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HM 21 Sub Letting
HM 22 Succession
HM 25 Voids Procedures

GOV 27 Equal Opportunities Policy



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This policy is available, on request, in other languages and formats, for example, in large print, audio-tape (or CD) or Braille.

Section 1: The role of the allocations policy

1.1. Introduction

Forth Housing Association has developed its allocation policy to explain how we let houses to:

- applicants on our housing list;
- tenants wanting to move to other accommodation.

This policy also explains how we process referrals from Stirling Council. (See section 5 and Appendix 2)

The allocation policy is very important as it enables us to:

- meet our legal obligations;
- address different forms of housing need; and
- promote our equality objectives.

Notes

Forth Housing Association is usually referred to as "we" in this policy document.

“Allocation” simply means house letting; allocation and letting are both used in this policy to refer to how we let our houses.

1.2. Policy issues

This policy covers the following issues.

Section 2 describes our key policy aims.

Section 3 summarises the main legal and good practice framework within which we operate.

Section 4 explains our methods of letting houses. We have also established internal procedures.

Section 5 describes our current links with Stirling Council.

Section 6 explains our policy on transfers and mutual exchanges. These terms are explained clearly in this section.

Section 7 summarises our rules concerning the suspension of offers of accommodation.

Section 8 details how we measure allocation performance.

Section 9 summarises how we consult with tenants and other service users in developing this policy.

Section 10 covers our procedure for dealing with appeals and complaints.

The appendices cover general issues, as well as additional policy information.

Section 2: Policy aims and objectives

2.1. General

This section explains what the allocation policy aims to achieve in practice.

These aims or principles are, therefore, very important as they set the **framework** within which our allocation services operate.

2.2. Allocation aims and objectives

In our allocation service, we are committed to:

- meeting legal and good practice standards;
- promoting equal opportunities, as well as ensuring that our practices do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly;
- seeking to create sustainable and inclusive communities, that is, an area in which people want to live and work;
- making best use of our housing stock, for instance, by reducing under-occupation;
- working closely with Stirling Council to address housing need, for example, in addressing homelessness;
- allocating houses quickly to reduce lost rental income;
- providing housing list applicants with comprehensive advice and information about their housing options, as well as publicising the list widely;
- processing housing applications confidentially in line with data protection legal requirements;
- implementing quality training programmes that are ongoing for staff internally and externally to ensure effective policy implementation;

- dealing with appeals and complaints concerning this policy fairly;
- monitoring our performance through a system of performance indicators;
- reviewing policy on a regular basis in consultation with committee, staff, tenants and other service users.

Note

The policy is generally reviewed every **three** years.

This may occur sooner if required, for instance, due to legal changes.

We publish any policy changes within **six** months.

Section 3: Legal and good practice framework

This section summarises the law relating to allocation practice and the good practice standards that we meet.

3.1. Legal framework

The law covering allocation practice is contained in the **Housing (Scotland) Act 1987** (as amended).

These rules cover:

- admission to the housing list;
- groups to receive reasonable preference when allocating houses;
- things to ignore when allocating houses;
- information and publicity; and
- rights to access personal information.

Admission to the housing list

Any applicant aged **sixteen** years or more is entitled to be admitted to our housing list. In order to come onto the housing list, we arrange for applicants to complete our standard application form. We provide applicants with information about their housing options and also assist them to complete their application form, on request.

Groups to receive reasonable preference when allocating houses

The groups to whom we must give reasonable preference when selecting tenants are:

- people affected by homelessness and those threatened with homelessness;
- people living in housing below the tolerable standard;
- people living in overcrowded houses or in large families; and
- people living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.

We also deal with other housing needs and the full list of needs addressed by this policy is detailed in section 4 and Appendix 1.

Things to ignore when allocating houses

In selecting tenants, we ignore the following matters:

- the time that applicants have lived in our area;
- any housing debt that is not owed by applicants, or housing debt that has been repaid;
- non-housing debt, for example, council tax;
- applicants' age except for housing that is designed or specifically adapted for people of a certain age; and
- applicants' income or property, including that of other household members.

We also disregard rent arrears if they are under one month's rent, although we ask applicants to repay such arrears.

If rent arrears are more than one month's rent, we disregard the arrear as long as applicants:

- agree an arrangement to repay the debt;
- pay the agreed figure for at least **three** months; and
- continue to pay the agreed figure.

In law, we must also disregard whether or not an applicant lives in our area if she/he:

- is employed, or has been offered employment in our area;
- wants to move into our area to look for employment and we are satisfied that this is so;
- wants to move into our area to be close to a relative or carer;
- has special social or medical reasons for being re-housed in our area; and
- wants to live in our area to avoid harassment or the risk of domestic violence.

Finally, we cannot impose any of the following conditions:

- that applications are to be active for a minimum period before considering applicants for housing;
- that a judicial separation order should be obtained; and

- that applicants should no longer be living with another person before they are considered for housing.

Information and publicity

We provide all applicants with a summary leaflet of this policy; and applicants are given a copy of the full allocation policy, on request. We provide these documents free of charge.

This leaflet explains in plain language (a) the range of housing needs that we address and (b) how we prioritise allocations.

We provide copies of our rules at the following locations:

- Our office
- Communities Scotland
- Arabic Community
- Central Scotland African Union
- Central Scotland Chinese Association
- Central Scotland Islamic Centre
- Indian Community Centre
- Council offices and libraries
- Offices of advice and information agencies
- Offices of other housing providers

Rights to access personal information

Applicants are entitled under the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 to view information that they provide in their application.

Applicants may also access personal information as allowed by the **Data Protection Act 1998**.

3.2. Good practice standards

We meet the regulatory standards specified by Communities Scotland. These standards cover admission to the list, as well as allocation practices.

Section 4: Allocation system

This section covers the following issues:

- processing applications;
- selecting tenants; and
- our points system.

4.1. Processing applications

We ask applicants to complete our standard application form. This is available at our office, by post, or on our website

We assess completed application forms within **ten** working days of receipt.

We send applicants written details of the status of their application, including their point award.

We provide support services, as required, to ensure that our allocation services are accessible. For example, we may use interpreters (or signers) for hearing impaired applicants.

We process personal information on the application form in line with legal requirements. Thus, we will only share applicants' information with other agencies if applicants consent, or if allowed in law without consent.

We may contact landlords or lenders (in the case of home owners) to confirm application details. For example, we may seek information about current or former tenancies. We will obtain applicants' consent before doing this.

In the case of applicants living in Forth's area of operation, we carry out home visits to confirm application details. This is very important if we cannot obtain references that confirm household details.

In the case of applicants living outside of Forth's area of operation, we may ask other landlords and agencies to confirm application details.

These visits take place only at the point when an offer of housing is being considered.

We advise applicants of their right to apply for a joint tenancy. For those applicants who want to do so, we can provide them with information on the pros and cons of joint tenancies.

We review applications once a year. Each application is reviewed based on its date of registration.

We ask applicants to inform us within **fifteen** working days if they want to remain on the housing list.

If we receive no response, we issue a reminder letter giving applicants a further **ten** working days to inform us.

If we receive no response, we remove applications from our housing list.

We have inserted a clause in our standard application form to delete applications if no response is received.

Applicants can register at any time simply by completing a new application form.

4.2. Selecting tenants

This section explains the following issues:

- the type of allocation system that we use to select tenants;
- the housing needs that we meet, including a definition of need;
- making offers; and
- specific rules.

4.2.1. The type of allocation system that we use to select tenants

This section describes the **type** of allocation system that we use to select tenants. This system has been selected as it enables us to meet our policy objectives outlined in section 2. The system that we use is a groups plus points system.

(a) Groups plus points system explained

This system has three key elements.

Firstly, it involves having a select number of groups.

Secondly, applicants receive points for housing need and are placed in a relevant group.

Thirdly, an applicant's priority is determined, not simply by their level of points, but also by the priority given to the group.

Our points system and the targets of lets to each group is summarised in Appendix 1.

(b) Benefits of the groups plus points system

The main benefits of adopting this system are that it:

- allows us to address the range of housing needs contained in allocation law (the reasonable preference groups);
- enables us to identify changing levels of housing need and to alter targets accordingly; and
- enables a range of needs to be addressed thereby assisting us in achieving balanced and sustainable communities.

Note

The term "balanced communities" simply refers to having a wide range of households from different cultural and social backgrounds. Sustainable communities are achieved when areas are popular places to live and work.

4.2.2. The housing needs that we meet, including a definition of need

(a) Housing need defined

Housing need is a complex term that must be defined in relation to certain standards.

In this policy, housing need is defined against:

- **legal standards** that define homelessness, the tolerable standard and the overcrowded standard;
- **professional standards** such as our overcrowding standard that is higher than the existing legal standard;
- **social standards** that address applicants' preferences and choices, for example, applicants who want to live nearer relatives. This standard includes environmental and infrastructural issues such as social isolation due to lack of transport or poor facilities; and
- **affordability standards** that relate to the ability of households to pay for current housing costs.

Note

We assess housing need on an ongoing basis through our Letting Plan. This Plan evaluates the numbers of applicants on our housing list, their preferences and the housing stock that is available to meet demand.

(b) The housing needs that we meet

Applicants with housing needs are given points for these needs and then their application is put into one of the relevant groups.

Applicants with no points are placed on the general list.

We have established **seven** main groups as follows:

- referrals of applicants affected by homelessness from Stirling Council;
- the reasonable preference groups (four in total);

- transfer applicants; and
- the general group.

The main rules concerning each group are explained below.

Group 1: Referrals of applicants from Stirling Council

We work closely with Stirling Council to prevent homelessness and to re-house applicants affected by homelessness referred to us by the council.

We also work with Stirling Council to re-house other referrals or nominations.

Details of this arrangement are explained in section 5 and Appendix 2.

Group 2: The reasonable preference groups

Group 2 contains the **four** reasonable groups as explained in section 3.

Each group is now explained below.

Note

The main Act that covers these legal issues is the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended)

(a) People affected by homelessness and those threatened with homelessness

Homelessness is defined in law and applicants are assessed against this legal framework.

Applicants who apply as homeless persons (or threatened with homelessness) are considered under our allocation policy. They may also present as homeless persons to Stirling Council for consideration for housing.

The term “threatened with homelessness” means being likely to become homeless within two months.

The main types of applications likely to be threatened with homelessness are applicants living:

- in the private sector with limited security;
- with friends or relatives; and
- in tied accommodation or in the armed forces.

Each applicant category is now briefly explained.

(i) Private sector with limited security

This covers private rented sector accommodation in which a tenancy is ending due to court action for recovery of possession. For example, this could also apply when the landlord is ending a short assured tenancy by using the correct legal procedures.

(ii) Living with friends or relatives

This covers applicants who reside with other people, for instance, their family or friends but who have been requested to leave.

(iii) Tied accommodation and the armed forces

This covers applicants residing in accommodation that is part of their employment and that will be ending due to retirement (tied accommodation), or discharge (armed forces).

(b) People living in housing below the tolerable standard

Housing does not meet the tolerable standard if it fails to meet any of the elements defined in law. For example, a house must have a sink that has hot and cold water.

The application form contains these elements so that housing below the tolerable standard is clearly identified.

We award a fixed point award if a house fails to meet the standard.

Note

In our policy, a house is deemed to include caravans.

(c) People living in overcrowded houses or in large families

The legal overcrowding standard includes the living room and bedrooms as being appropriate rooms for sleeping.

The law also includes people who have large families as being a separate group to be given reasonable preference. "Large families" are not defined in law but we cover this below under our professional standard.

In this policy, we cover two forms of overcrowding.

Firstly, we give applicants whose house is statutorily overcrowded greater priority in this group.

Secondly, we have developed our own professional standard of overcrowding that includes large families as being overcrowded if their house does not meet our standards of occupancy.

This standard reflects contemporary standards of what is acceptable. For example, our standard excludes the living room as sleeping accommodation when assessing overcrowding.

Our occupancy standard

Our occupancy standard defines what rooms people should expect, including the type of bedroom.

Each couple (that is, partners of the same or opposite sex) should have their own bedroom. This should be a double bedroom.

Each single person should have his/her own bedroom. This should be a single bedroom.

Children who share a bedroom should have their own bedroom as soon as they attain **eight** years of age.

Applicants may request to move to accommodation that does not reduce overcrowding.

We will consider such applications as it may address certain needs such as social needs.

This is important as people may not receive an offer of housing given the relative shortage of larger houses relative to demand. No points for overcrowding would, however, be awarded.

Applicants may require extra room due to medical circumstances. A points award may be made for overcrowding on this ground subject to a medical health assessment.

We take account of people who normally live in the house but are temporarily absent. For example, this might include family members working away, or people residing in institutions, including prison.

The size of accommodation let to couples living apart but who have shared custody will be made based on actual custody arrangement.

We award a set point figure for each bedroom needed.

Note

We do not let houses to applicants if this were to cause statutory overcrowding.

(d) People living in unsatisfactory housing conditions

This category is broad and covers forms of housing need that arise due to unsatisfactory housing conditions.

These conditions include the following factors:

- accessibility;
- disrepair; and
- harassment.

Accessibility

This applies to applicants who require to move to alternative accommodation due to medical related conditions; or to disabled people whose housing does not meet their accessibility needs.

Accessibility needs of individual applicants are assessed through a process of self-assessment. This is covered in detail in our internal procedures and applicants are advised of what they should do when providing information.

We award two levels of points depending on whether there are serious accessibility needs or other accessibility needs.

Note

Each case is assessed on merit taking account of the individual's needs measured relative to the condition of their existing home.

Disrepair

Disrepair is an important element that makes a house unsatisfactory to live in.

We may award points under this category if steps are not being taken to remedy the disrepair in question.

An example of disrepair is a leaking roof that is causing dampness internally.

In cases of disrepair, we award an applicant a fixed point award.

Harassment

We are committed to addressing any form of harassment. Harassment can take many forms, including harassment on grounds such as age, disability, race, sex and sexual orientation.

In cases of harassment, we award an applicant a fixed point award.

Note

We have established a separate policy and procedure for dealing with all forms of harassment.

Group 3: Transfers

We operate a separate transfer list to:

- enable households to move to other housing thereby releasing housing for other applicants;
- address the preferences of tenants that are a form of housing need; and
- foster a community that is popular and inclusive.

Tenants who apply for alternative housing are placed in group 3. Applicants receive points for the same housing needs as other applicants, although only transfer applicants are awarded under-occupation points. This is done to promote the best use of our housing stock in line with one of our allocation policy objectives.

In assessing under-occupation, we use the same occupancy standards as for overcrowding.

Applicants may apply to move to housing that lessens present under-occupation even if their new house is under-occupied. No points for under-occupation will be granted unless this reduces under-occupation within our stock.

We award a fixed point for each room under-occupied.

Group 4: The general list

This list is made of a range of needs that are not covered by the other groups, including applicants who prefer to live elsewhere. This is important as applicants may be in need for social or environmental reasons and these are not included in the legal framework.

The needs covered in this section include:

- applicants wanting to be nearer to specific facilities, namely workplace or educational or health facilities;
- applicants wanting to be nearer relatives or friends to provide or receive support;

- applicants seeking accommodation for reasons of preference;
- applicants seeking accommodation who are unable to afford present housing costs;
- applicants with families (children 16 and below) residing above ground level if there is no internal lift within the property; and
- applicants sharing amenities, that is, a bathroom (including shared toilet) or kitchen.

Notes

Applicants living outwith Forth Housing Association's area of operation will only obtain points in this section if the facilities or support requirements are within the Forth Housing Association area of operation.

An applicant sharing amenities may include family members presently living with parents but who want to live on their own.

Tenants that we have allowed to sublet part of their home (or take in lodgers) are not awarded shared amenity points. Their subtenants or lodgers would, though, qualify for such points should they apply for housing.

4.2.3. Making offers

We offer housing based on the specific housing needs and preferences provided on our application form.

Examples of preference factors that we consider are as follows:

- area and street;
- type of house;
- floor level in the case of flats;
- amenity provision such as gardens; and
- internal amenities such as type of heating.

We will not, therefore, offer applicants housing that they do not request. This includes both house types and location.

We will make applicants three reasonable offers before considering suspending future offers. See section 6 for further information on suspensions.

We counsel applicants, however, on the question of realistic options as demand far outstrips supply of housing in certain areas. This is explained in detail below.

In order to ensure that applicants' expectations are realistic, we offer detailed information on the likely availability of houses in particular areas. This is based on re-let patterns that we monitor on an ongoing basis.

Note

If a legal order such as an Antisocial Behaviour Order prohibits an applicant from moving to particular areas, we will suspend offers of housing to these areas.

4.2.4. General rules

Our general rules cover the following issues:

- housing stock that is specially designed or adapted to meet particular housing needs;
- allocating houses to committee members and employees;
- committee members' role in allocation policy development; and
- deciding priority if applicants have the same points.

(a) Housing stock designed to meet particular needs

We reserve the allocation of specific houses to certain groups.

This housing covers the following needs:

Housing for wheelchair users. This type of housing is designed to meet the needs of people who use wheelchairs in their home. We will only consider households who have a permanent member who is, or who has a medical condition and they become a wheelchair user to occupy accommodation designed to this standard.

Supported Housing. Sometimes we may make arrangements with housing support agencies that specific houses should only be let to people with support needs that the agency will meet. We will only consider applicants with the type of needs the support agency can meet for these houses.

Amenity/Sheltered Housing. This housing is particularly designed for the needs of older people. We will firstly consider applicants who are, or who have a permanent household member who is suitable for this type of accommodation.

(b) Allocating houses to committee members and employees

Committee members and employees applying for housing are considered using the rules of this policy. This also applies in the case of close relatives of committee members and employees.

We process such applications in line with Association policy and follow appropriate reporting procedures to our regulatory body, namely Communities Scotland.

(c) Committee members' role in allocation policy development

Committee members do not participate in the allocation of individual houses to applicants; this role is delegated to employees.

Committee members' role is restricted to the important strategic duties of developing the policy – based on staff guidance – and monitoring the implementation of that policy.

Committee members may also be requested to consider individual cases that are not covered by existing policy principles. In such cases, the decision should be aligned to the review of the allocation policy and the new principles incorporated into the new policy.

(d) Deciding priority if applicants have the same points

If applicants within the same group have the same points total, we base priority on the date of application.

Section 5: Referrals from Stirling Council

We work in partnership with Stirling Council to address the various forms of housing need that can arise.

This partnership arrangement involves taking referrals of:

- people affected by homelessness; and
- other nominated applicants.

Details of these arrangements are contained in Appendix 2.

Section 6: Mutual exchanges

This section outlines our policy on mutual exchanges. This covers the following issues:

- tenant's right to exchange;
- reasons for refusing requests to exchange;
- time scale for processing applications; and
- appeals.

(a) Tenant's right to exchange

Scottish secure tenants may exchange their tenancy with any other Scottish secure tenant. An exchange means "swapping homes" with another tenant.

This may include exchanges with tenants of Forth Housing Association, or tenants of another landlord.

Tenants must first obtain our written consent before the exchange can go ahead.

We may only refuse our consent if we have reasonable grounds to do so.

(b) Reasons for refusing requests to exchange

We may only withhold consent if we have reasonable grounds for doing so.

We base our reasons for refusing applications using grounds set out in the **Housing (Scotland) Act 2001**, as well as other grounds that we deem to be reasonable.

It is stressed that each case is assessed on merit relating to the particular circumstances of each case.

The legal grounds that we may use to refuse exchange requests are summarised in plain language as follows:

- a legal Notice of Proceedings has been served on the tenant;
- an order for recovery of possession of the house has been made against the tenant;
- the landlord has provided the house as part of the tenant's employment;
- the house has been designed or adapted for occupation by someone with special needs and – after the exchange – the new tenant doesn't have such needs;
- the accommodation is substantially larger than that needed by the tenant and the tenant's family, or is not suitable to their needs; and
- the exchange would result in statutory overcrowding.

Notes

This list is not exhaustive and there may be other grounds when it might be reasonable to refuse requests.

These grounds are dealt with in our staff procedures that accompany the exchange policy.

We will consider exchanges as reasonable if they meet our occupancy standards as detailed in this allocation policy.

(c) Timescale for processing applications

We must provide our written response to applications within **one month** of receiving applications.

If we fail to respond to applications within this time scale, we are deemed to have given consent.

If we refuse an exchange application, we must give reasons in writing.

This is required to enable tenants to appeal against our decision.

(d) Appeals

If we refuse an exchange application, tenants are entitled to appeal to the sheriff court.

We inform tenants of this right in our letters.

Section 7: Suspensions

7.1. General

This section explains those situations when we may withhold offers of housing to applicants.

This is referred to as “suspending application” throughout this section, although applications once registered remain on our housing list until their removal. For example, an applicant may request us to delete their application, or it may be removed at the re-registration stage with their consent.

We may suspend application for two main reasons, namely:

- suspensions due to an applicant’s conduct; and
- suspension on grounds of eligibility.

Each type of suspension is now explained.

(a) Suspensions due to an applicant's conduct

We may suspend applications if an applicant is failing to meet the terms of tenancy. These terms are clearly specified in the tenancy agreement that tenants receive.

For example, we may suspend an application if the applicant is acting in an antisocial manner by causing a nuisance to other tenants.

(b) Suspensions on grounds of eligibility

We may suspend an application, too, if the applicant is not eligible because of the rules within the allocation policy.

For example, an applicant must generally have attained a certain age to qualify for sheltered housing.

7.2. Examples of suspended applications

This section summarises the situations that may result in an application being suspended.

Applications will normally be suspended for no more than **six** months.

Applicants may appeal any suspension that is imposed. Section 7.3. provides information on appeals.

Delayed applications

This is an application that cannot be processed as the applicant has not completed the application form details.

Deferred applications

This is an application that is presently inactive as the applicant only wants housing in the future. An example of this might be an applicant living with parents, or someone in the armed forces.

Suspensions on grounds of age

We may suspend applications on grounds of age if the housing in question is designed or adapted for people of a certain age.

Suspensions on grounds of housing debt

We may suspend applications if there is housing debt over a certain level.

Housing debt relates to rent arrears lawfully due, service charges and rechargeable repairs.

We will only apply suspensions if:

- the debt is more than **one** month's rent;
- an arrangement to repay the debt has not been kept to for at least **three** months; and
- payments are not continuing.

Suspensions on grounds of the legal status of applicants

We meet the relevant law concerning asylum seekers and other migrant workers in respect of their entitlement to register on the housing list. For example, an asylum seeker may register in our housing list provided she/he is sixteen or over, but we cannot offer housing until refugee status is achieved.

Suspensions on grounds of conduct

We may suspend applications due to the conduct of applicants. This is to done to protect the interests of other tenants and residents.

In deciding whether or not to suspend applications on conduct grounds, we consider **three** main factors:

- the nature and seriousness of the conduct;
- the likelihood of the conduct continuing in the new location; and
- other options, for example, could a short Scottish secure tenancy be granted instead.

Note

A short Scottish secure tenancy can only be granted in circumstances prescribed in law and is a form of tenancy with limited security of tenure.

Suspensions on grounds of refusing reasonable offers of accommodation

We may suspend applications due to an applicant refusing **three** reasonable offers.

This is a reasonable position as we only offer applicants houses in areas that they specifically request. Repeated failure to accept offers of housing requested may result in the Association facing rental loss so suspensions are used to stop this. Again, this is an important principle within our policy objectives.

Suspensions on grounds of legal orders

We may suspend applications if a legal order is in existence that prohibits someone living in a particular area.

For example, such orders may apply in the case of matrimonial disputes, antisocial behaviour, and sex offenders.

7.3. Appeals

We will suspend applications for no longer than six months.

Applicants may appeal to our internal appeals committee.

Details of how to appeal are described in section 10.

Section 8: Performance management

We monitor this policy to ensure that policy objectives are implemented effectively.

We monitor quantitative and qualitative issues.

(a) Quantitative monitoring

This involves monitoring things by numbers and includes:

- new applications by number, including processing within time scales;
- number of applications reviewed and deleted;
- offers made and whether accepted or refused;
- reasons for offers being refused;
- allocations to each group by target;
- numbers of appeals and complaints and outcomes; and
- equality information to identify applications, offers and lets by reference to factors such as age, disability, ethnicity and gender.

(b) Qualitative monitoring

This involves monitoring the quality of services that we provide and includes:

- advice provision; and
- documentation attaining certain standards, for example, being in plain language.

We present information on allocation trends to the Management Committee on a **three monthly** basis.

We also provide general information on allocation trends to tenants and other service users through our newsletter.

Section 9: Consultation and policy review

9.1. General

We review the allocation policy every **three** years, or sooner if needed. For example, the allocation policy may need to be reviewed in the light of any changes in law.

We consult with tenants and other service users on relevant policy proposals through our tenant participation strategy.

9.2. Methods of Review

The Housing Manager is responsible for initiating reviews and will organise detailed consultation of policy proposals with:

- the Management Committee;
- housing staff;
- tenants; and
- other service users such as housing list applicants.

Section 10: Appeals and complaints

This section summarises our appeals and complaints system; information on these procedures are available to applicants.

10.1. Appeals

Any applicant wanting to appeal against a decision taken in line with this policy should appeal in writing to the Director stating the grounds of their appeal. We can provide a standard appeal form, on request.

Appeals are considered by the Appeals Committee at the next appropriate meeting after the receipt of the appeal. This is subject to ratification by the Management Committee whose decision is final.

10.2. Complaints

Complaints are different in from appeals. Any complaints are dealt with under our Complaint Policy.

For example, an applicant may complain if we don't:

- apply the allocation policy properly; or
- provide services in line with our published organisational standards.

We give tenants a copy of our complaints policy and procedure when they sign their tenancy agreement. We inform all applicants in our general information pack.

This information includes details about the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman; this agency deals with complaints involving failure to implement services properly(maladministration).

Applicants must generally use our internal complaints system before contacting the Ombudsman.

Appendix 1: Points table

The points table describes the present targets set for each group and then lists the needs factors for which we award points.

Group 1: Referrals of applicants from Stirling Council

Target: 50%

Group 2: The reasonable preference groups

(a) People affected by homelessness and those threatened with homelessness

People affected by homelessness - Target: 10%

People threatened with homelessness - Target: 8%

(b) People living in housing below the tolerable standard - Target: 5%

(c) People living in overcrowded houses of large families.

People living in overcrowded houses - Target: 5%

People with large families - Target: 5%

(d) People living in unsatisfactory housing conditions - Target: 10%

Group 3: The transfer list - Target: 5%

Group 4: The general group - Target: 2%

Points elements

Homeless	100
Threatened with homelessness	50
Below the tolerable standard	30
Overcrowding per bedroom	15
Statutory	30
Other	20

Unsatisfactory housing

Accessibility	40 or 20
Disrepair	20
Harassment	20

Transfers

Under-occupation – per bedroom not used, above one spare	20
--	----

General

Applicants wanting to be nearer to specific facilities, namely workplace or educational or health facilities	10
Applicants wanting to be nearer relatives or friends to provide or receive support	10
Applicants seeking accommodation for reasons of preference	10

Applicants seeking accommodation who are unable to afford present housing costs	10
Applicants with families (children 16 and below) residing above ground level if there is no internal lift within the property	10
Applicants sharing amenities, that is, a bathroom (including shared toilet) or kitchen.	20



Appendix 2: Stirling Council referral protocol

**HOMELESSNESS PROTOCOL
(Section 5 Referrals)**

BETWEEN

STIRLING COUNCIL

AND

FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Homelessness Duty Protocol for Stirling

1. Introduction

The Protocol seeks to ensure the smooth and effective operation of the new legislative duty upon Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to comply with requests from the local authority to rehouse homeless people, in accordance with Section 5 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The terms of this legislation, and any guidance or regulations issued by Ministers in accordance with it, take precedence over the terms of the Protocol.

The objective is to provide accommodation to homeless people and to ensure that the referral process operates in a fair and non-discriminatory fashion.

The aims of the Homelessness Protocol are to help:

- **Provide long-term, sustainable solutions to homelessness;**
- **Prevent homelessness;**
- **Lessen the problems for people when homelessness does occur;**
- **Develop flexible, person-centred services based on individual needs;**
- **Work effectively, and share responsibility with partners and;**
- **Develop and maintain sustainable communities**

Stirling Council and Forth Housing Association seek to promote equal access to housing and are committed to equality of opportunity with regard to age, race, gender, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

All information provided in connection with referrals will be treated as confidential by all organisations.

2. Liaison Arrangements

The parties to this agreement will have a named officer with day-to-day responsibility and authority for dealing with homelessness referrals.

For Stirling Council this will be the person with the responsibility for making referrals for the area in question (this will be the Area Housing Officer). Where a Homelessness Caseworker initially assesses homeless applicants, the referral will still be routed through the named Housing Officer. The named Housing Officer will be responsible for liaison with Forth Housing Association and the Homelessness Caseworker at Springkerse House. Forth Housing Association may contact the Homeless Casework Manager if there is a particular issue with a referral.

Details of Stirling Council's operational structure and homelessness processes are outlined in (**appendix i**).

There should be at least a second named officer within each organisation as a substitute to cover for absences.

Each organisation will be responsible for notifying the other of changes of personnel.

Local liaison arrangements will be entered into and regularly reviewed to ensure that the key personnel are familiar with each other and to ensure operational awareness, understanding and communication. There will be regular, formal meetings on an annual basis between the two parties at a local level to give consideration as to how the Protocol is operating.

3. Stock Information

In order to inform the number and type of requests made for accommodation, Forth Housing Association will provide the Council with full information detailing:

- stock numbers
- property sizes

- estimated projected turnover of stock
- actual historical turnover of stock
- information on the number and type of specifically designed properties and:
- any special characteristics of certain stock

In order to minimise the burden on Forth Housing Association, this information will be linked to existing monitoring arrangements with the Council and collected annually via a single information request via the Local Housing Strategy.

Stock information should be provided on an area basis from Forth Housing Association.

4. Tenancy/Household Information Exchange

Where the Council, in making a homelessness assessment, believes that the applicant has previously resided in a property owned by Forth Housing Association either as:

- The tenant or
- A member of the tenant's household

Forth Housing Association will, to the best of its abilities, co-operate in supplying information requested about such residence that is relevant to the homelessness assessment.

In making a referral to Forth Housing Association the Council will provide relevant information about existing or previous tenancies (with a Council or RSL) held by the homeless applicant.

5. Quotas

The Council's allocation policy states that in each allocation area every second property, of each size, is allocated to a homeless priority applicant, if there is one waiting for that allocation area. Referrals to RSLs will be consistent with this approach. The outcome of this policy objective would mean that up to 25% of lets to the RSL could be to homeless applicants. As at 2005 there is a smaller percentage of allocations to homeless people, the reasons for this are complex and it is not anticipated that allocations will approach 25% within the next 12

months. RSLs will be kept advised of homelessness presentations on an annual basis. This will assist the Council and RSLs in future planning and the agreement of quotas.

Each year, the Council will provide RSLs with figures which show the % of homeless referrals to the RSL and will report on the outcome in terms of properties let to the RSLs.

Reaching the quota would not be considered reasonable grounds to refuse a referral, as these are set as guidance.

The establishment of such quotas should enable Forth Housing Association to plan how vacancies are to be let, and the Council to manage a fair distribution of requests between all RSLs operating within Stirling. Statistics on homeless presentations will be provided to Forth Housing Association on an annual basis.

Quotas will be reviewed on an annual basis and will be altered in line with any changes to Forth Housing Association stock as a result of any new developments.

6. New Build

Forth Housing Association will have due regard to those priorities set out in the current Local Housing Strategy and work with Stirling Council to establish a balance of priorities within its development programme. This will include recognition of the needs of young and vulnerable households. Forth Housing Association must notify the Council one month before any new builds are available to let to allow the housing officer to refer homeless applicants.

7. Protocol for supply of Temporary Accommodation

In addition to this agreement a Protocol may also be developed in relation to the future supply of temporary accommodation by Forth Housing Association.

Forth Housing Association will discuss and agree, in consultation with Stirling Council, the exact proportion of its quotas to be provided as temporary accommodation.

8. The Referral Process

The aim of the referral process is to provide applicants with a suitable offer of secure accommodation within six weeks of being accepted by the Housing Officer as recommended by the Draft Protocol produced by COSLA and the SFHA.

The process followed will be a combination of a void or applicant led approach and relate to a specific homeless applicant. The aim of the referral process is to provide homeless households with a suitable offer of accommodation.

Where the process is void led, then Forth Housing Association makes the Council aware of vacancies through the Council's housing staff. This will operate alongside the current nomination arrangement. On receipt of this notification, the Council will decide whether the void should be filled under the Nomination Arrangement or the Protocol.

The process for filling the void under the Protocol is as follows:

- Having assessed someone as homeless, and potentially eligible for referral for permanent accommodation, the Housing Officer will determine which RSL with whom to make contact.

This will be done by taking into account:

- The area where the homeless applicant wants to live and the Code of Guidance requirements regarding locations;
- Stock profiles and turnover rates of all RSLs to assess the likelihood of them having suitable property;
- The proportion of referrals already made of all RSLs to assess the likelihood of them having suitable property;
- The proportion of referrals already made during the current period to the various RSLs compared with target quotas;

- Any locally agreed issues/principles, which may be raised and discussed in informal contact between the parties before a formal referral. Examples of such factors might be as follows:

The following list has been identified at this stage:

Recently evicted households: Forth Housing Association may be anxious to ensure that Stirling Council does not refer a person/household to it that the RSL has recently evicted or who has abandoned a property that it owns.

Size and type of property: Forth Housing Association will wish to avoid making a let that would breach its own allocations policy in terms of size and type of property allocated.

Lack of connection/no desire to live in an area: In order to avoid failed tenancies and repeat homeless presentations, the Council will avoid wherever possible referring homeless people for areas in which they do not wish to live.

Sensitive Allocations - Wherever possible, the Council will seek to take into account any sensitive circumstances, such as the potential for lifestyle clashes in the property (or close etc).

Perpetrators of abuse/violence: The Council will not normally refer to Forth Housing Association a perpetrator of abuse or violence towards a person living in the vicinity of the only stock owned by the RSL; if a referral is made unknowingly, the Council will agree to withdraw the request.

Support Needs - Wherever possible the Council will not be seeking to refer applicants who have unmet support needs. The outcomes of pending assessment or assessments that have been completed will be made available to Forth Housing Association.

There may be different levels of support required and it is the responsibility of the Homeless Caseworker to identify the level of need. e.g. Referral to Social Work, Accommodation & Aftercare Worker support.

In doing all of the above full regard will be had to the requirements of the Data Protection Acts and other relevant statutory provisions.

Where the referral is to be applicant led, the Housing Officer will contact Forth Housing Association to make informal enquiries to assess the likelihood of a suitable property becoming available. The Housing Officer will ensure that the applicant wishes to be housed by the RSL.

Where it appears that a suitable property will become available or is available and has been offered to the Council for nomination (the void-led approach), Forth Housing Association will send FORM A - VOID NOTIFICATION (**appendix ii**) to the appropriate housing officer. The Housing Officer will disclose appropriate information about the homeless applicant and the information will be provided on FORM B - SECTION 5 REFERRAL (**appendix iii**).

Further information will be provided to Forth Housing Association by sending a PERSONAL HOUSING SUPPORT PLAN (**appendix iv**) with the following information:

- History concerning assessed housing support needs and details of support packages that will be provided
- Any other information of which the RSL should be aware in attempting to ensure that:
- The tenancy can be successfully sustained
- Any potential issues relating to health and welfare of existing residents can be taken into consideration and assessed.

Once the Housing Officer decides to make a referral they will fax or e-mail FORM B to Forth Housing Association (e-mails always to be copied to a second officer in receiving organisation). All further communications referred to in this protocol are to be the same method unless otherwise specified. It is envisaged that a series of pro-formas will be developed for use at each of the communication stages.

The pro-forma will include information about the contact details for the homeless person as well as any family member or advocate or adviser that needs to be involved. It will also specify any particular needs relating to literacy or sensory impairment and any particular language requirements.

Forth Housing Association will then confirm receipt of request immediately or in any event within one working day of receipt.

Forth Housing Association may carry out a home visit but only by arrangement via the Homeless Team to the person to clarify circumstances, requirements and preferred location, explain tenancy terms etc. Prior notification will be given to the Housing Officer/Caseworker of the date/time of the planned visit. Forth Housing Association must **not** use home visits to re-examine the homeless assessment and question whether an offer should be made. Forth Housing Association can offer the Council information that it had not previously been aware of when making the initial assessment.

Prior to formally responding, Forth Housing Association will notify the Housing Officer of any reason for not wishing to comply that was not apparent earlier. It will be for the Housing Officer/Caseworker to decide whether or not to proceed with the request to re-house using FORM C - ACCEPTANCE/REFUSAL (**appendix v**).

Forth Housing Association will give its response within 5 working days of receipt of the request. In the period prior to giving its response, Forth Housing Association may contact the Housing Officer for further information, or to provide information to the Housing Officer. This does not change the RSL response deadline unless the two parties agree a revised response deadline. In some (exceptional) circumstances this provision/exchange of information may lead to Stirling Council formally withdrawing the nomination, particularly where Stirling Council has reviewed its original homelessness assessment.

Forth Housing Association's response is one of the following:

Situation A: Forth Housing Association indicates a property is available

Situation B: Forth Housing Association indicates it has good reason not to comply

9. Situation A: Forth Housing association indicates a property is available

On receipt of confirmation from Stirling Council that the proposed offer is acceptable, the Housing Officer should contact the Caseworker who will then contact the homeless applicant to make arrangements for viewing as soon as

possible. The offer letter from Forth Housing Association will outline the legal status of the offer and the possible implications of refusal.

The opportunity to view the property will normally remain open for 5 days from the date of issue. An extension may be granted but only after an assessment of the particular reasons and circumstances.

The household must accept or refuse the offer within 2 working days of viewing the property. In exceptional circumstances a longer period of time might be agreed, particularly in the event of any ongoing court action in relation to the homelessness assessment.

Forth Housing Association must communicate the outcome of the offer to Stirling Council within one working day of receipt of the household's decision; where the household has accepted the offer, Forth Housing Association must also confirm the agreed date of allocation to Stirling Council.

Where the household has refused the offer, the reason for refusal must be communicated to the Council. It will be the Homelessness Caseworker's responsibility to make an assessment of whether the offer is reasonable for the applicant to occupy in order to discharge the Council's duty. This will normally be done within one working day of the information about the refusal being received.

If the reason for the refusal can be addressed by some remedial action (e.g. poor condition of property) the Housing Officer will check with Forth Housing Association as whether this work will be carried out.

If the Housing Officer finally concludes that the offer is not reasonable to occupy and that the duty has not been discharged then Forth Housing Association will be asked to make another offer.

If the Housing Officer decides that the offer is reasonable, then she/he will counsel the applicant about the implications of refusing it. The applicant will be informed at this stage of the right to have this decision reviewed under the Council's obligations for review of homelessness decisions. Forth Housing Association will hold the property for up to one working day after the refusal has been received to allow for the applicant to accept the offer.

Forth Housing Association will be deemed to have complied with the request if

the offer was sanctioned by Stirling Council but refused by the household.

10. Situation B: Forth Housing Association indicates it has good reason not to comply

Forth Housing Association's response specifies its reasons for non-compliance, which must normally be in line with the ministerial guidance.

Stirling Council will consider Forth Housing Associations response and, within 5 working days, respond to Forth Housing Association. Stirling Council's options are:

- Within the 5-day period, to contact Forth Housing Association and discuss their response; this could lead to Forth Housing Association agreeing to reconsider the request.
- To withdraw the referral (this may or may not be after informal discussions with Forth Housing Association).
- To indicate commencement of the period of 5 working days within which the parties must reach agreement or submit to arbitration (this would arise only where informal discussions between the parties have ended in stalemate).

11. Arbitration

In accordance with the provisions of Section 6 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 the parties to this Protocol will agree to the appointment of an arbiter who will have the final say in the event of disputes arising from Forth Housing Association's refusal to comply with a request from Stirling Council to rehouse a homeless person. The Scottish Executive has issued guidance to Local Authorities and RSLs in this respect and a copy of this is attached. **(appendix vi)**

In the event that any parties to the Protocol cannot agree on the appointment of an arbiter, the Regulation & Inspection Section of Communities Scotland (on behalf of the Minister) shall have the authority to appoint the person it believes to be right for the job and to decide on the arrangement that will apply. The arrangements that would take effect are detailed in the guidance.

The procedures that will be followed after the appointment of the arbiter will be set out in Section 4 of the guidance.

12. Tracking and Monitoring of Referrals/Nominations

Forth Housing Association will immediately (within 1 working day) notify the Housing Officer by fax or email of both successful nominations and refused offers.

On a quarterly basis or as agreed Forth Housing Association will forward to Stirling Council's, Management Services Officer a standard format report (**appendix vii**) summarising:

- The total number of nominations received and their outcome – for homeless and mainstream
- Data on overall number of lets by Forth Housing Association (e.g. own waiting list, transfers, Stirling Council nominations, homeless referrals etc). This is also to specify the numbers of homeless people housed by Forth Housing Association through its normal allocations activities that fall into one of the categories agreed within the Protocol as eligible for offsetting against the quota.

On a quarterly basis or as agreed Stirling Council will supply Forth Housing Association total figures for both the period in question and, for the year so far:

- The total number of homeless acceptances for permanent accommodation, broken down by area.
- An analysis of referrals made to all landlords (including the Council) within the Stirling area and their outcome.

This data will enable all parties to monitor against any targets/quotas agreed within the Protocol.

In addition to this, arrangements will be put in place to ensure that more qualitative information on the operation and outputs of the referral process can be obtained. This will include:

- Information on the relative rate, by area/landlord, at which referrals result in offers of tenancy being made, and accepted, and the reasons for this.
- Information concerning the rate at which tenancies are successfully sustained following referrals and the reasons for this e.g. appropriateness of level of support provided.

All parties to the Protocol undertake to explore the potential for existing or new IT to provide a fast, efficient and cost effective means by tracking homeless referrals and to generate accurate analytical data about the operation of the Protocol.

13. Reviewing the Operation of the Protocol

Representatives of Forth Housing Association and Stirling Council will meet on a regular basis to discuss and review the general operation of the Protocol on a localised basis.

It is recognised that, as a last resort, any party, which has serious concerns about the operation of the Protocol, can contact the Regulator, Communities Scotland, which has responsibility for ensuring compliance with Performance Standards by all parties in this respect.

Principles for Information Sharing in Relation to Homeless Referrals

When a homeless nomination is being made, the Housing Officer will provide Forth Housing Association with details of name(s), dates of birth and composition of the household along with any particular requirements that the person has in relation to property type and size.

It is important that Forth Housing Association is made aware of:

- Any issues concerning the person/household's ability to sustain a tenancy;
- Any likelihood of a risk being posed to neighbours, members of the community and Forth Housing Association staff and contractors

In the majority of cases there will be no such issues and the Housing Officer will simply confirm that this is the case when making the referral.

Where there are such issues, the Caseworker will be responsible for making a formal assessment of the person/households suitability for being referred based on all available information.

In the event that there are support needs, the Caseworker will be responsible for referring the case to the appropriate assessment agency, i.e. Social Work, and that arrangements have been made to put in place any support package that will be required.

In certain circumstances the Caseworker may consider that a case conference involving Forth Housing Association would be appropriate. Forth Housing Association may also suggest such a case conference after the initial nomination is made. The Caseworker will have the final say over this but will respond as positively as possible to Forth Housing Association in this regard.

The Caseworker will provide Forth Housing Association with the assessment of the person's ability to sustain a tenancy and/or any risk that might be posed to members of the local community along with relevant supporting information derived from the assessment process. In the event that the person has a support requirement Forth Housing Association will receive details of this and of the package to be provided and the duration of the package.

In the event that the person requires the assistance of the Homeless Accommodation and Aftercare worker to maintain a permanent tenancy, this service will be available for a maximum of 12 months. This information will be made available to Forth Housing Association as part of the nomination process.

In doing all of the above, full regard will be had to the requirements of the Data Protection Acts and other relevant statutory provisions. The person's consent will be required for such information to be forwarded. There will be an exception where it is considered that information sharing is necessary, e.g. where there is a perceived significant risk in terms of client/tenant safety or where there are concerns regarding the safety of a household member, the general public or staff members.

The receiving landlord will handle all information received in confidence.

Appendices

Appendix i	Homeless Service Structure
Appendix ii	Form A - Void Notification
Appendix iii	Form B - Section 5 Referral
Appendix iv	Personal Housing Support Plan
Appendix v	Form C - Acceptance/Refusal
Appendix vi	Guidance on Arbitration
Appendix vii	Form D - Quarterly Monitoring Form

NAME.....

DESIGNATION.....

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF FORTH HOUSING ASSOCIATION

.....

DATE.....

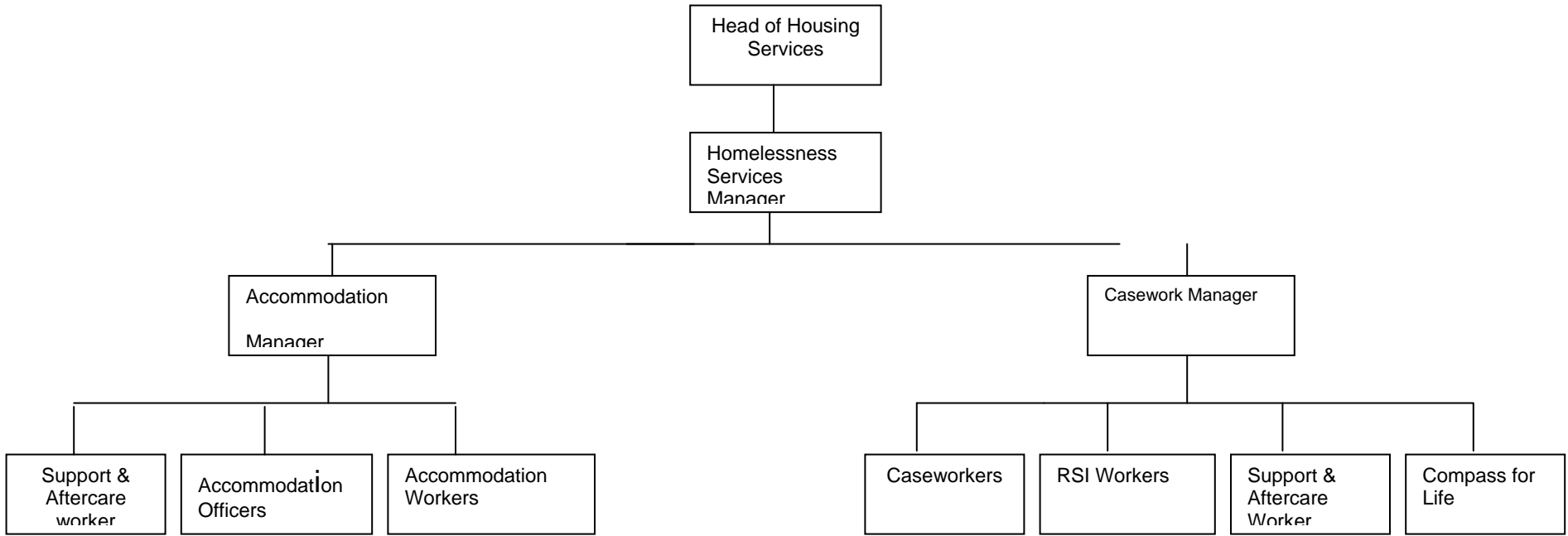
NAME.....

DESIGNATION.....

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF STIRLING COUNCIL

.....

DATE.....



**FORM A
VOID NOTIFICATION**

Appendix ii

FROM _____ **HOUSING ASSOCIATION** **Date** _____

HOUSE TYPE _____

APARTMENT SIZE _____

**PROPERTY
ADDRESS** _____

**ADDITIONAL
DETAILS:** _____

**Monthly
Rent:** _____

**Service
Charge:** _____

**Anticipated available
date** _____

**Responsible
Officer** _____

Fax No: _____

E-mail: _____

TO BE SENT TO APPROPRIATE AREA HOUSING TEAM BY ASSOCIATION



Appendix iii

**FORM B
HOUSING (SCOTLAND) ACT 2001**

SECTION 5 REFERRAL

(VOID LED)

TO _____ HOUSING ASSOCIATION

HOUSING LIST NOMINEES

DATE: _____

Property Nominated for: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel No: _____

Has the person been referred before? YES/NO (circle)

PERSON(S) IN HOUSEHOLDS

Name	Age	Sex	DOB	Relationship
------	-----	-----	-----	--------------

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Support Needs/Personal Housing Plan-----

Past tenancies-----

Reference-----

Additional Comments

**TO BE SENT TO ASSOCIATION FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF FORM 'A' WITHIN 3
WORKING DAYS**

Person information

Name	
Preferred name	
Address	
Date of birth	
NI number	
Telephone number	

Housing Details

Accommodation type	
Tenure type	
Household composition	
What type of heating	

Professional Contacts

Name	
Relationship	
Address	
Contact number	

Name	
Relationship	
Address	
Contact number	

Name	
Relationship	
Address	
Contact number	

Health Problems

No problems Occasional problems Coping with Support Requires assistance

Physical Health

Comments	
-----------------	--

Mental Health

Comments	
-----------------	--

Mobility

Comments	
-----------------	--

Learning Difficulties No problems Occasional Problems Coping with Support Requires Assistance

Comments	
-----------------	--

Housing

No problems Occasional problems Coping with Support Requires assistance

Comments	
-----------------	--

Capacity to Manage

No problems Occasional problems Coping with Support Requires Assistance

Finance

Comments	
-----------------	--

Needs

Equipment, adaptations already in place

Equipment, adaptations required

Medical History

Details of Income

Summary of Needs/Recommendations

Plan & Objectives

Client Signature:-

Support Worker:-

Date:-

Copy of plan provided:- YES/NO

Date of next review:-

Mandate

**I agree that Stirling Council; Homeless Services can share my details
with other agencies and landlords who can provide housing & support.**

Signed:-

Date:-

FORM C

Appendix v

**SECTION 5 REFERRAL
ACCEPTANCE/REFUSAL**

FROM _____ **HOUSING ASSOCIATION**
DATE _____

DATE OF REFERRAL BY STIRLING COUNCIL _____

**PROPERTY
ADDRESS** _____

ACCEPTANCE YES/NO (CIRCLE WHICH)

**APPLICANT
NAME:** _____

**APPLICANT
ADDRESS:** _____

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/REASON FOR
REFUSAL:** _____

Signature _____

**TO BE SENT TO HOUSING OFFICER HOUSING AREA TEAM BY
ASSOCIATION WITHIN 5 WORKING DAYS**

**QUARTERLY MONITORING
(Form D)**

From.....Housing Association

QuarterPeriod.....to.....

INFORMATION	TOTALS IN PERIOD
number of lets (relets & new)	
number of nominations requested	
number of potential homeless referrals	
Number of actual homeless referrals	
number of referrals refused by Association	
i) Applicant Led	
ii) Void Led	
Total	
Number of offers of housing accepted	
i) Applicant Led	
ii) Void Led	
Total	
Number of offers of housing refused	
i) Applicant Led	
ii) Void Led	
Total	
To be sent to: Management Services Officer Housing Services e-mail:	

Appendix 3: Forth Housing Association -Information

INTRODUCTION

Forth Housing Association is a non-profit local housing provider, which is 'Registered Social Landlord' with the Scottish Executives Social Housing Regulator (Communities Scotland).

The Association's origins date back to May 1987 when a steering group called Stirling Single Housing Group was established with the aim of increasing the provision of housing for single people in the Stirling area. Since formal registration on the 14th March 1988 Forth has continued to take on new challenges and now houses a variety of households including families, couples, single people, wheelchair users and people with particular and varying needs.

Forth's main efforts continue to be directed towards finding sites and developing and managing houses in the part of the Stirling area which is mainly east of the M9 motorway and includes Stirling town, Bannockburn, Cambusbarron, Plean, Fallin and Cowie. At the end of September 2007 the Association managed 514 houses and flats for rent and shared ownership. Forth's future development programme is mainly on the Raploch regeneration area of Stirling. The housing within the regeneration area will be a mix of private rented and open market sales properties. This will result in the Association increasing its stock by approximately 250 units.

Appendix 4: Law and good practice framework

Main law

Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (as amended)

Good practice guidance

SEDD Circular 1/2002: Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Housing Lists and Allocations, Scottish Executive

Performance Standards for social landlords and homelessness functions, COSLA/ Communities Scotland/ SFHA, 2001.

Chartered Institute of Housing: Standards.

SFHA/Communities Scotland: Raising Standards.