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## Introduction

Yoker Housing Association Limited is a non-profit making community based Housing Association operating in the Yoker District in the West of Glasgow. The Association was established in 1979 with the main aim of eradicating 'below tolerable standard' housing through its programme of comprehensive tenement rehabilitation. The Association owns 639 properties with an annual turnover of approximately 8% of the stock.

The Association is registered with The Scottish Housing Regulator, who is responsible for the funding and supervision of housing associations. All associations are required to meet specified performance standards and comply with guidance laid down by the Government. The Association is required to meet the outcomes and standards published within The Scottish Social Housing Charter in relation to all activities, including the allocation of houses.

## Statement of Policy Aims / Objectives

Yoker Housing Association's main aims include the regeneration of the area and the provision of good quality affordable rented accommodation for those in housing need and / or support need where appropriate. The ability to achieve these aims is subject to the number and type of houses available at any given time.

## Legal Requirements & Guidance

In all aspects of the letting policy, the Association will conform and comply with all legislation, guidance and good practice that directly and indirectly affects the allocation of houses in Scotland.

## The Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Association has taken due consideration of the outcomes and standards within The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) in the development and implementation of this policy.

## Glasgow Housing Strategy

When developing this policy the Association has given due consideration to Glasgow's Housing Strategy 2017-2022 and its strategic priorities.

## Reasonable Preference

In accordance with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 the Association is required to give reasonable preference to the following categories of applicants:

- Homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness and who have unmet housing needs.
- People who are living under unsatisfactory housing conditions and who have unmet housing needs; and
- Tenants of houses which are held by a social landlord and which the social landlord selecting its tenants considers to be under-occupied.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 states that people have unmet housing needs 'where the social landlord considers them to have housing needs which are not capable of being met by housing options which are available'.

## Equality & Diversity

The Association is committed to Equal Opportunities and will endeavour to ensure that all services are carried out in an undiscriminating manner in line with the Association's Equality & Diversity Policy.

In particular, the Association will not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment or sexual orientation.



### Access to the Housing Register

The Association operates an open waiting list so that anyone can apply and be assessed for housing. Any person aged sixteen years or over may be assessed for housing at any time.

In order to ensure that the Association and the services it provides are made known to as wide an audience as possible, it will publicise itself and its services in appropriate locations, agencies and forms of media.

The Association will consider applications from the following client groups:

1. Direct Application
2. Homelessness Duty Protocol
3. Transfer Applications
4. Leaving Care Protocol
5. Referrals from Other Housing Providers

### Operation and Administration of the Housing Register

The letting policy is primarily a points system, together with a range of targets, which are designed to meet the needs of a wide range of client groups.

Applicants will be asked to attend a Housing Options interview during which the application form will be completed with a member of staff. Applicants will be asked to sign a mandate allowing the Association to approach any necessary persons / agencies to validate the information provided on the application form. It is the responsibility of every applicant to provide all the information necessary to assess their application and, to provide all relevant supporting evidence required. The applicant will be added to the waiting list and the application form will be assessed on the basis of the details and supporting evidence provided and a points level will be awarded in accordance with this policy. The applicant will be advised of their point award by letter. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the Association is immediately informed of any changes in circumstances and provides all relevant information that may require a re-assessment of their housing application or have a bearing on any offer of re-housing.

Applicants will be made a maximum of two offers of accommodation. Failure to respond to the offer letter will result in the offer being withdrawn and offered to the next qualifying person on the waiting list. All viewings will be carried out jointly with a staff member. An offer of accommodation must be accepted or refused within one day of viewing. Where an offer is refused, the applicant must give their reasons for refusal.

### Suspension from receiving an offer of housing

Although the Association will treat and assess all applications on their individual merit, there are certain standards and basic expectations that applicants are expected to adhere to when applying to the Association for re-housing. These relate to the information provided on the application form, the applicant's conduct when dealing with Association staff and their conduct during previous tenancies. The procedures to be followed where an applicant is to be suspended from receiving an offer of housing are contained in the Association's Application Suspension and Cancellation Policy which is available on request.

### Cancelling Applications

In accordance with the Association's Application Suspension and Cancellation Policy there are certain grounds where the Association will cancel an application form. Where any of the stated circumstances apply the Association will cancel an application form. This includes the applicant being under sixteen years of age, death of an applicant, applicant has requested removal from the waiting list and the applicant has failed to respond to the review.

### Appeals & Complaints

The aim of the appeals procedure is to provide a review mechanism for applicants who feel their application for housing has been unfairly assessed. Applicants wishing a review of their application should write to the Association's Housing Management Department within fourteen days giving their reasons for appeal.



### Assessing Housing Need

A points system is a method of allocating houses, which assigns a range of points to applicants with specifically defined personal and property circumstances.

### Comprehensive Tenement Improvement

Where the Association acquires property for the purpose of improvement, any owner or private tenant who wishes to become a tenant of the Association will be offered a permanent move as a priority.

### Homelessness

#### 1. Statutory Homeless

Any applicants presenting themselves as homeless to the Association will be referred to Glasgow City Council who will determine their status under the terms of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Applicants who have registered and have been accepted as being homeless with Glasgow City Council, will be given priority with the Association as soon as their Section 5 Referral has been received and processed by the Association and the applicant has completed an application form. Applicants that are homeless but fail to secure a Section 5 Referral from Glasgow City Council can still apply for housing as a direct applicant and will be allocated points in accordance with this policy.

#### 2. Roofless / No Fixed Abode

Applicants that have short-term, temporary accommodation in a number of places or roofless will be invited to complete an application form, given housing options advice, details of independent support agencies and advised to present themselves as homeless to the Local Authority with a view to a possible Section 5 Referral to the Association.

### Potential Homelessness

Applicants facing imminent homelessness from tied accommodation, a short term let or the termination of an occupancy agreement, student accommodation, repossession or the armed forces will be invited to complete an application form, given housing options advice and advised to contact the Local Authority with a view to a possible Section 5 Referral to the Association. With the exception of those being discharged from the Armed Forces, applicants faced with homelessness will be awarded potential homelessness priority points for a maximum of two months prior to the leave. Applicants will be reassessed in accordance with this policy once the leave date expires.

#### 1. Private Rented Sector

Applicants who reside in a private rented sector tenancy created prior to December 2017 will be awarded priority points where the applicant has been given a two month effective date for leaving the property. Applicants who reside in a private rented sector tenancy created from December 2017 will be awarded priority points where the applicant provides confirmation that a court order has been granted bringing the tenancy to an end. In all cases, the applicant must provide a copy of their lease / agreement and the Court Order.

#### 2. House Repossession

Applicants who own their home but face imminent homeless due to the repossession of their property must provide confirmation of the date of repossession.

#### 3. Armed Forces

Applicants facing homelessness as a result of discharge, disability or injury from the armed forces will be awarded priority points where they provide a copy of their 'Certificate of Cessation of Entitlement to Occupy Service Living Accommodation'.

#### 4. Tied Accommodation

Applicants who reside in tied accommodation will be awarded priority points where the applicant has been given an effective date for leaving the property. The applicant must provide confirmation of the date that they are required to leave the property.



Assessing Housing Need (Continued)

5. Student Accommodation

Applicants who reside in student accommodation will be awarded priority points where the applicant has been given an effective date for leaving the property. The applicant must provide confirmation of the date that they are required to leave the property.

6. Prison

Applicants facing homelessness as a result of discharge from prison will be awarded priority points where they provide evidence of their discharge date.

Leaving Care Protocol

The Association has entered into a Leaving Care Protocol with Glasgow City Council to assist in the provision of accommodation for young people up to the age of twenty-six who are supported in the care system. Where a referral is received from Glasgow City Council in accordance with the protocol, the applicant will be asked to complete an application form and will be awarded priority in accordance with this policy.

Particular Needs Referrals

Where the Association receives a direct referral from a particular needs agency or support agency the applicant will be asked to complete an application form and will be awarded priority in accordance with this policy.

Social Needs

1. Imminent Danger / Risk / Abuse

Priority points will be awarded if the applicant or a member of their household can demonstrate the risk of violence / abuse if they remain living in their present accommodation. The applicant will be required to provide third party confirmation or a written statement of the harassment outlining the details of the harassment.

2. Social / Environmental Risk

Harassment should not be confused with neighbourhood problems, general nuisance, vandalism or other forms of anti-social dispute. However an applicant may be at risk or their quality of life may be severely impacted as a result of criminal activity, severe anti-social behaviour, vandalism and other adverse social or environmental factors in the locality of their home. Points will only be given to those applicants who can demonstrate that their quality of life is being seriously affected because of social or environmental factors in the locality. The applicant will be required to provide third party confirmation or written statement outlining the details of how their quality of life is being affected by these factors.

3. Local Employment

Points will be awarded where the applicant is working or has been offered employment within a three mile radius of the Association's area of operation. Written confirmation of the applicant's local employment will be required.

Medical Needs

The Association recognises that certain physical or medical factors and disabilities are related to or aggravated by physical, social or environmental conditions and that a person's quality of life will be eased by the re-housing of the applicant or the adaptation of their current home. Having medical or health conditions does not automatically mean that medical points will be awarded. Applicants wishing to have a medical condition considered are required to provide a written statement about their medical condition and needs or how the current accommodation is adversely affecting the sufferer. The assessment and the category of points awarded will be based on the information provided and to the extent to which re-housing would alleviate these issues or improve the sufferer's quality of life.



Assessing Housing Need (Continued)

Care and Support Needs

5 The Association understands that some applicants may seek re-housing in the area in order to seek essential practical care and support. Consideration will be given to awarding points to applicants who can demonstrate that the distance between their current home and the source of the care and support makes it unreasonable for them to receive the necessary care and support they require. Points will only be considered if the care and support is provided within a one-mile radius of the Association's area of operation. The applicant will be required to provide third party confirmation or a written statement of the care and support requirements or a statement  
10 outlining the details of their care and support requirements.

Insecurity of Tenure

15 Points will be awarded for applicants that have no security of tenure. Applicants residing care of family / friends will be required to provide proof of residency. For applicants living in a short term let then a copy of their lease or a written statement from their landlord will be required. Applicants residing in temporary homeless accommodation, nursing home, student accommodation, tied accommodation, long term hospital stay, refuge accommodation and NASS will be required to provide proof of residency and awarded points if they are sharing amenities. Applicants living in a caravan / mobile home will be required to provide proof of residency.

Owner Occupation

20 The Association will take into consideration home ownership when assessing a housing application. The Association will not award points to applicants who own their own home except in certain circumstances such as repossession, structural faults, the property endangers the health of occupants or there is a risk of violence / abuse. In such cases applications will be assessed in accordance  
25 with the relevant sections of this policy.

Overcrowding / Assessment of Housing Size

30 The degree of overcrowding being experienced by an applicant's household will be assessed according to the number of bedrooms exclusively available to that household within its present accommodation compared to the number of bedrooms required. Only the applicant's needs will be considered in assessing the overcrowding. Single persons will only qualify for a two apartment house. Couples will be taken to share a bedroom unless a medical certificate is submitted showing that there is a medical condition that requires each to have a separate room. Where a separate bedroom is required for medical reasons overcrowding points will be awarded. The Association will award overcrowding points to applicants that can confirm a household pregnancy as soon as the pregnancy is confirmed in writing, and where the future birth of a child will result in overcrowding in terms of the above bedroom  
35 deficiency. Applicants that can provide evidence that they require an additional bedroom for overnight access to children or a carer will be viewed as requiring one additional bedroom. Where an applicant provides evidence that they have been approved to adopt, foster or act as a kinship carer and are overcrowded then overcrowding points will be awarded in terms of the above bedroom deficiency. Where an applicant has experienced a relationship breakdown but resides in the same property as their ex-partner, the Association will recognise that the applicant requires a separate bedroom. Overcrowding points will be awarded where a relationship  
40 breakdown results in overcrowding in terms of the above bedroom deficiency.

Under-occupancy

45 Points will be awarded to applicants who are tenants of a housing association or local authority and are under-occupying the property. The number of points awarded will be calculated on the basis of the number of bedrooms within the present accommodation compared to the number of bedrooms required. The number of bedrooms required will be calculated in the same way as for overcrowding.

Sharing Amenities

50 Points will be awarded to applicants that have no security of tenure and are assessed as sharing facilities with another independent household living within the same accommodation. Sharing amenities points will also be awarded to an applicant facing a relationship breakdown where both parties are still living in the same home.

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Assessing Housing Need (Continued)

Property Condition / Lack of Amenities

5 Points for severe disrepair of the property will be awarded where the physical condition of the property is adversely affecting the applicant's living conditions or their ability to remain in the property. Points will also be considered where a property does not meet the medical or social needs of the applicant.

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Appendix - Points System

<p><b>Comprehensive Tenement Improvement*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoker Housing Association Action Area for Improvement / Demolition.</li> </ul>	*80
<p><b>Homeless*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory Homeless (Section 5 Referral received).</li> </ul>	*80
<p><b>Potential Homelessness</b> (all two months notice with exception of Forces which is immediate notice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short Term Let (Notice to Quit / Court Order)</li> <li>• Tied Accommodation</li> <li>• Student (Termination of Lease)</li> <li>• Discharge from Armed Forces</li> <li>• Discharge from Prison</li> <li>• Owner Occupier subject to Repossession</li> </ul>	<p>*45</p> <p>*45</p> <p>*45</p> <p>*45</p> <p>*45</p> <p>*45</p>
<p><b>Social Needs Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious Harassment / Domestic Abuse / Imminent Risk</li> <li>• Social / Environmental Risk</li> <li>• Employment</li> </ul>	<p>*80</p> <p>30</p> <p>6</p>
<p><b>Medical Needs Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<p>50</p> <p>20</p> <p>5</p>
<p><b>Care &amp; Support Needs Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<p>20</p> <p>8</p> <p>5</p>
<p><b>Insecurity of Tenure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Living with family / friends</li> <li>• Short Term Let</li> <li>• Temporary / Hostel / Homeless / Supported / Refuge / NASS / Student / Hospital</li> <li>• Caravan / Mobile Home</li> </ul>	<p>12</p> <p>10</p> <p>12</p> <p>12</p>
<p><b>Overcrowding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For every bedroom required by the applicant's household.</li> </ul>	12
<p><b>Under-occupancy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For every bedroom required by the Applicant's household (social rent tenants only)</li> </ul>	8
<p><b>Sharing Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared amenities points will be awarded when more than one household shares the amenities</li> </ul>	8
<p><b>Property Condition / Lack of Amenities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unsuitable Housing (house does not meet medical or social needs)</li> <li>• Serious Property Defects (severe dampness, wet / dry rot, severe water penetration)</li> <li>• No facilities / Minor Defects (no hot water, heating, kitchen facilities, no bath / shower)</li> </ul>	<p>12</p> <p>12</p> <p>10</p>
<p><b>Leaving Care Protocol / Particular Needs Referral</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving Care Referral</li> <li>• Particular Needs / Support Referral</li> </ul>	<p>*60</p> <p>*60</p>
*Maximum Points Award	

