

Common Allocation Policy Review Consultation

CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE COMMON HOUSING ALLOCATION POLICY

The partners of the East Ayrshire Common Housing Register (known as SEARCH) are reviewing the Housing Allocation Policy and we are writing to ask you for your views on the proposed changes.

The partners of the Common Housing Register are;

- East Ayrshire Council;
- Cunninghame Housing Association;
- Irvine Housing Association;
- Atrium Homes and
- Shire Housing Association.

Why are we proposing these changes?

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 will introduce changes as to how social housing can be allocated and we are preparing for this
- There are some areas of the current Allocation Policy which we feel should be amended to help us meet the objectives set out in the Policy and
- The proposed changes will make the Policy fairer and clearer

Background

The current Allocation Policy was first introduced in 2010 when the Common Housing Register (CHR) was implemented. The CHR and the associated Common Allocation Policy (CAP) aim to:

- Make the process of applying for housing in the social rented sector in East Ayrshire easier,
- Address housing need,
- Make best use of housing stock ,
- Maximise applicant access and choice.

The consultation period will run until the end of July 2017.

We will use your feedback to prepare a report for presentation to the Council's Cabinet and Housing Association Boards of Management later this year at which Members will make a final decision on the changes proposed. We will then advertise the changes.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you would like more information about our proposals, please get in touch with us using any of the methods below:

- Telephone the Housing Register Team on: 01563 554821
- Email housing@east-ayrshire.gov.uk or
- Write to East Ayrshire Council, Housing Service, Civic Centre North, John Dickie Street, Kilmarnock, KA1 1HW.

The full version of the Common Allocation Policy can be viewed at <https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/CommonAllocationPolicy.pdf>

We would like to thank you for taking the time to take part in this consultation.

Your views are important to us and help improve the services we provide to our tenants and customers.

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Care and Support points

Points for consideration:

Should an additional award of points relating to care and support be introduced? For example if someone requires to move to be closer to a family member in order to provide or receive care and support.

Current Policy:

There is no category for this within current Policy

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants

Applicants may be considered for additional points if they require to move to be closer to a family member to either give or receive essential support which would significantly enhance the person's ability to remain in their own home and live independently.

*** 1. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Sharing Points

Point for Consideration:

Should sharing points be awarded to all eligible applicants regardless of their tenure? i.e. Owners, tenants, private tenants and those without their own home

Current Policy:

Currently 'Sharing Points' are not awarded to owners and tenants who share a kitchen and bathroom or both with people who will not be moving with them as part of their household.

Applicants who have dependent children resident with them on a permanent basis and are sharing with others who will not be moving with them are awarded 8 sharing points, those who do not have children are awarded 6 points.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

This would mean that sharing points would be extended to those applicants who are owners, private rented tenants or social rented tenants if their circumstances were such that they were sharing facilities with people who are not moving with them

*** 2. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Serving Armed Forces

Point for Consideration:

Should applicants who are being discharged from the Armed Forces receive priority for re-housing?

Current Policy:

Currently Armed Forces applicants do not get priority for housing, unless they have been injured in the line of duty and require specially adapted accommodation.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

This would mean that applicants leaving the forces could be placed on the Strategic Needs Group, which is a priority group for re-housing, for 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after they are discharged. If they have not been offered and or accepted a property within this period then they would revert back to the mainstream group appropriate to their circumstances

*** 3. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Kinship Carers

Point for Consideration:

Should Kinship Carers get the same priority as Foster Carers?

N.B Kinship care is when a child is looked after by their extended family or close friends, if they cannot remain with their birth parents. Under the Looked After Children (Scotland) Regulations 2009, kinship carers are defined as "a person who is related to the child (through blood, marriage or civil partnership) or a person with whom the child has a pre-existing relationship".

Current Policy:

Foster Carers are admitted to Strategic Needs Group which is a priority group and Kinship Carers are not.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

Foster Carers and Kinship Carers will receive the same level of priority for housing through the Strategic Needs Group.

*** 4. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Offers to Applicants placed on the Strategic Needs Group

Point for Consideration:

We propose that Applicants on the Strategic Needs Group are made 2 offers of housing and if both of these offers are refused, then the applicant will revert to the mainstream group applicable to their circumstances within the framework of the Allocation Policy.

Current Policy:

The Strategic Needs Group is a priority group, currently applicants on this group can be made and refuse unlimited offers of housing with no penalty.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

Applicants placed on this group will receive up to 2 offers of housing. If both offers of housing are refused the application will revert to the mainstream group appropriate to their circumstances, this means that the applicant will lose their priority status.

*** 5. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Suspension from the Housing List after 2 Refusal of Offers of Housing

Point for Consideration:

Should we introduce a suspension period where an applicant has refused 2 offers of housing with the exception of the Strategic Needs and Homeless Groups?

Current Policy:

Currently applicants, with the exception of those on the Homeless Group can receive and refuse unlimited offers of housing and are not suspended for a period of time from receiving further offers.

N.B Applicants placed on the Homeless Group receive 2 offers of housing and if refused their application reverts to the mainstream group appropriate to their circumstances.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

An applicant would be suspended on the housing list for 3 months after they have refused 2 offers of housing. The applicant would not be considered for housing during this 3 month suspension period.

*** 6. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Applicants who Provide False Information

Point for Consideration:

Where an applicant is found to have provided false information, should a suspension period from the housing list be applied?

Current Policy:

Not currently included within Policy.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

Where it is established that an applicant has provided false information, the applicant will be suspended from receiving offers of housing for a period of 6 months.

*** 7. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Appeal Timescales

Point for Consideration:

Should we consider introducing timescales for applicants who appeal against a decision in regard to their housing application?

Current Policy:

No timescales within current policy.

What this proposed change would mean for Applicants:

If an applicant wishes to appeal any decision concerning the Allocation Policy then they must do so within 28 days of the decision and we would propose to respond within the following timescales:

Stage 1 Appeal - we will respond within 10 working days

Stage 2 Appeal - we will respond within 15 working days

*** 8. Do you agree or disagree with the above proposed change?**

- Agree
- Disagree

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why and provide an alternative to the proposal in the space below?

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Thank you

Thank you for completing this questionnaire, we appreciate your views and assistance

9. Please provide us with the following information

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Email:

Organisation (if applicable):

10. Are you a tenant / applicant / other?

- Tenant
- Applicant
- Other (please specify)

11. If you are a tenant of one of the Common Housing Register Partners - who is your landlord?

- East Ayrshire Council
- Atrium Homes
- Cunninghame Housing Association
- Irvine Housing Association
- Shire Housing Association
- N/A

If posting this questionnaire please return it to: (PLEASE NOTE NO STAMP IS REQUIRED)

Customer Liaison Team
FREEPOST RSEY-XHST-JHGL
Civic Centre North
John Dickie Street
KILMARNOCK
KA1 1HW

Alternatively you can hand it in to any East Ayrshire Council, Atrium Homes, Cunninghame Housing Association, Irvine Housing Association or Shire Housing Association Office

This document is also available, on request, in braille, large print or recorded on to tape, and can be translated into Chinese, Punjabi, Urdu, Gaelic and Polish.

Ma tha sibh airson fiosrachadh fhaighinn ann an cànan sam bith eile, cuiribh brath thugainnaig an t-seòladh a leanas.

اگر آپ یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں چاہتے ہیں تو براہ مہربانی نیچے دیے گئے پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

閣下如需要這份資料的其他語言版本，請透過以下的地址與我們聯絡。

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ
ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰ ਹੇਠ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ
ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

Dokument dost pny jest równie w alfabecie Braille'a, w wersji z powi kszonym drukiem lub w formie nagrania d wi kowego na kasecie. Na yczenie oferujemy tak e tłumaczenie dokumentu na wybrany j zyk.