

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Vision**

Our vision for housing in Angus is ‘everyone in Angus has a good quality, safe, secure and warm home that they can afford.’

### **1.2 Aims and Objectives**

We want to make finding a home as simple, fair, and open as possible: We want our service to:

- make applying for housing easy to understand and explain;
- make allocations of our homes open and fair;
- meet local needs and preferences where possible;
- prevent homelessness where possible;
- prevent tenancy breakdown or ‘failed tenancies;’
- provide a variety of housing options;
- support and advise applicants;
- make the best use of our housing stock; and
- maximise rental income through the efficient allocations of our homes.

We aim to achieve these outcomes by:

- working in partnership with other social landlords through our Common Housing Register and through nomination arrangements;
- responding quickly and giving the right priority to people who are in most need of housing;
- advertising our vacant homes so that people are fully informed to make the best choice for them (exceptions to this are detailed in section 11);
- preventing homelessness by taking early action if their home is at risk, and responding to homelessness by providing help and advice or suitable housing within a reasonable timescale;
- providing a housing options approach to meet people’s needs, encouraging people to make informed and realistic decisions on their options;

- assessing and meeting any additional support needs they may have, in partnership with other agencies;
- working to create communities where people want to live.

## 2. Background

The Angus Common Housing Allocations Policy ('the policy') has been developed as part of the Angus Common Housing Register ('the CHR').

The CHR is a single housing register ('the register'), application process and allocations policy shared across four social landlords. They are:

- Angus Council
- Blackwood Homes
- Caledonia Housing Association Ltd
- Hillcrest Homes

These four social housing landlords are referred to as 'we,' 'our' or 'the partner landlords' in this document.

The policy tells you:

- how to register for housing;
- how we will review your housing needs;
- how we advertise available homes.

We have developed the policy by listening to our tenants, people who work for us and people from other agencies who also care about good housing, such as other council services and NHS Tayside. Our policy is designed to meet the legal and regulatory standards that guide how the partners in the CHR should work.

Our policy is available in other languages or formats, such as large print and Braille, if required, and we will also publish it on our [website](#). Free internet access is available in local libraries.

## 3. Acting within the Law

Our housing policy has been written based on guidance from the Scottish Government, the Scottish Housing Regulator, the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, and the Chartered Institute of Housing. Our policy complies with all relevant legislation, including changes introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. This means our policy is fair and gives priority to people with the greatest housing need.

#### 4. Continuing to provide choice

This policy has been developed to provide people with choice about where they want to live. We will advertise the details of homes available, and people can choose which ones they would like to be considered for. We use the term 'bid' if someone registers that they want to be considered for a particular property.

#### 5. Applying for housing

Before bidding for properties, you must complete an [application for housing](#). You will not be able to bid on properties before the application process has been completed and your application is live. If you have an additional housing need, we will make your application live with no priority, so you are able to bid on properties that are advertised whilst we assess your housing needs. Once we have assessed your needs, your priority or the type or size of properties you can bid on may change.

##### 5.1 Who can apply for housing?

Anyone 16 years and over can apply for housing unless they are subject to immigration control. You must supply all the information we ask for (proof of identification, etc.) before your application can go live. Staff in the local libraries can help you to complete your application or you can contact our Angus HomeFinder Team on ACCESSLine 03452 777778.

To assess an application, we need accurate and up-to-date information about your circumstances. If you deliberately provide false or misleading information or omit essential information, your application will be suspended, meaning you will not be able to bid on or be matched to properties.

You can apply on your own, jointly with a partner or jointly with anyone else who will be living with you. However, we cannot allow you and two or more applicants who are unrelated to you to rent a property under this policy because this creates a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), which is governed by separate regulations.

#### 6. Housing Options Advice

If you need additional advice or support, we can offer you an appointment to discuss your housing options. The service can give advice or refer you to further information on a wide range of subjects including:

- planning to move home and finding accommodation;
- help to prevent you becoming homeless;
- homelessness;
- an assessment of your housing needs;
- getting further relevant support.

To contact the service, call ACCESSLine or visit an Angus Alive office located in our local libraries.

#### **6.1 Processing Your Application**

We aim to process your application within 28 working days of receiving it, if you have provided all the information we need. We will contact you to tell you:

- when your application is live;
- whether you are eligible to bid or will be matched to a property;
- size(s) of properties you can bid for or will be matched to;
- whether you are considered as a housing register or transfer applicant;
- if you have an assessed need for or are eligible to bid on a particular house type;
- if you have been placed into a priority banding.

#### **6.2 Verifying your application**

We may request more information or make an appointment to meet with you to complete a full assessment of your housing needs. If you do not give us all the information we need, this may delay your application.

You will need to provide us with proof of your identity. We will accept your birth certificate, passport, or photographic driving license. We also need proof of your current address. This may include, but is not limited to:

- official letters/bills/statements from a local authority, public agency, or private utility company (gas, electric, telephone), government department, private sector lease, bank or building society;
- photographic driving licence

We make enquiries about your application when we receive it, but any enquiry we make will depend on your circumstances. We will ask your landlord for a reference if you have been a tenant at any time in the past three years to find out if:

- you owe any money;
- you have acted in an anti-social manner;
- your landlord has taken any formal action against you because of you breaching your tenancy conditions.

We may suspend your application if we receive an unsatisfactory reference; refer to “Suspending Applications” for more details on when we will suspend your application.

## 7. Reviewing, Removal, Suspension and Merging of Applications

### 7.1 Reviewing your application

We aim to contact you every twelve months from around the time you registered your application with us to ask you to review your application answers.

It is important to keep your application up-to-date and ensure the details we have are accurate for any bids you make. You can do this here.

You have 21 days to respond. If you do not respond, we will remove your application from the CHR, and you will no longer be able to bid. However, if you contact us within three months of your application being cancelled, you can have your original application reviewed and reinstated. The date of registration will be based on the date you made the original application.

### 7.2 Removal of applications

There are other times when we will remove an application from the register. We will remove your application from the register if:

- you cancel your application;
- you do not reply when we ask for more information to support your application, or we ask you to contact us for some other reason.

### 7.3 Suspending applications

We can suspend your application in certain circumstances. If we suspend your application, you will not be able to bid on any vacant properties. These circumstances are as follows and apply to the applicant and anyone included as a joint applicant on the application:

Reason	Period of Suspension	Ending Suspension
<b>You refuse two reasonable offers of housing. <i>An offer of housing will not be considered reasonable if there is a risk to a member of the household's health or safety; there has been a notable change in circumstances from the time</i></b>	6 months from date of 2 <sup>nd</sup> refusal	Application reinstated after 6 months, following a review of your circumstances.

### Appendix 3

<i>the bid was made that means the property is no longer suitable; or the property was incorrectly advertised.</i>		
You intentionally withhold information that you should have told us about OR you intentionally give us misleading information OR you intentionally give us information you know is wrong	12 months from date discovered	Application reinstated after 12 months, following a review of your circumstances.
You are a tenant, and you have breached your tenancy conditions (other than failure to pay rent) and your landlord has given you notice of proceedings for recovery of possession or has a decree or order from a court for your eviction.	Duration of notice/order or 12 months whatever is most appropriate	Application reinstated after 12 months, following a review of your circumstances
You are subject to a written warning for antisocial behaviour; acceptable behaviour agreement; unacceptable behaviour notice; final written warning for antisocial behaviour; or an antisocial behaviour order	Duration of notice/order or 12 months	Application reinstated after 12 months or where there is evidence that the behaviour has improved following a review of your circumstances.
You have lost a previous tenancy within the last 3 years by abandoning it: for example, you leave a property that you have rented without handing back the keys or notifying your landlord.	6 months from date of discovered	Application reinstated after 6 months, following a review of your circumstances
You have outstanding tenancy related arrears from a current	Subject to you repaying the debt	We have evidence that you have reduced the debt to less

### Appendix 3

or former tenancy (more than one twelfth of the annual rent) and there is no arrangement in place to repay what you owe.		than one twelfth of the annual rent, or,  We have evidence you have maintained an arrangement for at least 3 months, and you are continuing to make the payments
You have been evicted by a court order in the last 3 years because of breaching your tenancy conditions: for example, you were evicted for rent arrears.	12 months from date for eviction	Application reinstated after 12 months, following a review of your circumstances

**We will not suspend your application if we have a legal duty to find you permanent accommodation under homelessness legislation.**

If we suspend your application, we will write to you and tell you:

- why we have suspended your application, including the circumstances we have considered;
- what this means, for example you will not be able to bid on vacant properties;
- how long the suspension will last;
- what you must do to have the suspension shortened or lifted (if applicable);
- where to find independent housing and /or legal advice;
- your rights to review and appeal.

#### 7.4 Merging applications

You may wish to apply jointly for housing with someone who already has an application on the CHR. In these cases, the date of application will be determined by the date of the earliest application.

If you wish to withdraw from a current joint application and apply in your own right, you can have the original date of application re-instated. We will reassess the status of your application and any priority banding awarded due to the change in your circumstances.

Remember we cannot allow you and two or more applicants who are unrelated to you to rent a property under this policy because this creates a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) which is governed by separate regulations.

#### 8. Change in circumstances

You must update your application as soon as possible if your circumstances or contact details change. For example, if someone joins your household or leaves it, or you move home, you need to tell us about this change. If you update your application within your renewal period, your next renewal will be twelve months from that date. You can do this [here](#).

#### 9. Nomination Agreements

We have nomination agreements with other social housing landlords who have properties across Angus but who are not members of the CHR. They may ask us to tell them about anyone on our housing register who is looking for housing in the areas where they have homes for rent.

We may nominate you if you have agreed to this on your application, or if we have a legal duty to secure permanent accommodation for you under homelessness legislation. An offer of housing resulting from a nomination, if considered reasonable, will count towards your reasonable offer entitlement.

#### 10. Assessing Housing Need

##### 10.1 Housing Priority

By law we must give 'reasonable preference' to certain groups. We must give priority to:

- people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness through no fault of their own **and have unmet housing needs;**
- social housing tenants who are under occupying their home;
- people who are living in unsatisfactory housing conditions **and have unmet housing needs.**

We consider people have **unmet housing needs** if they have housing needs which cannot be met by other housing options available. For example, an applicant with disabilities whose housing needs can only be met in social housing because it is not possible to make essential adaptations to their current home to meet their assessed needs and there is no other suitable housing available in the area. If you are an owner occupier, we will consider any equity you have in your home and whether you can buy another property to meet your needs.

If you fall into the above 'reasonable preference' groups, we will confirm your needs by completing a housing options assessment with you.



### Appendix 3

To meet our 'reasonable preference' obligations, achieve our aims and provide a fair system, giving appropriate priority to people who are in most need of housing, some applications will be awarded a priority banding. The priority bandings are as follows:

Priority Banding	Who will be considered	Criteria / bidding restrictions
1. Platinum Plus	<p>Applications containing care experienced children with an unmet housing need, where this is supported by Children's Services;</p> <p>People moving on from supported housing if there is no longer a need for it;</p> <p>People living in adapted housing, owned by the partner landlords, but no longer need it; where the property is required to meet another applicant's needs;</p> <p>People approaching discharge from an institution (e.g., prison, hospital, care facility) who do not have accommodation on discharge and the council has a statutory duty to offer them permanent housing;</p> <p>Armed forces personnel approaching leave from full-time regular service;</p> <p>Housing First applicants;</p>	<p>Must be accompanied by a housing options assessment.</p> <p>We will confirm your circumstances with Children's Services.</p> <p>Applications will be prioritised in date order; from the date the Outright Priority Banding was awarded.</p> <p>Applications received from people within an institution (who are unable to bid) will be matched to suitable accommodation when this becomes available.</p> <p>For all other applications, we will decide whether to match the application to suitable housing or allow bidding, based on individual circumstances.</p> <p>People approaching discharge from prison will be considered as per the criteria set out in the Angus Prison Protocol.</p> <p>Applicants who do not make appropriate bids or do not make bids within a reasonable period, will have a review of their circumstances and auto bid activated.</p>

### Appendix 3

	Other exceptional circumstances (see 10.4).	If an offer of housing is refused and is considered a reasonable offer, the Platinum Plus priority banding will be removed and the application reassessed.
<b>2. Platinum</b>	People who are unintentionally homeless or unintentionally threatened with homelessness under Part II of the 1987 Act (as amended).	<p>Must be accompanied by a housing options and homeless assessment to determine homeless status.</p> <p>Auto bid, where bids are placed automatically on suitable properties by the system, will be activated for all homeless applications, unless the applicant requests to make bids themselves.</p> <p>Applicants who do not make appropriate bids or do not make bids within a reasonable period, will have auto bid activated.</p> <p>If an offer of housing is refused and is considered a reasonable offer, the Platinum priority banding will be removed, and the application reassessed.</p>

### Appendix 3

<b>3. Gold</b>	<p>Current housing does not meet mobility needs and cannot be adapted.</p> <p>People with a severe and enduring medical need (non-mobility) that cannot be met in their current housing or with support needs that cannot be met in their current housing;</p>	<p>Must be accompanied by a Housing Options Assessment to demonstrate that no other suitable options are available, supported by other medical professionals where required. If you have a mobility need this must be supported by an assessment from Occupational Therapy.</p> <p>Applications will be prioritised by assessed housing need – Gold high, medium and low; then by the date the Priority Banding was awarded.</p> <p>We will confirm with the Occupational Therapy Service that the property will be suitable for your needs before an offer is made.</p>
<b>4. Silver</b>	<p>People in unsatisfactory housing conditions with unmet housing needs: including overcrowding (see glossary for definition); OR</p> <p>Social housing tenants who are under occupying (i.e., they have more bedrooms than they need); or living in a house which has been assessed by Environmental Health as below tolerable standard; Or</p> <p>People who cannot meet their caring responsibilities for someone with a severe and enduring medical need in their current housing.</p> <p>People who have a private tenancy and have been served with a valid notice to leave but</p>	<p>Must be supported by a housing options assessment to demonstrate that no other suitable options are available.</p> <p>For those who are under occupying one of our or our CHR partner properties, in a property with three or more bedrooms.</p> <p>For anyone who has caring responsibilities, this must be supported by an assessment of need.</p> <p>Applications will be prioritised in date order; from the date the decision was made to place the application into the silver priority banding.</p>

	are not threatened with homelessness within 56 days.	
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**All other applications for housing will be prioritised as Bronze – Choice and ranked in date order from the date of application.**

#### 10.2 Assessing applications from out with Angus

When you apply for housing and you live out with Angus you will be assessed for a priority banding other than Bronze – Choice if you have unmet housing need, and meet at least one of the following conditions:

- You are assessed as unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness;
- You are approaching discharge from an institution and are considered normally resident in Angus;
- you are employed in, have been offered employment in, or wish to move into the area to seek employment, with evidence supporting their intention to do so;
- you need to move into Angus to be near a relative or carer;
- you have a special social or medical reason for requiring to be housed in Angus;
- wishes to move into the area because of harassment;
- wish to move into the area due to the risk of domestic abuse.

#### 10.3 Assessing Multiple Needs

If you have multiple housing needs; your application will be awarded the highest priority banding for which you qualify.

#### 10.4 Other Exceptional Circumstances

We know that our allocation policy cannot cover everyone's circumstances and all situations. The Service Leader, Housing (Angus Council) or the Director of Housing, or equivalent of Hillcrest Homes, Blackwood Homes or Caledonia Housing Association have special powers to use 'discretion' or 'management transfer' when the transfer request comes from one of our existing tenants. If you are a tenant of any of the partners, Angus Council, Hillcrest Homes, Caledonia Housing Association or Blackwood homes, we each have our own individual management transfer policies, any request would go direct to your individual landlord, where you need to move or be housed urgently.

Discretion will only be used, and an outright priority banding awarded, where:

- we determine that housing is needed quickly;
- our allocation policy will not allow you to be placed highly;
- there are good reasons or special circumstances.

‘Good reasons’ and ‘special circumstances’ include:

- significant compassionate grounds: This could include the death of a family member occurring in or around the house. In these circumstances, it may be difficult for the family to remain in the house. We would also consider requests for rehousing from the terminally ill living outside Angus who wish to return to Angus to be closer to their family;
- management reasons: such as where we want to make best use of available stock, and the applicant would otherwise be unable to obtain a move quickly;
- community safety issues: such as witness protection measures or to ensure the safety of victims of domestic abuse or harassment, supporting them to make a planned move and prevent homelessness;
- adult and child protection issues: to ensure the safety of individuals subject to adult and child protection measures;
- to ensure just in time allocations to prevent homelessness, in line with the objectives of Rapid Rehousing.

If the Service Leader, Housing (Angus Council) or the Director (or equivalent) of Hillcrest Homes, Blackwood Homes and Caledonia Housing Association agree to use their discretion you will be awarded a Platinum Plus priority banding and may be matched to a property if we need to offer you housing quickly and a suitable property becomes available. We will let you know if you are eligible to bid or will be matched to suitable properties.

Where there is an urgency to house someone, applicants who do not make appropriate bids or do not make bids within a reasonable period, will have a review of their circumstances and auto bid activated.

If an offer of housing is refused and is considered a reasonable offer, the Platinum priority banding will be reviewed when there has been a discretion awarded to the application.

#### 10.5 House Size – Number of Bedrooms

When we register your application, you will only be able to bid on properties that match the number of bedrooms for which you are eligible. This helps us make the best use of the stock that becomes available.

We will work out the number of bedrooms that you need based on who will be living permanently with you. Single people, couples and non-dependants are each entitled to a bedroom. However, we will allow single person households and couples to bid on properties with two bedrooms. If we make you an offer of housing

### **Appendix 3**

that has one more bedroom than you need, we will provide you with information and advice to enable you to make an informed decision about how you will manage to pay for your home. It is important that you consider this information as you could be at risk of financial hardship which could result in the loss of your home.

We will apply Department for Work and Pensions rules to assess the number of bedrooms allowed for children – considering how old they are and their sex. The bedroom entitlement rules assume that:

- Two children aged 0-9 can share a bedroom whatever their sex
- Two children aged 0-15 can share a bedroom if they are the same sex
- Children aged 16+ are counted as needing their own bedroom

We will make common sense exceptions to these rules, depending on individual circumstances. For example:

- Where we have very limited stock and turnover of the house sizes you qualify for, and you request a house size smaller than you would normally qualify for, unless it does not meet the minimum standards as set out in legislation and our overcrowding guidance;
- you require an additional bedroom on medical grounds;
- if you provide foster care/ kinship care or have been preapproved to provide foster care/kinship care or to adopt children, you will be eligible for additional bedrooms based on your circumstances.

We will count an unborn child or children as part of your household if you can provide us with proof of your pregnancy.

When assessing bedroom entitlement for those with shared care of a child/children we will consider those with equal shared care (the equivalent of three overnight stays per week on average) the child/children will be counted as part of both households when determining bedroom requirements. You will need to provide sufficient evidence of the shared care arrangements to support this claim.

If you have shared care of a child/children for fewer than three overnight stays per week (on average), the child/children will not be considered part of your household for bedroom entitlement. However, if you ordinarily qualify for a one-bedroom property, you will be able to bid on a two-bedroom property. This will ensure there is space for regular contact with your child/children.

For a property with two bedrooms, we will prioritise bids from households with children who require two bedrooms and have the same priority banding.

For single people and couples, if we have evidence that you might not manage to meet your housing costs, we will restrict the size of properties you can bid for or can be matched to, to a maximum of one bedroom.

#### **10.6 Housing Type**

The main type of housing provided by the four CHR partners is general needs or “mainstream” housing. However, we also provide housing for particular needs groups, such as:

##### ***Supported Housing***

Supported housing is a group of self-contained properties for older people or people with a disability. Accessible housing with 24 hour on-site enhanced housing management or care and support and communal facilities. Due to the specialist nature of this house type, supported housing vacancies will not be advertised. Vacancies will be matched to applicants with an assessed need for particular supported housing. Where there are no existing applications, we may advertise the property for bids. However, you must meet the eligibility criteria specified in the advert to bid on these properties. Those applicants with an assessed need for this type of housing will not be able to bid on any mainstream housing.

##### ***Sheltered Housing***

Sheltered housing comprises self-contained properties designed for adults, typically aged 60 or over who seek a quieter living environment with access to communal facilities. This type of housing is intended for individuals who would benefit from a setting that supports independent living while fostering a sense of community. Applicants who apply for sheltered housing will be considered based on assessed needs, including factors such as age, disability, or the requirement for a more appropriate living environment.

In some cases, younger individuals with a severe and enduring health condition may also be considered, provided they:

- Meet the general eligibility criteria,
- Would benefit from this type of environment, and
- Do not have a history of antisocial behaviour

##### ***Retirement Housing***

Retirement housing is a group of self-contained properties for older people over the age of 60. There are usually communal facilities on site. You must be over the age of 60 to bid on these properties.

##### ***Amenity Homes***

Amenity homes are flats or houses that meet the needs of older people or people with a disability with modifications like lower light sockets, additional handrails or special bathroom or kitchen features but without any onsite support. You should normally be over the age of 50 to bid on these properties but if you have a disability and assessed need, you may also be able to bid.

##### ***Adapted or Adaptable housing***

Adapted or Adaptable housing are flats or houses that meet the needs of people with a physical disability. Homes may be partially adapted, fully adapted or suitable for future adaptations. Due to the specialist nature of this house type, fully adapted housing vacancies will not be advertised. These vacancies will be matched to applicants with an assessed need for fully adapted housing. Where there are no existing applications, we may advertise the property for bids.

Homes that are partially adapted will be advertised however, where appropriate, will be restricted to only accept bids from applicants with an assessed need for the type of adaptation. E.g., Level access shower.

#### 10.7 Areas of Preference

We will ask you where you would like to be considered for housing. This allows us to monitor housing demand for each area. However, you can still bid for properties outwith your preferred area.

If you are matched to a property, we will try to match or make suitable nominations to other social landlords in your preferred area. However, we may match you to housing outside the areas where you want to live if we need to meet your housing needs quickly. We call this 'overriding your area preferences.' If we do this, we will write to you or discuss with you and tell you why.

#### 11. Advertising or matching our properties

Most of our vacant homes will be advertised on our [Angus HomeFinder](#) website, where eligible applicants can bid for properties. These applicants are known as '**Bid**' Applicants.

However, some applicants are unable to participate in the standard bidding process. These individuals are assigned as '**Match**' Applicants, meaning they will be directly matched to suitable housing based on specific assessment criteria.

#### Who is a Match Applicant?

You will be considered a Match Applicant if you fall into one of the following categories:

- 1) You are living in an institution (e.g. prison, hospital, or care facility) and are unable to bid for properties independently. Instead, suitable housing will be allocated to you as it becomes available.

Or

- 2) You require a specific type of housing, such as:
  - Supported housing – Properties with 24-hour on-site housing management or care and support.
  - Fully adapted housing – Properties with wide doorways, accessible kitchens and bathrooms, and enough space for a wheelchair or walking frame.



### Appendix 3

When a property is allocated through matching, the priority banding rules outlined in the "Assessing Housing Need" section of our policy will apply.

#### 11.1 Withdrawing adverts

On some occasions we may have to withdraw a property from being advertised, we will only do this when: -

- An error has been made in the property advert
- The property has major repairs required which could delay the allocation
- The property is required to meet exceptional or emergency circumstances

**If you have placed a bid on a property we withdraw from advert, we will tell you the reason we have had to remove the property from advert.**

#### 11.2 Applicant Categories

If you are a council or Common Housing Register partner tenant, we will categorise you as a transfer applicant. This has no impact on your priority banding. This will help us to better utilise our housing stock by creating more allocations from our available housing stock and allow us to meet our legal obligations to those in housing need.

- Transfer applicants are tenants of the Angus Common Housing Register landlords;
- housing register applicants are all others.

**When we process your application, we will tell you if you are a transfer applicant or housing register applicant.**

#### 11.3 Advert Criteria

When we advertise a property, we will clearly state if any restrictions apply. We cannot accept bids if you are not eligible. Bidding restrictions will be applied based on the property type and external factors, such as the surrounding environment, as determined by officers when a vacancy arises. Restrictions will be balanced with the need to meet statutory responsibilities, address housing needs, make the best use of available stock, minimise void times, and support the creation of balanced communities.

Property type	Restrictions
Ground floor, with minimum access steps	Bidding, where appropriate, will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for ground floor housing
Partially adapted, e.g. has a level access shower	Bidding, where appropriate, will be restricted to applicants with an assessed need for a level access shower

Stairs to access	Bidding will be restricted to applicants who do not have an assessed need for adapted or ground floor housing
Amenity / retirement housing	Bidding, where appropriate, will be restricted to applicants over a certain age

Restrictions may also be applied for properties that are considered to require a 'sensitive let.' This may happen where there are previous, or ongoing management issues and means there needs to be restrictions on who can move into the property.

We may restrict certain properties to Transfer Applicants to help create movement within our housing register, as this promotes chains of allocations. However, this restriction will apply to a maximum of 25% of advertised properties per calendar month.

We may also introduce a Local Lettings Initiative within an area which will set out any required allocations restrictions. We will consult with tenants on any proposed Local Lettings Initiatives, unless in cases of emergency, such as the need to house individuals displaced by an emergency, consultation may be bypassed. These emergency allocations will require approval from the Access to Housing Board. Local Lettings Initiatives will be published online.

We will continually review the properties we advertise, restrictions used and the outcomes of bids and allocations to ensure a fair approach to the use of restrictions.

#### 11.4 Where we advertise

If a property is advertised, it will be advertised on our [Angus HomeFinder](#) website.

If you have difficulty accessing the advertised properties, you can contact ACCESSLine or visit any of the Angus Alive offices/libraries where staff will be happy to help.

#### 11.5 How long are properties advertised for?

Properties will be advertised with a closing date for bids clearly shown. All bids must be received by the bid closing date. If no bids are received by the closing date, the property will continue to be advertised until someone makes a successful bid or we find a suitable applicant from our list.

### 12. Bidding

If you wish to bid for a property, you must do so before the closing date. The date and time you place your bid has no impact on your bid placing. Bids are ranked by priority banding, then by date order.

You can make bids on the [Angus HomeFinder](#) website. If you have difficulties bidding online, we can help you to place bids either over the telephone, in person or by nominating someone to bid on your behalf.

In some circumstances where you are unable to access the bidding system, we will match you to a property or place bids on your behalf, we can also activate autobid which allows the system to place bids on suitable properties within your preferred areas.

**If you do not meet the criteria specified in the advert, your bid will not be accepted.**

#### 12.1 Shortlisting Bids

Once the closing date for bids has been reached and all valid bids have been processed, selection for the individual properties will take place.

Bids will be ranked as outlined under “Housing Priority” and the highest ranked bidder will usually be selected.

We will let you know directly if you have been successful in bidding for a property. You will know the position of your bid and if your bid was unsuccessful by checking your bid on the [Angus HomeFinder](#) website.

#### 12.2 Bypassing successful bids

Where we do not make an offer of housing to the highest ranked bidder, we call this ‘bypassing.’ Only in exceptional circumstances will we bypass the highest ranked bidder, but we will notify the bidder of this. Reasons we may bypass the highest ranked bidder include:

- Public protection / community safety issues;
- The successful bidder has had a change of circumstances but did not notify us;
- The successful bidder’s application should be suspended from receiving offers;
- The property does not meet the successful bidder’s medical or support needs;
- A single person or couple has placed a bid on a 2-bedroom property. However, there are also bids from households with children who require 2 bedrooms and have the same priority banding.
- A single person or a couple has placed a bid on a 2-bedroom property. However, after conducting an affordability check, it has been confirmed that the property is not financially viable for them.

We will review offers and bypasses to ensure that bypasses are made fairly.

#### 13. Offering you a property

When you have either successfully bid or have been matched to a property, we will make you a formal offer of housing. We may call you to tell you we have an offer, or we may send you a written offer by email or letter. If we offer you the property by telephone, we will always confirm the offer in writing. This will include clear steps for you to follow to arrange to view the property.

Once we have been in contact with you, you must tell us within 24 hours if you would like to view the property. If you do not respond to our offer within three working days, we will assume you do not want the property, and it will be considered as a refusal.

#### **13.1 Home visits**

When we are thinking about making you an offer of housing, we may visit you at home. We do this to check that the information you gave us when you applied for housing is still correct. And for current tenants that you have maintained your current tenancy in accordance with the requirements set out with our tenancy agreement.

#### **13.2 Accepting our offer**

We will ask you to tell us within 24 hours of viewing the property if you are going to accept our offer or not. If you need more time to decide, this will be at the discretion of the housing officer.

If you accept our offer, we will sign you up as our tenant. If you made a joint application, you would have a joint tenancy. All joint tenants must be present when we ask you to sign your tenancy agreement. We will give you advice, information, and support throughout the process of becoming our tenant. We will clearly explain your rights and responsibilities under the tenancy agreement before you sign it.

#### **14. Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST)**

If you are made an offer of housing, we will offer you a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) in line with our legal responsibilities. A SST means you can keep your tenancy for as long as you want if you do not break the terms of your tenancy agreement. If you do, we can take legal action to end your tenancy.

In a limited number of situations, we may offer you a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. As a Short Scottish Secure tenant, you have many of the same rights as a Scottish Secure tenant. However, your rights are more limited on eviction, sub-letting, and succession.

We can only give Short Scottish Secure Tenancies in specific circumstances, defined by law. These circumstances will apply to you if:

- there is evidence that you or someone in your household or a visitor to your home has been involved in antisocial behaviour in or near your home within the last three years;
- you or someone in your household has been evicted for antisocial behaviour or subject to an antisocial behaviour order within the last 3 years;
- you are an owner occupier but cannot occupy your home on a short-term basis (e.g., your home is unsafe and needs significant repairs);
- you are moving to Angus to take up or seek employment;

### **Appendix 3**

- where you are living is scheduled for development and we need you to move to allow us to get the work done;
- you are homeless and the property is let to you on a temporary basis for more than six months;
- you need housing support to help you maintain your tenancy;
- we are sub-letting the property to you: this means we lease the property we are offering you from another social landlord.

In all cases, we will serve you with a notice informing you that we are offering you a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy. This notice will also state why you are being offered a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy and the period for which the tenancy is being offered.

#### **15. Refused Offers**

People who refuse two reasonable offers of housing (after successful bids) will be suspended from the housing list and unable to make bids for 6 months from 2<sup>nd</sup> offer. If you have a priority banding because you are homeless and you refuse one reasonable offer of housing, your priority will be removed.

If an offer is refused, the property will be offered to the next ranked bidder.

#### **16. Local Lettings Plans**

Local Lettings Plans (“LLPs”) consider the supply and demand for housing in each area of Angus considering specific local needs and circumstances. Our teams use LLPs to develop local solutions and plans for allocation of housing in their area, we call these ‘lettings initiatives.’ At times, we may operate local letting criteria for some of the available stock. This would result in additional criteria or restrictions being applied to the adverts of vacant properties, however, when we use additional criteria or restrictions, we will ensure the advert gives the details of these. Our local lettings plans will be the responsibility of our local Community Housing Team managers and will be reviewed annually to ensure we are meeting the local need and are consistent across Angus.

#### **17. Mutual Exchange**

A mutual exchange is when two or more tenants wish to swap their properties.

A tenant can exchange with:

- another Angus Council tenant
- a tenant of a registered social landlord
- a tenant of another council

### Appendix 3

We will allow an exchange if it is in line with this policy. Other landlords will have their own rules about this. You can look for a mutual exchange at <https://www.houseexchange.org.uk/> and find suitable swaps with other tenants looking to swap their properties.

#### 18. Appeals

If you are unhappy with any decision, we make about your housing application including decisions relating to an offer of housing, you can appeal against our decision. All appeals are considered by officers that had no part in making the decision about which you are unhappy.

You must appeal within 21 days of your decision. Appeals should be in writing but if you have difficulties reading or writing, or your first language is not English, you can contact us by phone. You should explain to us why you think the decision is wrong.

We aim to write to you with a decision on your appeal within 21 days.

You can ask for help from Shelter or the Angus Citizens Advice Bureaux if you need help with your appeal.

Write to us:

Housing Strategy  
Performance and Access Team  
Angus House  
Orchard Bank Business Park  
Orchard Loan  
Forfar  
DD8 1AN  
Call us: 03452 777 778

Email us: [HOUSINGQPP@angus.gov.uk](mailto:HOUSINGQPP@angus.gov.uk)

Visit the web: <https://angushomefinder.homeconnections.org.uk/>

#### 19. Complaints

You can complain about the service we provide if you are unhappy with it. You can contact the relevant landlord or department using the details below for each landlord.

##### Angus Council

[https://www.angus.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/complaints\\_and\\_comments/make\\_a\\_complaint\\_about\\_a\\_council\\_service](https://www.angus.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/complaints_and_comments/make_a_complaint_about_a_council_service)

##### Hillcrest Homes

<https://hillcrest.org.uk/contact-us/complaints/#:~:text=If%20something%20goes%20wrong%20or,is%20dissatis%EF%AC%81ed%20with%20our%20service.>

**Caledonia Housing Association**

<https://www.caledoniaha.co.uk/complaints-suggestions-compliments/>

**Blackwood Homes**

<https://www.blackwoodgroup.org.uk/compliments-comments-and-complaints/>

#### 20. Getting a copy of this policy

You can download a copy of this policy on the [Angus Homefinder](#) website. We will also send copies of our policy to advice organisations and agencies. This policy can be translated, on request, into other languages. For people with additional needs, easy read, large print, audio, or braille versions can also be provided.

#### 21. Monitoring the Policy

To ensure this policy is effective and equitable, we will gather data through our allocations system and regularly report our performance to the Access to Housing Board. Reporting will occur on a **quarterly and annual** basis as set out in the Housing Service Performance Management Framework.

We will report on the indicators described below: -

Percentage of lettable homes that became vacant in the last year

Percentage of offers refused

Percentage of new applications are verified with 28 days

#### 22. Reviewing our policy

We introduced this policy in (Date to be inserted). We will review our allocations policy every three years. The policy will be reviewed by officers from Angus Council, Blackwood Homes, Caledonia Housing Association and Hillcrest Homes.

We will ask everyone for their views about any changes we are considering following our review of the policy.

#### Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
<b>Adaptations</b>	Adaptations are changes made to a home that make it safer and easier to move around and do everyday tasks.
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b>	This is behaviour which causes nuisance, alarm, or distress to at least one person who is not of the same household.
<b>Banding</b>	This is the method we use to categorise and rank applications by need. The priority bandings are Platinum, Gold, Silver Plus, Silver, and Bronze.
<b>Bid/ Bidding</b>	This is the process by which applicants register their wish to be considered for a particular property, for which they are eligible. No money changes hands in this process.
<b>House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)</b>	An HMO is a building or a part of a building (such as a flat) that is occupied by three or more people, living as more than one household, where rent is paid, or some other consideration is made.
<b>Housing Need</b>	If you meet one of the circumstances outlined in the priority bandings, we consider you to be in 'housing need'.
<b>Housing Register</b>	The list of people who qualify for housing and can bid on properties advertised or be offered a property.
<b>Immigration Control</b>	People who are “subject to immigration control” and who do not have indefinite leave to remain / settled status are normally prohibited from accessing particular public funds and social housing.
<b>Licensed Overcrowding</b>	If the council has given permission for the overcrowding.
<b>Match</b>	This is where an applicant is offered a property that is deemed suitable without the need to place a bid.
<b>Management Transfer</b>	Refers to the process of moving an existing tenant from one property to another within the same organisation. This can occur for various reasons, especially when a tenant applies for a transfer due to changes in their circumstances or housing needs.
<b>Natural Growth</b>	If the reason that your home becomes overcrowded is because one of your children has reached either the age of one year or ten years, and your household has not changed in any other way, then it will not be considered as legally overcrowded.
<b>Nomination</b>	As well as allocating to our own properties we can also pass on the details of people on our housing register to other Housing Associations that are not part of our Common Housing Register.



### Appendix 3

<b>Reasonable Preference</b>	Reasonable preference means that certain groups are given an advantage over other group that have a lesser or no housing need. We must give priority to people in the reasonable preference groups set out in Housing legislation.
<b>Review</b>	Means checking your information. It is important to keep your information up-to-date and ensure the details we have are accurate. We will ask you to check the information on your application every 12 months.
<b>Overcrowding</b>	<p>A household is overcrowded if there are fewer rooms or space for the number of people who live there. The number of people who should live in a home depends on the number of rooms, the size of the rooms and the ages of the people who live there. Rooms that are counted include living rooms and bedrooms (but not the kitchen or bathroom). There are also 3 situations where overcrowding is allowed - natural growth, temporary overcrowding, and licensed overcrowding. If two people of the opposite sex must sleep in the same room, the accommodation will be overcrowded unless they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• married, in a civil partnership or living together, or</li> <li>• one or both is under ten years old.</li> </ul>
<b>Temporary overcrowding</b>	The reason for overcrowding is that one of the people sleeping in your home is there on a temporary basis and is a guest.
<b>Space Standards</b>	<p>The size of a room determines how many people can sleep there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• floor area 50-69 square feet = 0.5 people can sleep there</li> <li>• floor area 70-89 square feet = 1 person can sleep there</li> <li>• floor area 90-109 square feet = 1.5 people can sleep there</li> <li>• floor area 110 square feet = 2 people can sleep there.</li> </ul> <p>For the room and space calculations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• children under one year old are ignored</li> <li>• children over one and under ten years old count as a half</li> <li>• rooms under 50 square feet are ignored.</li> </ul>
<b>Statutory</b>	Means something is required by law.
<b>Suspended</b>	A “suspension” is when a landlord decides that it will not make an applicant an offer of housing or allow them to bid on a property until certain circumstances have changed, conditions are met, or a set period has passed. The applicant will remain on the housing list whilst suspended unless the applicant has asked to be removed from the list.
<b>Temporary Accommodation</b>	Temporary accommodation is a broad term that describes temporary housing for people who are homeless. It includes B&Bs or hotels, council, or housing association properties.

### **Appendix 3**

<b>Tied Accommodation</b>	Tied accommodation means you live somewhere that your employer provides. You might pay rent, or your employer might take it out of your wages before you get paid
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#### **Contact Details**

Tel: Angus ACCESSLine Contact Centre 03452 777 778

Web: [www.angus.gov.uk](http://www.angus.gov.uk)

#### **Angus Alive Offices available at**

Arbroath Library  
Hill Terrace  
Arbroath  
DD11 1AH

Brechin Library  
St Ninian's Square  
DD9 7AD

Carnoustie Library  
21 High Street  
Carnoustie  
DD7 6AN

Forfar Library  
West High Street  
Forfar  
DD8 1BA

Montrose Library  
51 John Street  
Montrose  
DD10 8LZ

Kirriemuir Library  
Town Hall  
Reform Street  
DD8 4BS

Monifieth Library  
High Street  
DD5 4AE

#### **Blackwood Homes**

North Office  
23 Raeden Court  
Midstocket Road  
Aberdeen  
AB15 5PF

Tel: 01224 327 408  
Email: [housing@mbha.org.uk](mailto:housing@mbha.org.uk)  
Web: [www.mbha.org.uk](http://www.mbha.org.uk)

**Caledonia Housing Association**

118 Strathern Road  
Broughty Ferry  
Dundee  
DD5 1JW  
Tel: 0800 678 1228  
Email: [info@caledoniaha.co.uk](mailto:info@caledoniaha.co.uk)  
Web: [www.caledoniaha.co.uk](http://www.caledoniaha.co.uk)

**Hillcrest Homes**

1 North Grimsby  
Arbroath  
DD11 1NU  
Tel: 0300 123 2640  
Email: [customerservice@hillcrestha.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@hillcrestha.org.uk)  
Web: [www.hillcrest.org.uk](http://www.hillcrest.org.uk)