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LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ALLOCATIONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Loretto Housing Association is a charitable Housing Association established in 1977 concentrating on providing housing with support to individuals who require this service. In most of its current schemes there is also mainstream housing available. Schemes are located in Glasgow, Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.

2. THE ASSOCIATION'S OBJECTIVES

The Association was established to provide housing and support services to individuals whose needs require these services. It operates under Charitable Housing Association rules. Allocations for accommodation with support will be made independently of the Allocations Policy. Individuals will be referred by the relevant Social Work Department and will be assessed by the Association.

The Association also aims to provide mainstream housing for individuals with a range of housing needs. Houses will be allocated to those in greatest priority. Priority will be determined by the level of housing needs applicants have through a points based system (See Appendix I). A description on the types of housing need is given in Section 5. Applications will be dealt with efficiently and without unfair discrimination. Finally, the Association will work with the appropriate Local Authority to develop nominations arrangements.

3. ACCESS TO HOUSING LIST

The Association will operate housing lists for each scheme. Within each list there will be sub lists for different property types (2, 3 and 4 apartments, wheelchair, amenity).

Anyone aged sixteen or over can apply for housing to the Association. However, this does not result automatically in being accepted onto the housing list. As there are far more applications received for the number of houses likely to be available then access to the housing list must be restricted to those in greatest priority.

Applicants will receive information sheets about developments interested in and a summary leaflet explaining the allocations policy.

A minimum number of points will therefore be set for each sub list and any application receiving less will not be accepted. Any such applicant will be advised of other housing options and to re-apply if circumstances change. The minimum points required will be reviewed annually.

Applicants will normally will have their application acknowledged. They will then normally be advised within two weeks of their points award and also their right of appeal.

Applications accepted will be put onto the relevant sub-list e.g. 2 apartment, 3 apartment, as determined by household size only. Lists are also maintained for amenity housing and wheelchair housing.

Applications can only be considered when the Association has housing suitable for the needs of the household as determined by the Association in the area requested.

4. **TYPES OF LETTINGS**

The Association will allocate properties through the following ways -

- (i) Supported accommodation - allocations will be made to individuals who have been referred to the Association by Social Work and assessed by project care staff
- (ii) Housing list - this is for applicants on one of the sub-lists for each scheme
- (iii) Transfer list - this is for existing tenants who require a move e.g. through overcrowding (see appendix 2)
- (iv) Nominations from District Councils - these will be accepted on the basis of current nominations arrangements (see appendix 3)
- (v) Mutual Exchanges - Existing tenants can exchange houses with other tenants or with tenants of a district council or housing association co-

op. Exchanges will be dealt with in accordance with the Association's procedures.

(see appendix 2)

- (vi) Nominations from local housing associations - This would occur where the Association is opening a development within the area of a local housing association.
- (vii) Referrals from voluntary agencies who provide short stay temporary accommodation. The Housing Services Sub-Committee will agree annually a list of participating agencies and the number of allocations to be made under this section.

5. **FACTORS OF HOUSING NEED**

The following will be taken into account when assessing priority to be given to an application

(a) **Suitability of existing accommodation**

Lacking or sharing facilities, disrepair/structural problems with property, overcrowding or underoccupancy.

(b) **Social Factors**

Needing to move into the area where houses are available to provide support to or receive support from family, friends. Make work more accessible.

For sheltered housing only account will be taken of how more accessible applicants will find social amenities e.g. shops, G.P., Post Office.

If the applicant feels insecure in present house or area or is experiencing harassment. Examples of harassment include domestic violence and racial harassment.

(c) **Insecurity of Tenure**

An applicant's current tenancy status will be considered and priority will be given to applicants with no/limited rights to stay in present accommodation.

(d) **Medical Condition**

Priority will be given to applications where the applicant or a member of his/her household has a health problem which is adversely affected by present accommodation and where a move would be beneficial to that person's health. Applicants will be required to complete a self assessment form. Letters from applicant's G.P.s/hospital may be required.

The Association may contact the applicant and visit if necessary to assist in pointing an application. Visits will always be carried out before an allocation is made and the content of an application form will be verified.

There may be exceptional situations where an application does not receive high priority but the need for rehousing is great. The Management Committee will consider such applications assisted by a written report from the Housing Manager.

Where applicants are tied at the top of a list then account will be taken of the length of time they have experienced housing need.

6. **DISCRIMINATION**

The Association will carry out allocations without unfair discrimination. It will conduct an ethnic monitoring exercise for all application forms received including those that are turned down, those that are accepted and all applicants rehoused.

Questionnaires will be kept separate from application forms and will be used for statistical purposes only. It will also monitor applications received and allocations made on the basis of gender and household type.

7. **ABUSES**

Applicants who lie or knowingly provide false information or withhold relevant information will have their application form cancelled. Where a tenancy has been granted and it then comes to the Association's attention that the applicant had knowingly provided false information or withheld relevant information then the Association will take action to recover possession of the property.

8. **APPEALS**

If an applicant has any queries about how his/her application will be dealt with or the number of points allocated then please contact the Association's Housing Management staff.

If the applicant is not then satisfied as to how many points he/she has been allocated then he/she can appeal the decision by writing to:-

Secretary
Loretto Housing Association
Lipton House, 2nd Floor
170 Crown Street
Glasgow
G5 9XD

This applies to both applicants who have/have not been accepted onto the housing

list.

9. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

An application form will be dealt with only by the Association's staff and its contents will be treated in confidence. No information will be passed on to another agency without the applicant's permission.

10. **APPLICANTS WHO ARE RELATED TO MEMBERS OF STAFF OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS OR WHO ARE STAFF**

Applicants will be asked to give details. The Association will follow relevant Communities Scotland guidance.

11. **REVIEW OF HOUSING LISTS**

A review will be carried out annually to ensure applicants wish to remain on the list. Minimum points required to be accepted onto a list may be adjusted if the number of applications is significantly in excess of likely re-lets.

12. **ROLE OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Housing Services Sub-Committee will carry out a review of the Allocations Policy and then present it to the Management Committee.

The Housing Services Sub-Committee will receive regular reports from staff giving details of applications received and allocations made (see appendix 4)

13. **CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE APPLICATIONS ARE NOT ACCEPTED OR ALLOCATIONS NOT MADE**

The Association reserves the right not to accept an application from an individual. The individual will be advised in writing on the on the reason(s) for refusal and their right to appeal the decision.

The Association also reserves the right to withhold an allocation to an individual. This may be on the basis of a tenancy report provided by a previous landlord or a history of rent arrears. An individual would be written to giving the reason(s) for refusal and their right to appeal.

14. **REFUSAL OF OFFERS**

If an applicant refuses an offer without good cause then their application will be removed from the housing list. The applicant will be advised of this and their opportunity to appeal.

15. **REVIEW OF THE ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

The Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the Association's objectives are being achieved.

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

POINTS SYSTEM

LACKING FACILITIES

Heating: Points:

No heating	10 Pts
Inadequate heating	5 Pts

Bathroom:

No bath/shower	10 Pts
No inside WC	10 Pts

Kitchen:

Inadequate facilities	5 Pts
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Combined living room/bedroom	5 Pts
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SHARING FACILITIES

	C/O	Institution/HPU	Family
Kitchen	5	7	3
Living Room	5	7	3
Bathroom	5	7	3

OVERCROWDING

Each bedroom lacking	10
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UNDEROCCUPANCY**Points:**

Each room extra 5

CONDITION OF PROPERTY

General Disrepair 5
Serious Disrepair 15

SOCIAL FACTORS

Support requirements 10
Distance to travel to work 5
Closeness to Amenities
(Sheltered) 5
(Housing Applic.)
Separated Households 5

HARASSMENT

Minor harassment 5
Severe harassment 15

HOMELESS/POTENTIAL HOMELESS

Insecure Tenancy 5
Living care of 10
Living in an Institution 15

MEDICAL

Low priority 5
High priority 15

SECURITY OF TENURE

Insecure tenancies - short assured tenancies, no written agreement

Living Care of - details of length of time, frequency of moving to be noted

Other examples of Homeless/Potential Homeless:

Tied Tenancy 10 points

Caravan/Houselist 10 points

Notice to quit and notice of repossession have been served or where applicant has no rights to continue living there eg. resident landlord, short assured agreement where landlord confirms that it will not be continued.

MEDICAL

Home affects health and benefit of moving

Low Priority

High Priority.

Low Priority: Where existing accommodation/environment is having an adverse affect on applicants or members of household's health and where a move in house would alleviate this. Examples would involve depression; illnesses such as asthma where there is clear evidence that the illness is caused by or exacerbated by the accommodation.

High

Priority:

Where existing accommodation and environment have a major adverse affect on applicants or member of household's health and where a move in house would significantly alleviate this. Examples will mainly relate to physical disability which prevent an individual leaving/entering house and using facilities within the house eg. bathroom.

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

POINTS SYSTEM GUIDELINES

LACKING FACILITIES

No Heating - No fixed heating at all (or inadequate, heating in part of the house only, eg. calor gas in livingroom only.

Inadequate Heating - Either poor heating throughout, eg electric bar heating in each room or adequate heating in some rooms only.

Adequate Heating - Space heating systems, gas fires

Inadequate Heating - Calor gas, electric bar heaters, convector heaters, coal fires.

BATHROOM

No bath or shower

No inside W.C.

KITCHEN FACILITIES

Inadequate - If it doesn't provide storage space and service point for cooker, service space for a fridge, sink with hot and cold water. Only applies where applicant is required to cook food.

SHARING FACILITIES

Sharing with another household

Institution - Hostel, Hospital, Bed and Breakfast, Prison

Hostel - Emergency or Temporary eg. Stopover type facility - where a person is there on a temporary basis, training flat.

Care Of - With friends, family or other - also applies to applicant living at parental home who has child of own.

Family - Only if applicant is still living in parental home who hasn't previously moved away for a period of more than one year.

Where potential homeless applicant must provide proof of notice to quit

OVERCROWDING

Bedrooms required - One bedroom is required for each person age 16 years and over, except when living as a couple. One bedroom for two children age 1 year to 10 years. Where a child is age over 10 years and of a different sex, they require individual bedrooms. Two children of the same sex can share a bedroom until the age of 15 years.

UNDEROCCUPANCY

Extra rooms - Either livingroom or bedroom

CONDITION OF PROPERTY

General Disrepair - Dampness in some rooms, numerous outstanding repairs (Landlord's responsibility), droughts, leaking windows.

Serious Disrepair - Closing order, declared below tolerable standards, statutory repairs notice.

SOCIAL FACTORS

Support Requirements - Applicant or member of household requires support or where the applicant requires to give support, eg. physical care support, childcare support. Check evidence of support being given at the moment, ie. who will give support, reason why support is required, other options for support. Consider what improvements will be made by move in terms of ease in providing or receiving support.

Distance to Travel to Work - Normally 10 miles or more, unless dependent on public transport and in that case how good public transport is and access to its services.

Sheltered Housing - Closeness to post office, range of shops, GP, social facilities, if not within walking distance or easy access by public transport.

Separated Households - application either pointed with 5 extra points or as though partner/other members of household were living with applicant - whichever give more points.

HARASSMENT

Harassment - Racial - neighbours, visitors. General/Martial - ex partners etc. Note how regular and how extreme, involvement of other agencies ie. policy, women's aid, ethnic minority support groups, social work.

Violence Within Home - Partner or member of household or applicant being abused or violated. Check involvement of other agencies, other steps being taken. Confidentiality, dealing with collection of information sensitively write to applicant for further details.

STATEMENT ON NOMINATION AGREEMENTS AMENDED AT HSSC MEETING - MAY 1997

INTRODUCTION:

Local housing authorities have a duty to ensure housing need is assessed and met in their areas. Communities Scotland indicates through guidance that housing associations should assist local housing authorities in carrying out this function. This paper indicates how Loretto Housing Association will co-operate with the appropriate local authorities it has housing schemes in on the procedures for nominating applicants to Loretto when vacancies occur.

The items the agreement covers are:-

- 1. Information**
- 2. Nominations Process**
- 3. Named contacts**
- 4. Why nominations would be turned down**
- 5. Liaison work and training**
- 6. Which properties fall under the nominations agreement**
- 7. What happens to nominations**
- 8. Monitoring of nominations**
- 9. Equal opportunities**

THE ASSOCIATION'S OBJECTIVES

The Association will assist a local housing authority to carry out its duties by making available up to 50% of its properties subject to section 6 to nominations made by the local authority.

Nominations will be assessed according to the Association's Allocations Policy and allocations will be made if nominations achieve sufficient priority.

- 1. Information:**

Loretto Housing Association will supply a copy of its allocations policy and information sheet on projects detailing house types and rents etc. to a local authority. A copy of the statement nomination agreements will also be sent to the local authority. The local authority will be advised that the Association will assess any nominations on the basis of its own allocations policy.

In return the District Council will give the Association a copy of its own allocations policy, any policy papers or procedures on dealing with nominations and a copy of information given to applicants about housing associations and how to be nominated.

2. Nominations Process:

New Lets

Six months before site completion Loretto will notify the Local Authority and give information as described in section 1. It will arrange a meeting to discuss arrangements for nominations and the content of the nominations agreement. It will request a list of nominations 3 to 4 months in advance of handover. If necessary staff from the housing association will liaise with District Council allocations staff in drawing up a list of nominations. It is left to the District Council to decide who will be nominated but it is expected that most of the nominations will come from the District Council's own housing list rather from existing tenants on their transfer list. Discussions can also take place with regard to nominations coming from the homeless persons team or equivalent team within the District Council.

The Association will process nominations in accordance with its own allocations policy. Application forms will be completed and visits made as required. The initial list of nominations will have more names than houses available to take account of nominations which do not receive sufficient priority according to the Association's allocations policy. The District Council will have confirmed with nominations their interest to be re-housed by a housing association before the nominations are submitted to Loretto. The District Council will be kept informed on the progress made with allocating houses to nominations.

If necessary further nominations will be requested if there are not sufficient appropriate nominations within the first list.

The first group of nominations should be received within a maximum of 10 days. if further nominations are required then these should be received within 5 days of request.

If no successful nomination is made then the nomination will be lost.

Re-lets

When a vacancy becomes available and it is due to be offered to a nomination then the District Council will be requested by phone and/or letter to fax or send details by post within five working days of 3 nominations. These will then be visited and the District Council will be notified of how the nominations progress.

3. Named Contacts:

Loretto Housing Association's named contact will be the Housing Manager. The District Council will nominate a contact person as appropriate or nominate a senior member of staff within the allocations team at the district or relevant area office.

4. Details of why Nominations would be turned down:

Nominations will be turned down on the following grounds:-

- a) They do not meet/achieve the required number of points as outlined in the Association's allocations policy.**
- b) When contacted the applicants indicate they are not interested.**
- c) They no longer reside at the address.**

5. Liaising Work and Training:

Loretto will make staff available to give District Council staff information and training on the operation of its allocations policy. This will normally be for the allocations officers who will be dealing with identifying suitable nominations.

6. Which Houses are available to Nominations:

Properties not used for supported tenants will normally be available for nominations from the District Council. Any houses which the Association receives referrals from another agency e.g. Social Work Department, would not be available for nominations.

Any properties required to meet the needs of existing tenants requiring a transfer will be excluded from the nominations arrangement. Nominations will be considered for 50% of the remaining properties.

7. What Happens to Nominations:

If a nomination is unsuccessful the District Council will be advised as well as the individual. If they get sufficient points however to go on to the housing list then their application will be accepted. If they do not receive sufficient points then they will be advised of this and their application will not be accepted for future vacancies.

If a nomination has been successful and is made an offer and this is declined then the application will be deleted and the District Council will be advised.

8. Monitoring of Nominations:

A report will be made to the District Council after all new lets have been completed and annually thereafter. The report will detail the outcome of all nominations, if they have been an offer and accepted, if they have been made an offer and declined, if they have not been made an offer and why. This report is in addition to notification as per Section 7.

9. Equal Opportunities:

The section within the allocations policy on equal opportunities will be highlighted to the District Council at the initial meeting to discuss nominations arrangements. The District Council will be requested to give details of all agencies working with ethnic minority groups so that these could be included on a mailing list giving information about the new housing and how to apply.

Where required the Association will make arrangements to copy information to applicants in other languages.

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION

ESTATE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Scheme _____ Date

Landscaping - **Grassed Areas**
 Shrub Areas
 Trees

Bin Shelters

Fences

Drying Areas

Building Fabric - **Roof/gutters/down pipes**
 Drains
 Walls

Street/Car parking areas/ Pavements

Common Areas

Other Comments

Action Required

By Whom

Signature:

LORETTO HOUSING ASSOCIATION

HOUSING MANAGEMENT SECTION

HOUSE INSPECTION FORM

**TENANT:
PROPERTY:**

KITCHEN

**Units intact
Sink
Doors
Heater
Any Extras**

LIVING ROOM

**Door
Heaters
Any Extras**

HALL

Heater

BEDROOM

**Units
Door
Heaters
Any Extras**

BATHROOM

**Suite
Door
Heater
Any Extras**

Decorative State

Meter Readings

Extras

Missing