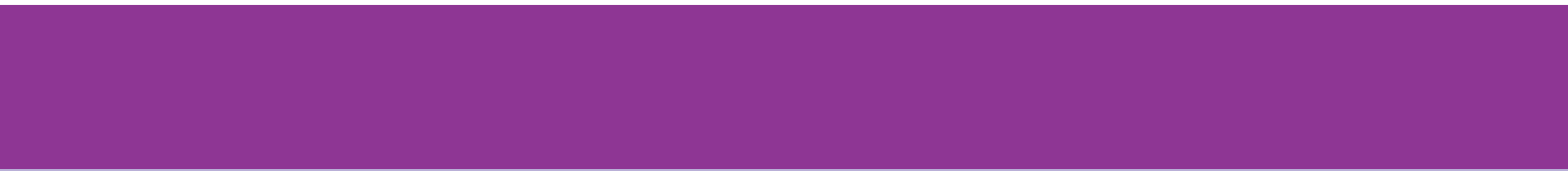




Stirling Council  
**Applicants Guide**



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# Part 1

## General Information

### The Housing Allocations Policy

We use the Housing Allocations Policy to decide who to offer Council housing to. This Policy sets out when and how people are given priority on our housing list and how we deal with applications for housing.

We use this Policy to decide who is offered properties as demand for Council housing is extremely high, and unfortunately we are not able to re-house everyone who applies for housing. Using the Housing Allocations Policy to decide who is offered housing means that we allocate properties in a way that is open, transparent and fair.

### Who Decided The Housing Allocations Policy?

The Housing Allocations Policy was agreed by Councillors at the Council's Environment and Housing Committee in 2019.

To make sure that the views of our tenants, applicants for housing and tenant organisations were taken into account, we carried out a comprehensive consultation exercise when developing the Policy. We wrote to all of our tenants and applicants for housing asking for their views on the Housing Allocations Policy and held local community events across the Stirling Council area.

In total, we received 1,155 responses to our consultation and these helped to shape the final version of our Housing Allocations Policy. We have published a report on the consultation results which shows how we acted on the responses we received. The report can be found on our website: <https://stirling.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/housing/council-housing/apply-for-council-housing/>

### How Does the Housing Allocations Policy Work?

We operate a 'groups plus points' Housing Allocations Policy. This means that everyone on the housing list is placed into one of four groups – Strategic, Homeless, Waiting and Transfer.

When we come to allocate a property, we first choose which group we will allocate the property to. We allocate a percentage of properties every year to each of the four groups, also known as a quota. We then allocate the property to the person with the highest housing need in that group.

How we determine housing need in each group is different. People in the Waiting and Transfer groups are awarded points depending on their housing need and people with the highest level of points are placed at the top of these lists. People in the Homeless and Strategic groups are held on the list in date order.

**Our annual quotas for each group are:**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Quota</b>
Homeless	50%
Transfer	30%
Waiting	15%
Strategic	5%

### **Which Group Will I Be Put In?**

You will be put into the group that best reflects your housing needs. If you have been assessed as homeless by our Housing Options team you will be placed into the Homeless group. If you fall into one of the categories set out in the Strategic group, you will be placed into this group. Only people with an urgent or exceptional housing need will be placed into the Strategic group, with full details of who falls into this category set out in our Policy.

If you don't fall into either of these categories, you will be placed into either the Transfer or Waiting Group. If you are a Council tenant or a tenant of another housing association in the Stirling area, you will be placed into the Transfer group. All other applicants will be placed into the Waiting list.

# Part 1

## General information

### What Size of Property Will I Be Allocated?

The size of property you will be offered depends on who needs to be rehoused with you. The table below sets out what size of property you will be eligible for.

You may also be eligible for an additional bedroom if you have a medical need for this, you have been approved to foster or adopt children and need a bigger home, or if you have access to children who do not reside with you on a full time basis.

Household Size	Number of bedrooms
Single person	Bedsit or 1-2 bedroom
Couple	1-2 bedroom
Family, 1 child	2 bedroom
Family, with 2 children under 5	2 or 3 bedroom
Family, with 2 children of the same gender where at least one is over eight years old	3 bedroom
Family, with 2 children of different genders where at least one is over five years old	3 bedroom
Family, 3 children	3 or 4 bedrooms depending on age and sex of children
Family, 4+ children	4 or 5 bedrooms depending on age and sex of children

### What Are Points Awarded For?

The Housing Allocations Policy sets out when we will award points and how many will be awarded. This was set after consultation with our tenants and applicants for housing, and also to ensure that we meet our legal duties and obligations.

An overview of the points that can be awarded is set out on the next page. A more in depth overview of the points we award and the criteria can be found on page 24 of our Housing Allocations Policy on our website: <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/media/22983/new-housing-allocations-policy-march-2021.pdf>

Overview of Waiting and Transfer List Points		
Applicants experiencing domestic abuse	450 points	
Applicants who are tenants of social landlords and are under occupying their current property	450 points	
Applicants residing in accommodation of poor housing quality or below the tolerable standard	High Award – 400 points	
	Medium Award -200 points	
	Low Award - 50 points	
Applicants who need an adapted or accessible home for medical reasons	High Award - 400 points	+50 points for each additional household member awarded
	Medium Award - 200 points	
	Low Award -50 points	
Applicants residing in accommodation that is overcrowded (A low award is equivalent to lacking one bedroom for your family; medium is lacking two bedrooms and high is lacking three or more)	High Award – 200 points	
	Medium Award – 100 points	
	Low Award – 50 points	
Applicants residing in insecure accommodation	High Award – 200 points	
	Medium Award – 100 points	
	Low Award – 50 points	
Social inclusion	High Award – 50 points	
	Low Award – 25 points	

## How Long Will It Take To Be Rehoused?

Unfortunately, the demand for Council housing is much higher than what we're able to provide. This means we are not able to re-house the majority of people that apply for housing with us. We use the Housing Allocations Policy to make sure that people in the most housing need are given priority for re-housing.

The length of time it takes for you to be re-housed will depend on your level of housing need as well as the choices you make on your application. You can discuss your choices and how these affect your application with one of our team by calling us on 01786 404040 and asking for the Allocations team, or emailing us at [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk).

To help you choose your areas and also give an indication of what properties we have available, we have published information on how many properties we own in each area of Stirling and the turnover of properties in each area. This can be found on our website:

<https://stirling.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/housing/allocations/>

# Part 2

## Applying for Housing

### What Happens Once We Receive Your Form?

When we receive your completed application, we will assess your application in line with the Housing Allocations Policy. We will place you into one of the four groups, and if you are on the Transfer or Waiting list, determine how many points you should be awarded.

We aim to assess all applications we receive within 10 working days. Once your application has been assessed, we will write to you to let you know the group you have been placed into and the number of points you have been awarded. We may also ask for further information if this is needed.

### How Often Will I Get Updates on My Application?

Unfortunately, due to the number of people that apply for housing, we aren't able to regularly keep everyone up to date with their application. We will get in touch with you if we are able to make you an offer of housing, if we need further information from you, and on an annual basis when we carry out a review of your application.

You will automatically be considered for suitably sized housing that matches your choice of areas and property types. You don't need to get in touch with us to express an interest in particular properties unless you want to make a change to your application to consider other areas and/or property types.

### Applying for Medical Points

If your home is unsuitable for you or for someone else in your household due to health reasons you may be entitled to medical points.

We need a separate medical application form to be completed to consider your application for points. This form is available on our website (<https://www.stirling.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/housing/allocations/apply-for-a-council-housing/>) or you can contact us on 01786 404040 or [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk) to request a form be sent to you.

**Once completed you can return the form to us at: Allocations Team,  
Allan Water House, Kerse Road, Stirling, FK7 7SG.**



When we receive your application for medical points, our assessor will review your application and reach a decision on whether to award you medical points within 28 days. If you have any supporting evidence of your condition and/or how your home is impacting your health this can be submitted along with your application. The level of points awarded will be based on how severely your current property is impacting your health.

Our assessor may also decide that you need to be housed in a wheelchair accessible property or accommodation on the ground floor. If the assessor makes this decision, you will be given priority for this type of accommodation over people with no medical need for it, even if they have more points than you do. It also means that we will remove any property types that don't meet your needs from your application.

If more than one person in your household requires re-housing due to health reasons, you will be awarded your highest award of medical points, plus an extra 50 points for each additional person with a medical reason for re-housing.

## Medical Appeals

You have the right to appeal against any decision we make on your application, including any award of medical points.

If you believe you should have been awarded additional medical priority, you can ask us to review your case by writing to us (Allocations Team, Allan Water House, Kerse Road, Stirling, FK7 7SG), or emailing us at [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk) and writing APPEAL as the email subject. Your case will be reviewed and a response sent to you within 10 working days.

If you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you should make an appeal in writing to the Allocations Co-ordinator or by emailing [allocationappeals@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocationappeals@stirling.gov.uk) within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of your case review. You must clearly state the grounds for appeal. You will receive a response within 15 working days provided you have given us all the information we need to reach a decision.

**There is no further right of appeal.**

# Part 2

## Applying for Housing

### What If My Circumstances Change?

If your circumstances change you should contact us at 01786 404040 or [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk) as soon as possible. A change in your circumstances can affect your priority for housing, so if you do not tell us you may miss out on housing.

The types of change we need to be informed of include:

- A change of address
- A change in your household (e.g. you've had a baby, or someone has moved into or out of your home)
- A change in your health means your home is now affecting your health.

### What If I'm Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness

If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness, we will do everything we can to try and prevent this.

We have a specialist team of Housing Options Officers who can discuss your situation and provide advice on the range of housing options available to you. They can also offer practical assistance or intervention to delay any urgent need to leave your home and can assess whether you should be placed on the Council's Homeless waiting list. They can provide advice on a wide range of issues, including:

- Identifying housing options to suit your circumstances;
- Giving information and advice with realistic housing solutions;
- Advising you of your housing rights;
- Giving you details about all housing providers;
- Referring you for money advice, or income maximisation advice;
- Helping you access support and giving advice on domestic abuse, harassment and other issues.
- Carrying out mediation

**You can contact the Housing Options team by calling 01786 237900 or by emailing at [housingoptions@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:housingoptions@stirling.gov.uk)**

You should contact us as early as possible if you are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This gives us the greatest chance to help you find the best solution for you.

## Other Housing Options

Unfortunately, we aren't able to house everyone that applies for rehousing with us. This is because there are more people applying for housing than there are homes available.

### There are alternative options to Council housing in the area, including:

- **MID MARKET RENT** - Mid Market Rent is designed to help people who are in employment on modest incomes access high quality affordable rented accommodation. Rents vary by property size and location and will normally be higher than a comparable social rented property but lower than privately rented property. You can find out more information on Mid Market Rent on our website here: <https://stirling.gov.uk/housing-council-tax/mid-market-rent/common-questions/>
- **HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS** – There are several Housing Associations in the Stirling area who operate their own housing lists. You have to apply for housing directly with these Housing Associations. The largest Housing Associations in the area are below, and details of all Associations in the area can be found in Part 5 of this Guide:
  - Forth Housing Association – [www.forthha.org.uk](http://www.forthha.org.uk)
  - Rural Stirling Housing Association – [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk)
  - Bield, Hanover and Trust Housing Associations (these organisations own sheltered and amenity housing in the Stirling area as well as general needs housing) - <https://www.homeforyou.org.uk/>
- **PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR** – You may want to consider looking for private rented accommodation in the Stirling area. Depending on your financial circumstances, you may be entitled to claim Local Housing Allowance, or the Housing Element of Universal Credit to help pay your rent. We can refer you to the Council's Money Advice Team for help, advice and assistance on benefit issues.

Our team can help you by discussing your options with you, give you realistic advice on your housing options, ensure that you have been awarded the correct level of priority on the Council's housing list and give advice on the likelihood of the Council being able to make you an offer of housing.

**If you would like to arrange an appointment, please contact us on 01786 404040 or by emailing at [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk)**

# Part 3

## Offers, Viewings and Accepting an Offer

### Offers

We aim to re-let our properties within 38 days. This allows us to reduce lost rental income, and to make sure that properties become a new home for someone as soon as possible.

If you are homeless, you can only refuse an offer of a suitable property twice, after which we consider that we have met our legal duties and you will be removed from the Homeless list. Your Housing Options Caseworker can give you more information and advice about property offers.

**You can contact your Housing Options Caseworker by calling 01786 237900**

If you are on our Waiting or Transfer list and you refuse two reasonable offers of housing, your application will be suspended for 12 months. A reasonable offer of housing will be a property that has the number of bedrooms you need and matches your requirements in terms of property type and size.

While we will wherever possible offer you the type of housing you'd like, this might not always be possible depending on the availability of that type of housing. If there is a priority attached to your application, we will not allow you to be unreasonably restrictive in your preferences. Our Housing Officers will discuss with you if they feel you are being unreasonably restrictive in your preferences.

### Notification of Offers and Viewing Properties

If we make you an offer of housing, we will send you a formal offer in writing (either by post or email) and may also follow this up with a telephone call. The information that we send to you will include:

- The property address
- The size and type of property
- The weekly rent charge
- Contact details for Housing staff
- Whether repairs are being completed to the property or if it is available to let immediately

If the property is available to let immediately, you must contact us to make arrangements to view the property and decide whether you wish to accept the offer within 2 working days. If you do not respond to the offer, we will assume you are refusing the offer of housing and this will count as one of your two available offers of housing.

If there are repairs being carried out to the property you have been offered, we will tell you in the written offer we send you. When the repairs are completed, one of our Housing Officers will contact you to arrange a viewing of the property.

After you have viewed a property, you must make a decision on whether you want to accept the offer within 2 working days of the date when you were contacted to advise that the property was available to view.

## The Tenancy Agreement

If you are offered a property and decide you want to accept this, you will have to sign a tenancy agreement. This will be a Scottish Secure Tenancy unless we have told you otherwise.

The tenancy agreement is a legal document that sets out your rights and responsibilities as a tenant. We will explain the tenancy agreement to you if you agree to accept the property.

We are here to help if you have any questions or concerns about your tenancy, please don't be afraid to ask if you have any questions.

# Part 3

## Offers, Viewings and Accepting an Offer

### What Condition Will the Property I'm Offered Be in?

When we offer and let a property, it will meet what is known as our Lettable Standard. If you view a property and it doesn't meet these standards, we will carry out any necessary work to bring it up to this standard before the tenancy starts.

#### **The Lettable Standard means:**

- The property will be wind and watertight
- Have working space heating as originally installed
- Have painted surfaces including all woodwork, doors and window sills which have been cleaned
- All floors, cupboards and kitchen units will be clean and cleared
- Have gas, electric and solid fuel installations that meet relevant legislation
- All gas installations will be supplied with a current safety certificate
- Have as a minimum 2 one metre base units (including the sink unit) and two wall units, or built in cupboards. A built in cupboard is either one base unit or both wall units
- Every kitchen will have a minimum of 1 metre of worktop space
- Have internal pass doors, which are operable and whole. Where part or wholly glazed, these doors will be fitted with clearly marked safety glass
- Have switches and electrical fittings which are free from paint and are fully operational
- Be provided with a decoration allowance where wall-covering paper is torn, falling off or seriously discoloured or where painted surfaces are scraped or heavily soiled. If you have any outstanding debts to the Housing Service (e.g. current rent arrears, former tenant arrears homeless accommodation rent arrears, rechargeable repairs, elective repairs) the decoration allowance will be paid towards these debts
- Have disused pipes, wiring etc removed and the surfaces repaired
- Have functioning windows and doors
- Have bathing facilities appropriate to the needs of the tenant
- Have sanitary ware that is clean, free from major cracks and holes which may cause injury or water leakage

# Part 4

## Suspensions, Cancellations and Appeals

### Suspensions

Everyone has a right to have their application added to our waiting list if they are 16 years old or older. However, we can suspend your application from our waiting list even if you are in housing need. We will aim to keep suspensions to a minimum but will decide to not make an offer of housing in the following circumstances:

- If you refuse two reasonable offers of housing
- If you give false or misleading information in your application
- If you withhold information you should have told us about
- If you do something that makes your housing situation worse e.g giving up a secure tenancy with nowhere else to go
- You or someone that lives with you is responsible for serious anti-social behaviour or has been subject to an ASBO
- If you owe rent you have not agreed a payment plan for
- If you have abandoned or neglected a previous tenancy
- If an order for recovery of possession has been made against you

The suspension period for any of the reasons set out above is 12 months.

### Annual Review and Cancellations

We review all applications on a yearly basis to make sure the information we have is correct and that you wish to remain on our list. If you do not respond to the review we will cancel your application.

In addition to the annual review we will also remove your application from our housing list under the following circumstances:

- When you request, in writing, that you wish to be removed
- When you have not replied to requests for further information to support your application
- When you have been re-housed.
- When we have been notified of the death of the applicant

Where an application has been cancelled you can reapply at any time and your situation will be assessed based on your housing needs at that time. If you contact us within 12 months of your application being cancelled and your housing circumstances have remained the same, we will re-instate your application.

# Part 4

## Suspensions, Cancellations and Appeals

### Appeals

If you are not satisfied with a decision we have made on your application, you can appeal. You can appeal the following decisions:

- The group or points you have been awarded. For points the appeal would check that your points are awarded in line with the policy.
- Our decision to suspend or cancel your application
- The level of medical points you have been awarded
- If you think an offer of housing was not reasonable
- Any decision you believe we have made that is not in accordance with our Policy

You can ask us to review your case by writing to us (Allocations Team, Allan Water House, Kerse Road, Stirling, FK7 7SG), or emailing us at [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk) and writing APPEAL as the email subject. One of our housing officers will review your case and respond within 10 working days. You should do this within one month of the decision having been made and you should make it clear why you think your case should be reviewed.

If you are still dissatisfied with the decision you should make an appeal in writing to the Allocations Co-ordinator or by emailing [allocationappeals@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocationappeals@stirling.gov.uk) within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of your case review. You must clearly state the grounds for appeal. You will receive a response within 15 working days provided you have given us all the information we need.

### Complaints

If you remain dissatisfied and wish to complain about the service you have received, you can do so using the Council's two stage complaints process. You can find out more information on the Council's Complaints Process on our website: <https://www.stirling.gov.uk/council-democracy/complaints/make-a-complaint/>

**To make a complaint you can call us on 01786 404040, write to us at Allocations Team, Allan Water House, Kerse Road, Stirling, FK7 7SG or email us at [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk)**

If you have gone through the Council's Complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied, you can write to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) at Bridgeside House, 99 McDonald Road, Edinburgh, EH7 4NS or contact them online at <https://www.spsso.org.uk/contact-us>



# Part 5

## Other Providers

There are a number of other Housing providers within the Stirling Council area. You can apply to as many of, or as few of these other housing providers as you wish, but remember the availability of Council housing is limited.

### Mainstream Housing Providers

#### **Forth Housing Association**

146 Drip Road,  
Stirling, FK8 1RW

Tel: 01786 446066

Email: [info@forthha.org.uk](mailto:info@forthha.org.uk)

#### **Rural Stirling Housing Association**

Stirling Road,  
Doune FK16 6AA

Tel: 01786 841101

Email: [enquiries@rsha.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsha.org.uk)

#### **Link Housing**

Watling House,  
Callendar Park Business Centre,  
Falkirk FK1XR

Tel: 0345 1 400 100

#### **Paragon Housing Association**

Grangemouth  
Invergrange House,  
Grangemouth, FK3 8DG

Tel: 01324 664966

#### **Castle Rock Edinvar Housing Association**

Edinburgh 1, Hay Avenue,  
Edinburgh EH16 4RW

Tel: 0131 657 0600

### Sheltered Housing Providers

#### **Cairn Housing Association**

South Office Murdostoun House,  
5 Linnet Way,  
Strathclyde Business Park,  
Bellshill, HL4 3RA

Tel: 0800 990 3405

Email: [enquiries@cairnha.com](mailto:enquiries@cairnha.com)

#### **Trust Housing Association**

12 Newmarket Road,  
Edinburgh EH14 1RL

Tel: 0131 444 1200

Email: [info@trustha.org.uk](mailto:info@trustha.org.uk)

#### **Hanover Housing Association**

95 McDonald Road,  
Edinburgh EH7 4NS

Tel: 0131 557 7404

Email: [hello@hanover.scot](mailto:hello@hanover.scot)

#### **Bield Housing Association**

Craighall Business Park,  
7 Eagle Street,  
Glasgow, G4 9XA.

Tel: 0141 270 7200

Email: [info@bield.co.uk](mailto:info@bield.co.uk)

# Part 6

## Contact Details

**You can get in touch with us for more information using the contact details below:**

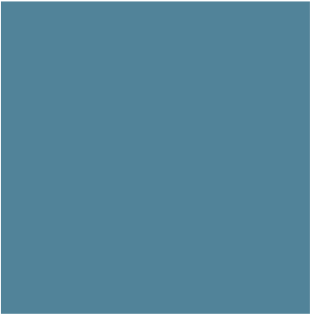
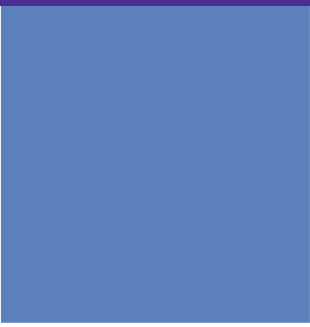
**Allocation Team**

Allan Water House  
Kerse Road  
Stirling, FK7 7SG

Tel: 01786 404040

Email: [allocations@stirling.gov.uk](mailto:allocations@stirling.gov.uk)





If you need help or this information  
supplied in an alternative format  
please call 01786 404040

