

LETTING HOUSING WITH CARE PROPERTIES

1. ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS AND AWARD OF PRIORITY

The registration form records basic details about the applicant, their household and their housing circumstances.

To determine an individual's eligibility and access to community care services, a Single Shared Assessment (SSA) is carried out and is used to determine an applicant's priority for Housing with Care.

The information gathered during the SSA is used to complete the national IoRN tool which classifies older people into groupings according to their relative needs. Eligibility criteria are also applied to assess the severity of any risks to the applicant's independent living and well-being and the urgency for a response to those risks. The eligibility criteria mirror the common standard eligibility framework for older people approved by Scottish Ministers, COSLA and ADSW which categorises the needs of individuals and which is to be applied by all local authorities.

1.2 ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANTS' NEEDS

When an individual applies for Housing with Care, if a current SSA is not already available, a home visit is carried out and a standard or review SSA is completed. The SSA, for the purposes of assessing an applicant's need for Housing with Care, will focus particularly on the applicant's care and support needs as well as their housing needs. The assessment involves the applicant and may involve family, carers or other professionals. Where an applicant lives out with the Falkirk Council area, a telephone interview may be carried out or a questionnaire is sent to the applicant. If necessary, confirmation will be sought from the applicant's current Social Work Service.

The SSA is a holistic assessment covering the applicant's health and social care needs encompassing mental health and physical needs. This will include the ability of the applicant to manage daily living activities, the extent of support required and provided by others, the help the applicant currently has at home and the social activities they are able to take part in.

In addition, in order to ensure that older people are maximising their income and are in receipt of appropriate benefits, arrangements will be made for a Benefits Advisor to contact the applicant, with their permission.

1.3 THE INDICATOR OF RELATIVE NEED (IORN)

The national IoRN tool is a means of recording the outcome of a SSA and awarding a level relative to the identified needs of the individual with regard to the activities of daily living/mobility, personal care, eating, mental well-being and bowel management.

Where the IoRN indicates high needs the applicants are considered for vacancies in Level 1 Housing with Care; those with moderate needs are considered for Level 2 Housing with Care and those with lower needs are considered for Level 3 Housing with Care.

The Eligibility Criteria Priority awarded to individual applicants is determined in consultation with Community Care Services.

An applicant's SSA – IoRN grouping can change higher/lower over a short period of time and should be subject to appropriate review.

1.4 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Priority 1 – Critical Risk

Housing with Care applicants are awarded Priority 1 where they are assessed to be at critical risk in terms of their physical or mental health; personal care/domestic routines and home environment; participation in community activities and existing care arrangements. Priority 1 is awarded to applicants with one or more of the following:

- who are at major risk in their existing environment
- who are delayed in being discharged from hospital
- who have health problems which cause life-threatening harm or danger to the applicant or others
- who are homeless or threatened with homelessness
- whose existing care or support arrangements have broken down

Priority 2 – Substantial Risk

Housing with Care applicants are awarded Priority 2 where they are assessed to be at substantial risk in terms of their physical or mental health; personal care/domestic routines and home environment; participation in community activities and existing care arrangements. Priority 2 is awarded to applicants with one or more of the following:

- who are at significant risk in their existing environment
- for whom social isolation is causing observable low mood
- who have health problems which cause significant risks of harm or danger to the applicant or others
- who have difficulty sustaining an existing package of care or support
- to prevent unnecessary admission to residential care

Priority 3 – Moderate Risk

Housing with Care applicants are awarded Priority 3 where they are assessed to be at moderate risk in terms of their physical or mental health; personal care/domestic routines and home environment; participation in community activities and existing care arrangements. Priority 3 is awarded to:

- applicants due to frailty or advanced ageing
- assist applicants access family or neighbourhood support
- assist applicants maintain or increase their independence
- prevent applicants becoming socially isolated
- assist applicants access care and support services

Priority 4 – Low Risk

Housing with Care applicants are awarded Priority 4 where they are assessed as having a minimal risk in terms of their care and/or support needs or their needs are already being met in their current home.

1.5 AWARD OF PRIORITY

Applicants are advised of the Level of Housing with Care where their needs can be met and the priority that they have been awarded in terms of eligibility criteria for an offer of Housing with Care accommodation.

2. LETTING A HOUSING WITH CARE PROPERTY

There are separate lists of applicants for each of the three levels of Housing with Care.

When a Level 1 or 2 Housing with Care property becomes available for letting, it is matched to an applicant on the appropriate Housing with Care list whose preferences for accommodation i.e. location and accommodation type, match the vacancy available.

When a Level 3 Housing with Care property becomes available for letting, it is advertised through the Choice Based Letting system. Adverts for Housing with Care 3 will indicate that preference will be given to applicants who have been assessed as requiring Housing with Care Level 3.

2.1 LEVEL 1 HOUSING WITH CARE

As soon as a vacancy in Level 1 Housing with Care is identified, applicants assessed as requiring Level 1 Housing with Care are considered in order of eligibility criteria Priority awarded. Where there is more than one applicant with the same level of Eligibility Criteria Priority, individual applicant's IoRN level and characteristic scoring will be considered for allocation of the property. If there is more than one applicant with the same IoRN level and characteristic scoring, the applicant who has had this assessment longest is considered for the property. The Housing with Care Manager for the establishment will visit the applicant to ensure that the accommodation and level of support available are suitable for the applicant or if a review of the SSA is required. Where appropriate, arrangements are made for the applicant to visit the property.

If it is considered that the property is not suitable for the applicant, the next applicant selected following the process set out above, is considered for the property. If there are no suitable applicants on the list, applicants assessed as requiring Level 2 Housing with Care will be considered for the vacancy in order of award of Eligibility Criteria Priority.

Requests from existing tenants to move from one property to another within Level 1 Housing with Care will only be considered if there are no applicants living in mainstream housing with eligibility criteria Priority (1) on the list.

2.2 LEVEL 2 HOUSING WITH CARE

Level 2 Housing with Care provides accommodation for applicants with a range of support needs, from those with moderate care needs in terms of their physical health or personal care to those with lesser physical care needs but who are socially isolated. In allocating vacancies in Level 2 Housing with Care, applicants across the range of needs will be considered in an effort to create a community within each individual complex which is balanced and sustainable.

As soon as a vacancy in Level 2 Housing with Care is identified, applicants assessed as requiring Level 2 Housing with Care are considered in order of Eligibility Criteria Priority awarded. Where there is more than one applicant with the same level of Eligibility Criteria Priority, individual applicant's IoRN level and characteristic scoring will be considered for allocation of the property. If there is more than one applicant with the same IoRN level and characteristic scoring, the applicant who has had this assessment longest is considered for the property. The Housing with Care Manager for the establishment will visit the applicant to ensure that the accommodation and level of support available are suitable for the applicant or if a review of the SSA is required. Where appropriate, arrangements are made for the applicant to visit the property.

If it is considered that the property is not suitable for the applicant, the next applicant selected following the process set out above, is considered for the property. If there are no suitable applicants on the list, applicants assessed as requiring Level 3 Housing with Care will be considered for the vacancy in order of award of Eligibility Criteria Priority.

Requests from existing tenants to move from one property to another within Level 2 Housing with Care will only be considered if there are no applicants living in mainstream housing with eligibility criteria priority critical (1) on the list.

Number of Offers for Level 1 & 2 Housing with Care

It is anticipated that the comprehensive process of assessment and matching applicants to available vacancies will result in successful offers of tenancies of Housing with Care properties. However, in an effort to ensure that adapted housing is utilised to maximum potential in terms of addressing the particular needs of applicants and complementing community care services and to offer applicants the widest opportunity to move into suitable housing, there is no limit on the number of offers of adapted accommodation that an applicant can receive.

2.3 LEVEL 3 HOUSING WITH CARE

Advertising Level 3 Housing with Care Properties

To ensure efficiency in managing void turnover and to minimise voids rent loss, arrangements to advertise Level 3 Housing with Care are made as soon as a termination of tenancy is notified. Such properties are advertised along with mainstream voids in a fortnightly cycle which states the closing date for bids. Adverts indicate when properties are likely to be available for occupancy. Adverts for Level 3 Housing with Care properties indicate that preference is given to all applicants who have been assessed as requiring Level 3 Housing with Care.

Properties are advertised locally and on the Council's Website, in ARC Neighbourhood Offices/One Stop Shops, local supported accommodation projects, local libraries and in RSL partners' offices. Additionally, there is a freephone service listing the properties which are advertised. Applicants for Level 3 Housing with Care can indicate during their assessment if they require assistance to bid for appropriate properties.

Matching Bids for Level 3 Housing with Care

Once bidding has closed, bids received are assessed to prepare a short-list of suitable applicants. Suitable applicants are those who:

- meet the criteria in the advert i.e have been assessed as requiring Level 3 Housing with Care
- meet the household size criteria for the property; and
- are not affected by the policy on suspensions set out in the Allocations policy

Where there is more than one applicant with the same level of Eligibility Criteria Priority, individual applicant's IoRN level and characteristic scoring will be considered for allocation of the property. If there is more than one applicant with the same IoRN level and characteristic scoring, the applicant who has had this assessment longest is considered for the property.

Number of Bids Level 3 Housing with Care

There is no limit to the number of properties applicants can bid for during each advertising cycle (2 weeks). The number of bids applicants can make during each advertising cycle is routinely monitored and reviewed at the end of each year.

Offering a Level 3 Housing with Care Property

The successful bidder is notified that they are to be offered the property they have bid for. Unsuccessful bidders are not notified individually however the results of the bidding process i.e. how many applicants bid for the property and what priority the successful applicant had, are placed on the Council's website and displayed in ARC, Neighbourhood Offices/One Stop Shops, local supported accommodation projects, local libraries and in RSL partners' offices. Staff will provide housing options advice to applicants whose bids have been unsuccessful.

Refusal of Level 3 Housing with Care Properties

Given that applicants have the opportunity to choose which Level 3 Housing with Care properties they bid for, there is an expectation that successful applicants will accept the properties offered. However, if an applicant refused two offers of Level 3 Housing with Care properties which they have successfully bid for, their circumstances and Eligibility Criteria Priority will be re-assessed.

No bids received for Level 3 Housing with Care

Where a Level 3 Housing with Care property is advertised and no qualifying bids are received i.e. bids from applicants who have been assessed as requiring Level 3 Housing with Care, any other bids received which meet the household size and age criteria are considered in order of priority as set out above.

2.4 NOMINATIONS TO RSLs INCLUDING NEW BUILD PROPERTIES

Falkirk Council has nomination arrangements in place with RSLs providing Housing with Care in the Council's area. Generally, the Council is able to make nominations to 50% of available RSL Housing with Care properties.

Nominations for Housing with Care are made using the process set out above.