact:**

- **Isle of Arran Homes**

Springbank  
Brodick  
Isle of Arran  
KA27 8BE

Tel: 01770 303700  
Fax: 01770 303701

For more information concerning allocations, available accommodation, etc, In other areas managed by Trust Housing Association, please contact the following regional offices:

- **Head Office & East Regional Office**

Trust Housing Association Limited  
12 New Mart Road  
EDINBURGH  
EH14 1RL

Tel: 0131-444 1200  
Fax: 0131-444 4949

- **West Regional Office**

Trust Housing Association Limited  
Pavilion 5  
Watermark Business Park  
345 Govan Road  
GLASGOW  
G51 2HJ

Tel: 0141-341 3200  
Fax: 0141-332 6843

**Visit our Web Site:** [www.trustha.org.uk](http://www.trustha.org.uk)

**IOAH/Trust Housing Association can also be contacted by e-mail:**

- [isleofarranhomes@trustha.org.uk](mailto:isleofarranhomes@trustha.org.uk)