



MID MARKET RENT ALLOCATIONS POLICY

Policy details:

Approval Date	August 2024
Review Date	August 2029
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Responsible Department	Housing Services

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1. Introduction

The Allocation Policy demonstrates how New Gorbals Property Management allocates vacant properties in its mid-market rented (MMR) stock, how it selects new applicants, and the qualifying criteria applied.

Unlike social housing owned and managed by New Gorbals Housing Association, MMR housing is designed to assist those on low to moderate incomes. MMR therefore aims to help people on incomes that may not be enough to afford owner occupation, or who need or want to rent for a limited period but are unlikely to be able to access social housing.

2. Legislative Framework & Compliance

This Policy also takes account of other related legislation, guidance and policies including:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1988
- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Letting Agent Code of Practice (Scotland) Regulations 2016
- Tenancy Deposit Scheme (Scotland) Regulations 2011
- Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 (Tolerable Standard) (Extension of Criteria) Order
- The Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016
- Scottish Government MMR guidance

3. Expected Outcomes

Key outcomes of operating an effective Allocations Policy include:

- Ensuring that properties are allocated in a timeously and efficient manner to minimise void loss and maximise rental income;
- Optimising customer satisfaction and service delivery; and
- Delivering value for money.

4. Marketing

Existing properties that become available for re-let will be advertised primarily through NGHAs own website.

Assuming adequate interest from applicants at the closing date, then this batch of applications will be assessed with a view to re-letting the property.

Applications will be assessed in line with this MMR Allocations Policy and if multiple applications are received, which are of the same priority group we will revert to a first come first served basis.

In the event of no applications being received or no applications meeting the criteria, NGPM will consider setting a new closing date and/or advertising the property via a commercial letting's website.

In the event of a sizeable number of properties being available for let, for instance due to a new development, we may, in addition, market available properties via other outlets.

5. Application process

As properties become available for re-let and are marketed on our website, we will normally set a closing date by which applications must be returned. The application form and related guidance will be made readily available from our offices and potentially via a web-based application form.

Applications received by the closing date will then be assessed against our criteria and priorities as set out below.

6. Income Criteria

Generally, applicants will have to meet our income criteria. Those who meet the income criteria will then be assessed further by priority. Flexibility on income criteria will be applied in appropriate circumstances, for example, where the prospective tenant's household includes someone with a disability.

In the event of flexibility being applied on income criteria, this decision must be approved by the Head of Housing Services and the reason for the decision recorded for audit purposes.

In letting our MMR properties, we will set a minimum household income level with the aim of ensuring that the rent can be afforded for those on modest incomes. Likewise, we apply an upper ceiling to ensure that we target MMR housing to those on modest incomes.

Our household income parameters are as follows:

	Minimum Gross Household Income	Maximum Gross Household Income
2 apartments	£23,000	£46,000
3 apartments	£25,000	£46,000
4 apartments	£30,000	£51,000
5 apartments	£35,000	£56,000

Applicants with a gross annual household income more than the specified household incomes are ineligible for MMR housing unless special circumstances apply, for example, unusually high costs associated with caring for a dependent.

In exceptional circumstances, where the applicant's income is below the minimum gross household income level we may consider the application under our rent guarantor scheme (further information on our rent guarantor scheme is available on request).

7. Priority Criteria

We will accept applications from anyone over the age of 16 years old whose income falls within the income thresholds listed above.

However, we will give priority to the following categories of applicant.

Priority 1 - Tenants of New Gorbals Housing Association or other persons living in a New Gorbals Housing Association property as their main or principal home.

Priority 2 - Other persons living in Gorbals (postcode G5, G41 1PY and G41 1PX) living in mid-market rent and the private rented sector or with friends or family in sub-tolerable, unaffordable, overcrowded, insecure or otherwise unsatisfactory conditions.

Priority 3 - Applicants vacating other social rented accommodation or applicants living in the private rented sector or with friends or family in sub-tolerable, unaffordable, overcrowded, insecure or otherwise unsatisfactory conditions.

We will not accept applications from owner occupiers, joint owners or those holding equity in property unless a significant change in circumstances has occurred which makes it impossible for the applicant to continue living in their accommodation. Normally, in such cases, the applicant must have sold their property before being allocated an MMR tenancy.

In all cases where there are exceptional circumstances under this Section, the Head of Housing Services will have delegated authority to approve decisions. The number and circumstances of any such cases will be reported to the NGPM Board as well as being recorded for audit purposes.

8. Occupancy Levels

Households can apply for a property which meets their current needs, as defined by New Gorbals Housing Association's current allocations policy which states the following:

- One bedroom for couples / partners or single person / parents
- One bedroom for 2 children of the same gender under the age of 16 years
- One bedroom for 2 children under the age of 10 years, regardless of gender
- A room for each child unless able to share with another child as above.

These rules will not apply in certain circumstances e.g. if a separate bedroom is required for medical, social or other relevant reason.

Where an applicant has shared custody of children, the children will be counted as part of the household for the purposes of determining the size of property that they can apply for.

In the event of a lack of demand for a particular house type NGPM would consider under-occupation, and this would normally be restricted to under-occupying by one bedroom. This would need to be approved by Head of Housing.

9. Other Mitigating Factors

Allocation of MMR properties may be affected by housing related debt. Applicants will be asked to provide details of their housing history for the preceding 3 years. If there are arrears arising from any tenancy during this 3-year period these may be taken into consideration when assessing applications for MMR. If the applicant has cleared the arrear, then they will not necessarily be excluded from being allocated an MMR property. We may take up written references from current and former landlords or mortgage providers.

Upon receiving an offer and during a tenancy, applicants will be able to access Welfare Rights services that we provide to support tenancy sustainment.

Allocation of MMR properties may be affected by anti-social behaviour. Any applicant or a member of their household who is subject to the provision of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order within the last 3 years or who has been evicted for anti-social behaviour or is known to be anti-social will not be allocated an MMR property. We may take up written references from current and former landlords and may carry out any further enquiries as we deem appropriate to establish whether the applicant or a member of their household is or has been anti-social.

We will not pass on or discuss with any third party any information provided by any applicant without the applicant's written permission or as may be required by law e.g. as in the case of registered sex offenders. If there is personal information about someone other than the applicant on the application, we will not release that information unless we receive written permission from that other person. An applicant will be requested to give all necessary written permissions to enable us to take up references and to carry out all necessary enquiries with third parties as may be required. To ensure an applicant's own confidentiality within their household, we can if instructed contact the applicant at an alternative address if we receive full details and the instruction in writing with the application or later if requested.

10. Deposit

All applicants who are made a formal offer of a property will have to pay a deposit equal to one month's rent prior to taking entry to their property. We will register the deposit in line with Tenancy Deposit Schemes (Scotland Amendment Reg 2019) with the agreed holder within the 30-day requirement.

11. Allocations Process

The allocations process will be managed on behalf of NGPM by NGHHA staff in line with this Policy.

12. Equalities

We will not discriminate in the operation of this policy based on age, disability gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We aim to promote equal opportunities and comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

13. Policy Review

We will review our income thresholds as set out in this Policy every two years and will otherwise review the Policy comprehensively every 5 years or earlier as required, for example, to take account of changes in related NGHHA policies, legislative or regulatory changes, or relevant Scottish Government or local authority guidance.