

Inclusive, sustainable communities where people's particular housing needs are met

Guide to the Allocations Policy



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Please read this carefully before completing the Housing Application Form. This is a guide to the main features of Horizon's Housing Allocations Policy. We will supply a full copy of the Housing Allocations Policy if you ask for one.

What is Horizon Housing Association?

Horizon Housing Association is a non-profit making organisation, registered with and monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator. We provide a high standard of affordable housing for rent and shared ownership across Central Scotland.

Who can apply for a Horizon Housing Association House?

If you are over 16 years of age you can apply for housing. The first step is to complete a Housing Application Form. This will give us the information we need about you, your household and the type of housing that you need.

We will use the information to assess your housing needs. Where your present accommodation does not meet your needs you will be awarded points according to our allocations policy.

If you need any document or publication in a language other than English or large print or other media we will provide this at no charge.

The form also allows you to tell us about the type of house you want to live in and where you want to live.

If you have rent arrears, Horizon will only accept applicants who have arrears under 1 month's rent or have an arrangement in place to repay the outstanding arrears, and can provide verification that the arrangement has been in place and maintained for over 3 months.

In each area where we have houses we have an arrangement with the local authority to seek nominations for 50% of the vacant mainstream and amenity properties that we have. This means that 50% of all our properties are relet through the Council's own Housing List, therefore you should also apply for housing to the Local Authority and tell them that you wish to be nominated to a Housing Association. This will mean you will be considered for nomination to any of the Housing Associations that operate in that area.

We do not ask for nominations for wheelchair houses. These are always allocated from our own housing list.

Transferring Horizon Tenants

Horizon will transfer existing tenants whose homes no longer meet their needs. Horizon tenants will have priority for rehousing over applicants who are not Horizon tenants. An inspection of your property will be carried out before being placed on the housing list.

Complaints and Appeals

If you disagree with any decision that we make about your housing application, please write to the Director of Housing Services and say why you are dissatisfied. We will reply within 10 working days.

If you are still unhappy, you can ask for the matter to be considered through Horizon's complaints procedure. We will give you a guide to our complaints procedure that explains the steps involved and how to complain to the Housing Association Ombudsman.

Confidentiality

All the information you provide to us will be treated in strict confidence. The Association is a registered data user and observes the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

You may access the records that the Association holds about your housing application at any time, on request, subject to the data protection act and third party confidentiality.

Keeping You Informed

We will contact you at least once a year to make sure that you want to remain on our housing list. Please help us by replying. If you do not reply we will remove your application from our housing list. If your application is being considered for a current vacancy, we will arrange to visit you.

Please contact us at any time if you would like to discuss your application.

Problems with the Amenities of Your Home

If your home is too small we will award **10** points

If your home has no suitable heating we will award **10** points

If your home has no cooking facilities we will award **10** points

If your home has no bath or shower we will award **10** points

If your home has no inside toilet we will award **10** points

If your home is affected by dampness or another structural defect we will award **10** points.

Points for Applicants who live in Hostels, Hospital and Residential Care

If you have a date for discharge and may become homeless we will award **50** points

If you share your bedroom with others we will award **20** points

If you share the facilities of your home we will award **15** points

If you can get into your bathroom but cannot use the facilities of the bathroom independently, we will award **5** points if you have difficulty in using the bath or shower and **10** points if you have difficulty using the toilet.

If you can get into your kitchen, but cannot use the facilities of the kitchen independently, we will award **5** points.

Points for Applicants with Difficult Personal and Social Circumstances

If your home limits your ability to make choices about your life we will award **20** points

If you are socially isolated where you live we will award **15** points

If you are experiencing Harassment / Violence we will award you up to **80** points. Verification/crime reference numbers must be provided. Failure to provide verification will mean that no points will be awarded.

Equal Opportunities

Horizon welcomes applications from all sections of the community and strives to ensure that its policies are fair and non discriminatory. To help us monitor this, our Housing Application Form comes with a Confidential Equal Opportunities Questionnaire.

This information is used for monitoring and no other purpose.

We will be pleased to arrange interpreting or translating services, including signing for the hearing impaired.

Vacancies arise when a tenant gives up their tenancy. Due to the size of our developments and low turnover of houses, it is impossible to indicate when the next property is likely to become available. When a vacancy arises, we check the list and contact the applicant with the greatest need, based on the points at that time.

For more information on other agencies that may be able to assist you in meeting your housing need, you can contact the Local Authority or our office.

You can log on to our website to view our developments and find out what type of housing we have in each specific development at www.horizonhousing.org.

What is the points systems?

The Association has identified certain factors that it gives an award of points for. These are as follows:

Points for applicants for Mainstream and Amenity Housing (for applicant over the age of 55). For Wheelchair points go to page 4.

Homelessness

Applicants who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 2 months will be awarded **200** points. Verification must be provided.

Applicants wishing to leave parental home, living with other relatives, separated ex partners living together or cohabiting or married couples without a home of their own will be awarded **50** points.

Harassment

Applicants who have experienced physical or psychological injury as a result of violence or threats, or who have had their property damaged will be awarded between **10 – 80** points depending on how serious the harassment is. Verification/crime reference numbers must be provided. Failure to provide verification will mean that no points will be awarded.

Overcrowding

Applicants who have **fewer** bedrooms in their home than they need will be awarded **40** points for each bedroom that they need.

Under Occupation

Applicants who have **more** bedrooms in their home than they need will be awarded **15** points for each bedroom that they do not need. Under occupation points will not be awarded to applicants who are living in another person's home.

Medical Circumstances

If you need to move because your home is unsuitable for you because of health reasons, you may be awarded up to **80** points. This level of points would only be given if your home was very unsuitable. Most awards of medical points will be less than this.

Lack of Amenities

If your present home lacks any of the amenities that a decent home should have, we will award the following points.

There is no central heating	20 points
There is no adequate kitchen	20 points
There is no bath or shower	20 points
There is no inside toilet	20 points
The property is damp	20 points
There is no hot water supply	20 points
There is no clean drinking water	20 points
There is no proper ventilation	20 points
The property has other structural defects	20 points

(Points awarded for each item up to a maximum total of 100 points)

Sharing Amenities

If you share the amenities of your home with people who are not members of your household, we will award **5** points for each amenity that you share. (Up to a maximum of 25). If you share the amenities with a lot of people, for example if you live in a hostel, we will consider that the amenities are lacking altogether.

Insecurity of Tenure

If you live in a property that you find unaffordable or have a private let, we will award **10** points. If this property is also lived in and owned by people who are not members of your family, we will award **50** points.

Moving to Receive Support/or To Give Support

If you need to move to be nearer to someone, or an agency, which will support you in your tenancy, or if you want to move to give support to one of our tenants, we will award **20** points. Verification must be provided from the support person. Failure to provide verification will mean that no points will be awarded.

Moving to Take Up Employment

If you need to move to begin a permanent job that is too far for you to travel to we will award **20** points. Verification must be provided.

Children living in Multi-Storey Flats

If you are living in a multi-storey flat more than 4 floors high and have a child or children under the age of 12 we will award **25** points.

Points for Applicants for Wheelchair Housing

If you or a member of your household is a wheelchair user and you do not live in a property that has been designed or adapted to meet your needs, we will award **100** points.

If you or a member of your household has a condition that will progressively limit mobility and you do not live in a property that has been designed or adapted to meet your needs we will award **50** points.

If you are homeless, living with family or friends or have insecurity of tenure, points will be awarded as set out in mainstream and amenity criteria

Problems with Access to Your Home

If you have no independent access to your home, or the access is difficult with assistance, we will award **20** points.

Problems with Using the Bathroom in Your Home

If you have no independent access to the bathroom of your home, or your carer cannot get the wheelchair in, we will award **20** points.

If you can get into your bathroom but cannot use the facilities of the bathroom independently, we will award **5** points if you have difficulty in using the bath or shower and **10** points if you have difficulty using the toilet.

Problems with Access to the Kitchen

If you have no independent access to the kitchen of your home, or your carer cannot get the wheelchair in, we will award **15** points.

If you can get into your kitchen but cannot use the facilities of the kitchen independently, we will award **5** points.

Problems with Access to Other Rooms

If you have no independent access to the bedroom of your home, or your carer cannot get the wheelchair in, we will award **10** points.

If you have no independent access to the lounge of your home, or your carer cannot get the wheelchair in, we will award **10** points.

Declaration and Consent

All applicants must sign the declaration on the application form.
If you refuse, your application will not be considered further.

References will be requested on all previous tenancies. Please ensure the correct information is given on your application.

If an unsatisfactory reference is received we will advise you.
The Data Protection Act will be followed at all times.

Please contact us:

You can contact us by telephone, email or alternatively call in to our office.
Leving House • Fairbairn Place • Livingston • EH54 6TN
Tel: 01506 424140 • Fax: 01506 400052

If you live outwith Lothian or North Lanarkshire, you can contact us on
Lo-call No: 0845 600 8648

Our email address is:
e-mail@horizonhousing.org

Log on to view our estates and leave feedback.

Our website address is:
www.horizonhousing.org

**Horizon Housing Association is a Registered Scottish Charity
Regulated by Financial Services Authority No: 187R(s)
Scottish Housing Regulator Registered No: HEP128**

