

## **HOUSING ALLOCATIONS**

### **OUTCOMES DURING 2011**

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# **Section 1**

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides comprehensive information about the housing list as at 09 January 2012 and allocation outcomes during 2011. The report seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the Allocations Policy with regard to meeting housing needs, making better use of the housing stock and providing housing applicants with more choice.

## Section 2

### Current Housing List – Applicant Groups and Band of Priority

- 2.1 The total number of applicants on the housing list as at 09 January 2012 was 9578 which included 158 applicants for Housing with Care. The Table below compares the number of applicants on the housing at 9 January 2012 with the total number of applicants on the housing list as at 31 January 2011 broken down by applicant group and Band of priority.

Table 1

**Number of Applicants by Band of Priority as at 09.01.12 and 31.1.11**

	Home Seeker		Home Mover		Home Starter		Total	
Year	Jan 2012	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2011	Jan 2012	Jan 2011
Band 1	770	1221	523	414	223	194	1516	1829
Band 2	259	247	456	463	740	486	1455	1196
Band 3	0	0	397	418	3686	2954	4083	3372
Band 4	0	0	1081	1049	1285	1264	2366	2313
TOTAL	1029	1468	2457	2344	5934	4898	9420	8710
%	11%	17%	27%	27%	62%	55%		

#### Main Points to note:

The number of applicants on the housing list has increased since January 2011 by 763 applicants, an increase of 7.8%.

The make up of the housing list has changed since January 2011 with Home Seeker applicants falling from 17% of all applicants to 11%. Home Movers have remained similar, making up 27% of the housing list and the largest proportion of applicants are Home Starters who represent 62% of the housing list.

The proportion of applicants with Band 1 priority for housing has decreased slightly from 21% in January 2011 to 16% in January 2012.

The majority of applicants with Band 1 priority are Home Seekers who represent 51% of Band 1 applicants.

The proportion of Home Starter applicants with Band 1 has increased from 10% in January 2010 to 15% in January 2011 and this is due to applicants found to be threatened with homelessness being awarded Band 1 Home Starter priority.

25% of applicants on the list do not fall into any of the statutory reasonable preference groups and therefore have no housing need.

There are 79 applicants on the housing list who are seeking Housing with Care Levels 1 & 2. 79 applicants are seeking Housing with Care Level 3. Housing with Care applicants make up less than 2% of all applicants.

## **2.2 Home Seeker Applicants**

Of the 1029 Home Seeker applicants on the list, 75% have been assessed as homeless and in priority need in terms of homelessness legislation. This compares to 83% in 2010.

The reduction in the overall number of Home Seeker applicants is encouraging and is due mainly to the Housing Options approach which has been operating since April 2011.

All applicants presenting at the Accommodation Resource Centre now receive a housing options interview at which time they are provided with detailed information about the full range of housing options available locally, across all sectors in order to assist them to make informed choices. As a result many applicants that may have gone down the route of a homeless assessment decide to take another course of action. For example, they may decide their prospects of getting an offer of housing are better if they stay where they are and their housing need is assessed as a Home Starter or they may secure a let in the private rented sector and stay on the housing list as a Home Starter.

However, given the current limited supply of housing in the social rented sector, fulfilling our statutory duty towards homeless applicants continues to be a challenge.

The remainder of Home Seeker applicants (25%) are homeless with no priority need and from December 2012, when the test of priority need is abolished, these applicants will also be entitled to an offer of permanent housing. Information in relation to this is included in the Annual Homelessness Statement 2011-12 reported to this Committee.

## **2.3 Home Mover Applicants**

The percentage of Home Mover applicants with Band 1 priority has increased slightly from 18% of all Home Movers in 2010 to 21% of all Home Movers in 2011. 15% of Home Mover applicants have a Band 1 award for under occupying their tenancy. 16% of Home Mover applicants are overcrowded; 4% who are lacking 2 bedrooms (Band 1) and 12% who are lacking 1 bedroom (Band 2). 16% of Home Mover applicants are living in a tenancy which is unsuitable due to a medical condition. 44% of all Home Mover applicants have been awarded Band 4 as they have no housing need.

## **2.4 Home Starters Applicants**

Home Starter applicants make up 62% of the housing list and this is an increase of 7% from 2010.

The increase in the overall number of Home Starter applicants is due mainly to the Housing Options approach which has been operating since April 2011.

The majority of Home Starters have Band 3 priority (62% of Home Starters) or no housing need (22% of Home Starters). 13% of Home Starter applicants are

overcrowded; 2% who are lacking 2 bedrooms (Band 1) and 11% who are lacking 1 bedroom (Band 2). 14% of Home Starters are living in Private Tenancies and have no other housing need. 6% of Home Starter applicants are living in a property which is unsuitable due to a medical condition. 0.2% have been awarded a Band 1 as they are Threatened with Homelessness.

## **2.5 Equalities Analysis**

Information is provided below on the profile of applicants as at 09 January 2012. The information is very similar to that provided for 2010.

### **Gender**

- just over 56% of applicants are female,
- just over 44% of applicants are male,

### **Age**

- 20% of applicants are age 25 years or less,
- 31% of applicants are between 26 and 40 years,
- 29% of applicants are between 41 and 60 years
- the remaining 20% of applicants are over sixty, one third of whom are over 75.

### **Disability**

- 24% of applicants on the housing list have indicated that they consider that they have a disability.
- Over half of these applicants indicate this is in relation to a physical disability or mobility problems.

### **Ethnicity**

- no information regarding the ethnicity of applicants is available for approximately 3% of applicants
- 87% of applicants are White Scottish
- the next most numerous ethnic groups are 3.9% White Other British; 1.6% Black Scottish/British African and 0.9% Asian Scottish/British Pakistani

### **Religion**

- no information is available for just over 17% of applicants
- 34% of applicants have no religion
- 26% of applicant indicated that they are Church of Scotland
- just under 10% of applicants are Roman Catholic

### **Sexual Orientation**

- 32% of applicants did not respond or indicated that they did not wish to respond.
- Of the applicants who did respond, 98.4% indicated that they were heterosexual.

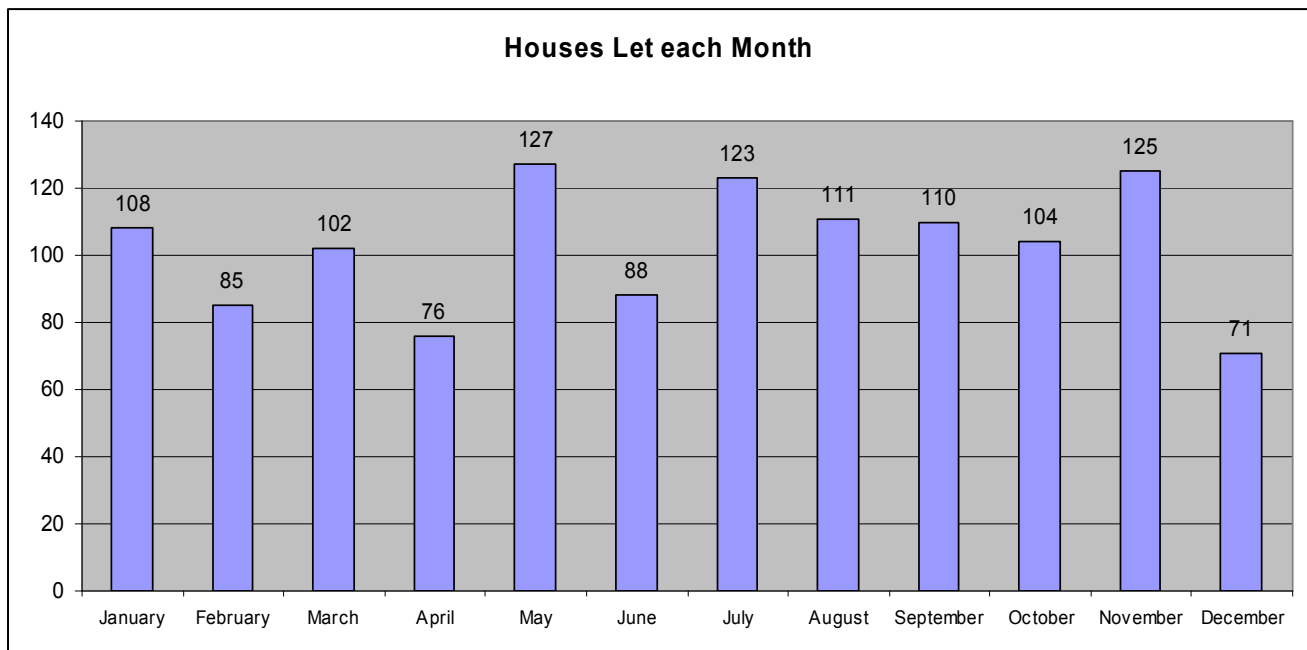
## Section 3

### Properties Let

#### Number of Properties Let Each Month

**3.1** During 2011, 1230 properties were let across the Council. This is a slight reduction from 2010 when 1243 properties were let. The number of properties let per month is set out in the table below.

Table 2

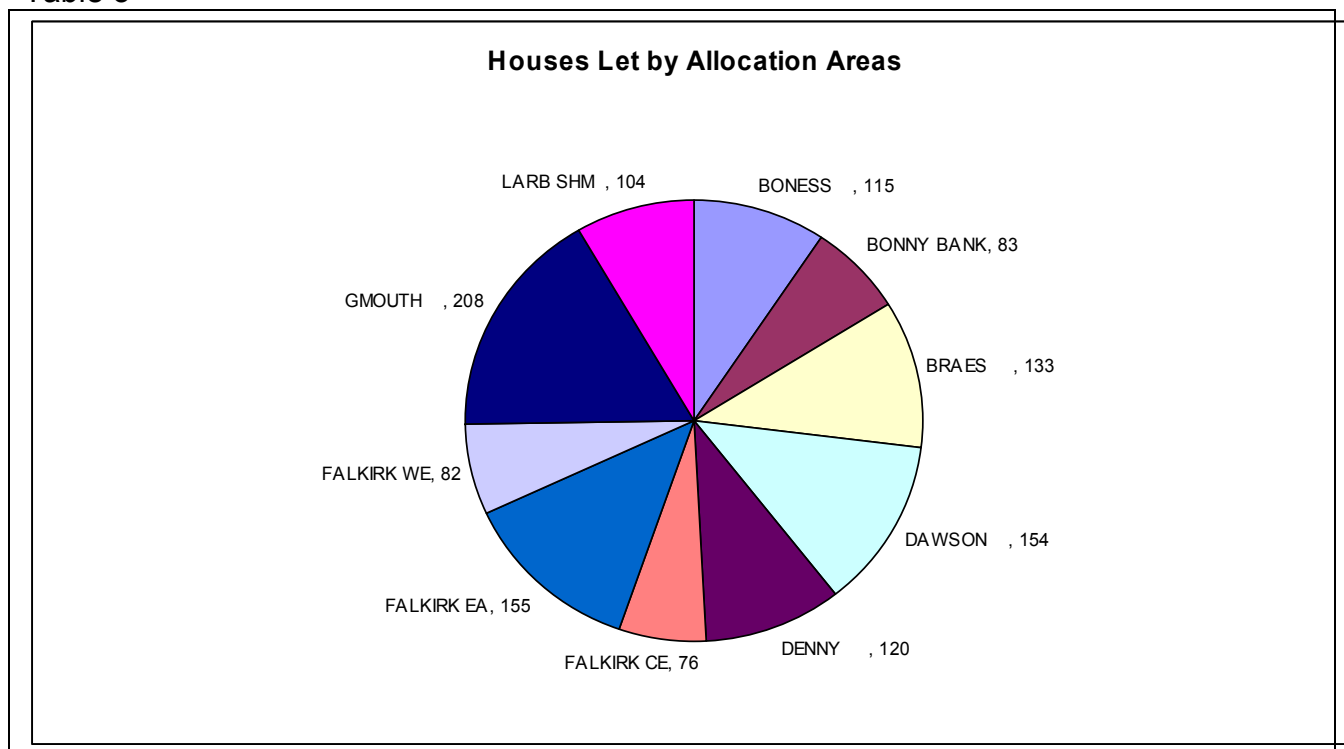


The number of properties let each month

#### 3.2 Number of Properties let in Allocations Areas

The chart below shows the breakdown of properties let by allocations area. The allocations area with the most lets was Grangemouth with 208 properties let during the year, followed by Falkirk East with 155 properties. The Falkirk Central area had the fewest lets with 76 properties being let during 2011.

Table 3



### Size of Properties Let

**24% (299 properties) let during 2011 had 1 bedroom.**

**56% (686) properties let during 2011 had 2 bedrooms**

**18% (224 properties) had 3 bedrooms**

**only 21 properties (less than 2%) of lets had 4 or more bedrooms.**

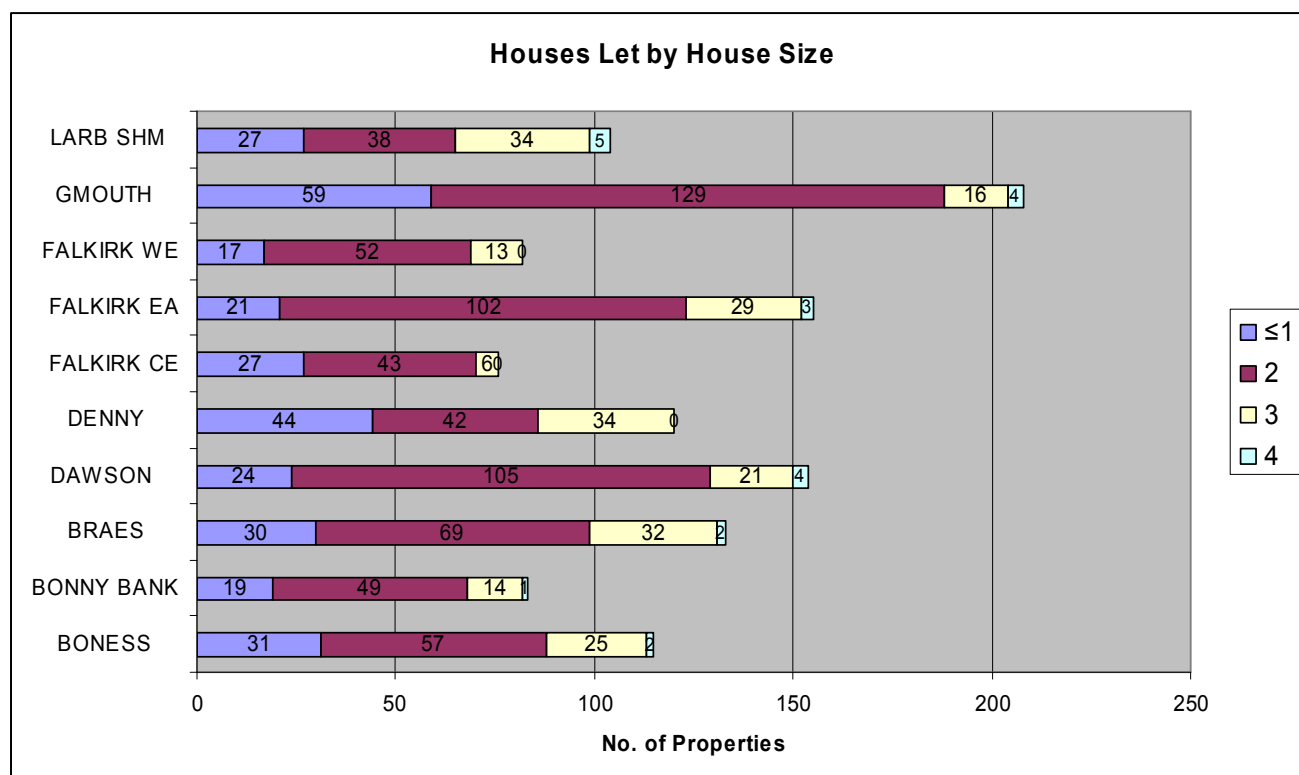
These figures clearly demonstrate that the number of larger properties available for let is small and opportunities for larger families who are overcrowded to move to more suitable accommodation are limited.

Increasing the supply of larger properties is a challenge and realistically, the Council is unlikely to be able to meet the needs and aspirations of all applicants on the housing list. The household size criteria included in the allocations policy aim to ensure that larger properties are allocated to those with the greatest and longest needs and to manage applicants' expectations and aspirations. Increasingly, it is the case that applicants will require to consider options other than Council housing to meet their needs and aspirations.

Given the Welfare Reform that is proposed for 2013 when tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit will lose some of their Benefit entitlement if they are under occupying a property then the shortage of 1 bedroom properties will become more apparent.



**Table 4**



## Section 4

### Sequencing of Properties

- 4.1 In order to achieve the Council's target of 50% of mainstream allocations being made to Home Seekers, 25% to Home Movers and 25% to Home Starters, a sequencing process is used to assign properties for allocation to each group. The process aims to ensure, over time, that the targets for lets to each applicant group are met in each of the allocation areas and that as even as possible a distribution of properties in terms of size is achieved within these targets. This is in recognition of the fact that within each of the applicant groups (Home Seeker, Movers and Starters) there is a range of household types who need accommodation of varying sizes. The sequencing process is complex and takes account of both, the location, type and size of each property, and the date the property became vacant.

Following a report to Housing and Social Care Committee on 29 March 2011 property type was taken into consideration in the sequencing process and the number of allocation areas increased from seven to ten from 13 April 2011.

The location of the property is considered in terms of the allocations areas, with each allocation area having its own discrete sequence. Within each discrete area sequence, properties are further sequenced according to type of property being separated into the following categories of flats, four-in-a-blocks and houses and finally by size with properties being separated into the following categories - 1 & 2 bedroom properties; 3 bedroom properties; and 4 or more bedroom properties.

Thereafter properties are ordered by the date they became vacant and assigned for allocation to the three applicant groups in the following order:

Void 1 - Home Seeker  
Void 2 - Home Mover  
Void 3 - Home Seeker  
Void 4 - Home Starter

The process of sequencing voids is continuous and sequencing for each new edition of the Homespot Newsletter starts from point where it left off from the previous list.

Adapted properties and Housing with Care Level 3 properties are advertised in HomeSpot and let in accordance with agreed procedures however, they are not included in the sequencing process. Housing with Care Level 1 and 2 properties are not advertised and are directly matched to applicants that have been assessed as needing this type of supported housing.

The table below shows the sequencing of general needs properties by Allocation Area and applicant group for all advertising cycles during 2011. The table shows that 999 general needs properties were advertised during 2011. This figure is not the same as the total lets during 2011 as the figure for total lets will include properties that were advertised at the end of 2010 where the tenancy did not start

until. Also, properties that were advertised at the end of 2011 will be included in the lets for 2012 as the tenancy will not have stated until some time after January 2012.

As mentioned above, the allocation areas of Bonny Bank, Dawson, and Falkirk Central were created in April 2011 following a report to Housing and Social Care Committee an 29 March 2011.

Table 5

Allocation area	Home Seekers	Home Movers	Home Starters	Total
Bo'ness	49	22	25	96
Bonny Bank (From 6.4.2011)	23	10	7	40
Braes	62	30	26	118
Dawson (From 6.4.2011)	36	34	16	86
Denny	67	33	28	128
Falkirk Central (From 6.4.2011)	19	9	8	36
Falkirk East	54	42	24	120
Falkirk West	58	28	26	112
Grangemouth	88	49	41	178
Stenhousemuir	45	20	20	85
Total No.	501	277	221	999
Total %	50%	28%	22%	100%

In addition to the 999 properties above, a further 178 properties were advertised for "All Groups". The majority of "All Group" properties are properties that have been adapted however, a small number are properties have been re advertised for "All Groups" when the initial advert resulted in no suitable bids from applicants.

65 Housing with Care Level 3 properties have also been advertised during the year with applicants over 60 years of age being eligible to bid for these properties.

## 4.2 Properties Advertised by House Type

The table below shows properties advertised by house type.

Table 6

Allocation area	4-in-a-block	Flat	House	Total
Bo'ness	26	37	33	96
Bonny Bank (From 6.4.2011)	6	15	19	40
Braes	37	19	62	118
Dawson (From 6.4.2011)	17	62	7	86
Denny	24	56	48	128
Falkirk Central (From 6.4.2011)	0	30	6	36
Falkirk East	22	65	33	120
Falkirk West	35	64	13	112
Grangemouth	22	142	14	178
Stenhousemuir	19	17	49	85
Total No.	208	507	284	999
Total %	21%	51%	28%	100%

Just over half of the properties advertised were tenement flats with the remainder of properties being more evenly split between houses and 4-in-a-block flats.

However these proportions vary with allocations area, for example, in Grangemouth nearly 80% of available properties were flats with only 12% of available properties being houses. This can create problems where applicants are trying to meet their housing aspirations as well as their housing needs.

## Section 5

### Bidding Activity

5.1 Properties are advertised weekly and on average 25 properties are advertised each week. Table 7 below shows the average number of bids per week by applicant group.

Table 7

Year	2011	2010
Average No of Properties Advertised per Week	25	26
Average No of Home Seekers bidding	560	689
Average No of Home Movers bidding	293	208
Average No of Home Starters bidding	990	516

The average number of bids from Home Seekers has fallen since 2010 while the average number of bids from Movers has increased slightly and the average number of bids from Home Starters has almost doubled.

During 2011, over 99,000 bids have been made by applicants which is an average of 84 bids per property. Around 1850 bids were received each week.

5083 applicants bid for properties during 2011 and Table 8 provides more information about the number of bids they made and the average number of bids.

Table 8

	Applicants that bid	Number of Bids	Avg	1-10 bids	11-20 bids	21-30 bids	30+	Total
HWC	122	647	5	109	9	1	3	122
Mover	1274	15250	12	833	229	97	115	1274
Seeker	1402	31275	22	649	268	174	311	1402
Starter	2285	51982	23	1121	436	208	520	2285
	5083	99154	20	2712	942	480	949	5083

Table 9

Bids on mainstream sequenced properties					Bids placed in own category	
	Mover	Seeker	Starter	Total	%	Avg
Mover	4300	5546	2213	12059	28%	3.4
Seeker	6043	13740	5138	24921	44%	9.8
Starter	11349	19423	9849	40621	19%	4.3

Table 9 provides information about the bidding activity of Home Seekers, Home Movers and Home Starters in relation to mainstream properties that have been sequenced for the different applicant groups. The information shows that the majority of bids made are for properties advertised for different applicant groups.

Home Seeker applicants placed a total of 31275 bids in 2011 but only 13740 of these bids were for properties that were advertised for Home Seekers. Accordingly, only 44% of the bids placed by Home Seekers were for properties advertised for their applicant group.

While we monitor bids from Home Seekers, we can only tell whether they have been bidding for properties and not whether they have been bidding for properties that are advertised for Home Seekers i.e. properties that they have a better chance of being let.

On average, 560 Home Seekers bid for properties each week. This figure is of concern and indicates a significant number of Home Seeker applicants are not bidding regularly. Bids from Home Seekers are monitored and those applicants who are not actively seeking housing are asked to attend Housing Options interviews and subsequently offered a direct match property. This approach is being taken as the Council has a statutory duty to provide permanent accommodation to homeless applicants.

On average, Home Seekers make 22 bids per year however, less than half (9.8) of these bids are actually for their advertised group.

Home Mover applicant placed a total of 15250 bids but only 28% of these bids were for properties advertised for Home Movers.

## Section 6

### Applicants housed during 2011

6.1 The table below shows the number of lets by applicant group and allocation areas during 2011.

Table 10

Applicants Housed	Bo'ness	Bonny Bank	Braes	Dawson	Denny	Falkirk Central	Falkirk East	Falkirk West	G'mouth	Larbert Shm	Total
Home Seeker	48	40	61	65	48	17	61	31	108	45	524
Home Mover	25	15	34	55	28	24	48	19	49	25	322
Home Starter	36	19	36	31	33	22	34	22	49	23	305
HwC	6	9	2	3	11	13	12	10	2	11	79
Total	115	83	133	154	120	76	155	82	208	104	1230

The outcome of all lets during the period, including Housing with Care properties, is as follows:-

- 43% of lets were to Home Seeker applicants,
- 26% of lets to Home Mover applicants
- and 25% of lets were to Home Starter applicants
- 6% of lets were made to applicants needing Housing with Care

This broadly meets the targets set in the allocations policy although lets to Home Seekers are lower than the 50% target.

### 6.2 Meeting Housing Needs

Lets have also been analysed based on the Band of priority of the successful applicant and the table below shows that (excluding Housing with Care lets):-

- 63% of lets were to applicants with Band 1 priority
- 15% of lets were to applicants with Band 2 priority
- 10% of lets were to applicants with Band 3 priority.
- 5% of lets were to applicants with Band 4 priority

The percentage of lets to applicants with Bands 1, 2 and 4 remains similar to that of 2010 however, applicants with Band 3 priority has fallen from 16% in 2010 to 10% in 2011.

This indicates that the policy is effective in meeting housing needs and that lets are routinely made to those applicants in the greatest housing need.

Table 12

Applicants Housed	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	HwC	Total
Home Seeker	512	11	0	1	0	524
Home Mover	136	79	54	53	0	322
Home Starter	129	99	72	5	0	305
HwC	0	0	0	0	79	79
Total	777	189	126	59	79	1230



## Section 7

### Time Applicants Spend in Housing Need

7.1 The tables below show the length of time that applicants spent in housing need (by applicant group) before accepting an offer of housing.

Table 13

Applicant Group	Priority	<6mths	6-12 mths	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	>10years	Total
Home Seeker	B1	89	146	255	22	1	0	513
	B2	5	2	2	2	0	0	11
	%	18%	28%	49%	5%	-	-	524

The majority of Home Seekers had been in housing need for between 1 and 2 years (49% of Home Seeker applicants). However, 28% of Home Seeker applicants were housed within 12 months.

Table 14

Applicant Group	Priority	<6mths	6-12 mths	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years -	>10years	Total
Home Mover	B1	65	28	16	20	7	0	136
	B2	23	12	15	21	8	0	79
	B3	18	13	10	12	1	0	54
	B4	19	7	10	10	6	1	53
	%	38.8%	18.6%	15.8%	19.6%	6.8%	0.3%	322

A significant number of Home Movers (38.8%) were housed in less than 6 months of applying for housing.

Table 15

Applicant Group	Priority	<6mths	6-12 mths	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years -	>10years	Total
Home Starter	B1	100	18	9	2	0	0	129
	B2	53	21	15	7	3	0	99
	B3	20	19	17	11	5	0	72
	B4	2	1	2	0	0	0	5
	%	57%	19%	14%	7%	3%	-	305

More than half of the Home Starters (57%) were housed in less than 6 months of applying for housing.

Table 16

Applicant Group	<6mths	6-12 mths	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	>10years	Total
HwC	65	8	6	0	0	0	79

82% of Housing with Care applicants were housed in less than 6 months of applying for housing. Applicants moving into Housing with Care are able to move more quickly than applicants moving into general needs housing.

Excluding the 79 applicants that were housed in Housing with Care 87% of all applicants were housed within 2 years of applying for housing. This is broken down further as follows:-

- 34% of all applicants were housed in less than 6 months of applying for housing
- 23% of all applicants were housed between 6 months to 1 year of applying for housing
- 30% of all applicants were housed between 1 – 2 year of applying for housing
- 9% of all applicants were housed between 2-5 years of applying for housing
- 3% of applicants were housed between 5-10 years of applying for a house
- Less than 0.5 % of applicants waited more than 10 years to be offered a house.

## Section 8

### Lets to Local Applicants

8.1 An analysis has been carried out to assess the percentage of applicants who were housed in the same allocations area as they were already living. The results show that the majority of applicants are housed in area that they already live in or a nearby area.

Table 17

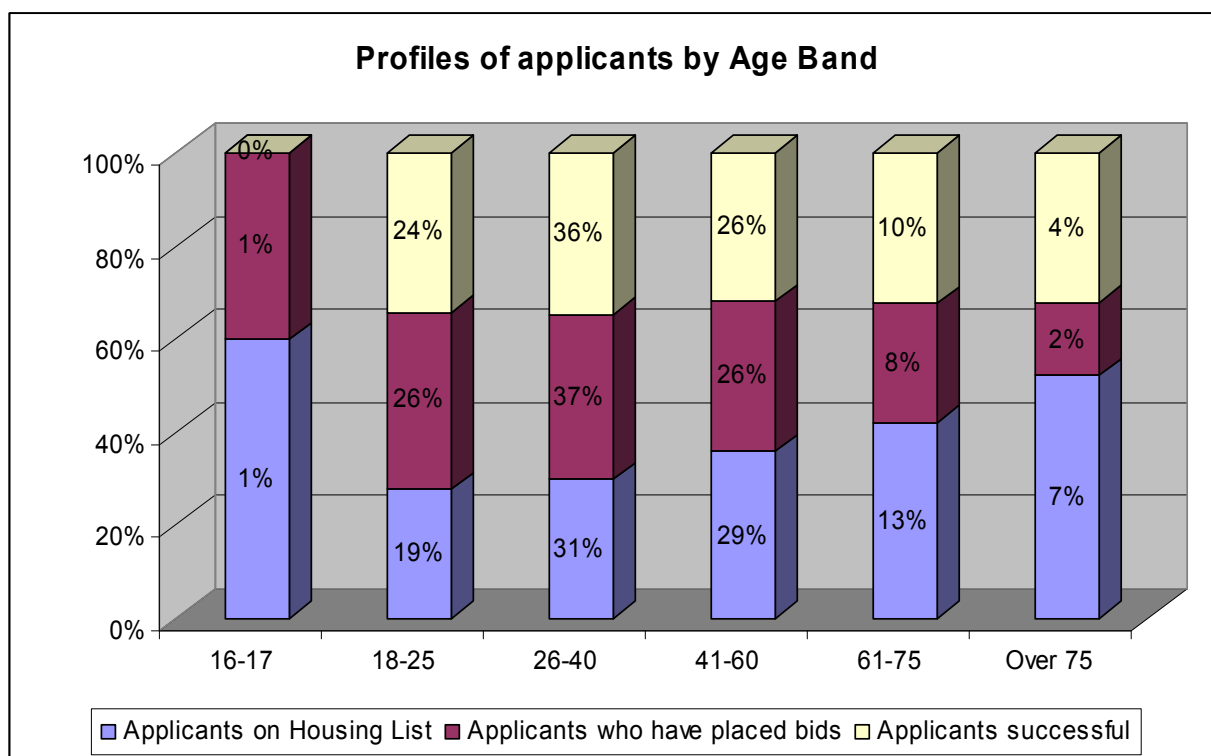
Allocations Area	From Bo'ness	From Bonny Bank	From Braes	From Dawson	From Denny	From Falkirk Ce	From Falkirk Ea	From Falkirk We	From G'mouth	From Larbert/Smuir	From Outwith
To Bo'ness	<b>77</b> <b>63%</b>	0 0%	4 3%	3 2%	0 0%	1 1%	3 2%	4 3%	16 13%	2 2%	12 10%
To Bonny Bank	0 0%	<b>23</b> <b>29%</b>	2 3%	2 3%	26 33%	3 4%	3 4%	8 10%	6 8%	4 5%	2 3%
To Braes	13 11%	0 0%	<b>30</b> <b>25%</b>	12 10%	3 2%	2 2%	20 17%	5 4%	23 19%	6 5%	7 6%
To Dawson	7 5%	2 1%	7 5%	<b>45</b> <b>32%</b>	4 3%	1 1%	17 12%	13 9%	17 12%	20 14%	7 5%
To Denny	1 1%	27 22%	2 2%	7 6%	<b>70</b> <b>57%</b>	1 1%	0 0%	4 3%	2 2%	5 4%	4 3%
To Falkirk Ce	0 0%	0 0%	5 7%	6 9%	1 1%	<b>12</b> <b>18%</b>	15 22%	17 25%	6 9%	5 7%	0 0%
To Falkirk Ea	7 5%	0 0%	15 11%	11 8%	7 5%	8 6%	<b>52</b> <b>37%</b>	12 9%	13 9%	10 7%	6 4%
To Falkirk We	1 1%	1 1%	2 2%	5 6%	4 5%	5 6%	9 10%	<b>34</b> <b>40%</b>	9 10%	10 12%	6 7%
To Grangemouth	11 5%	2 1%	5 2%	16 8%	3 1%	1 0%	14 7%	9 4%	<b>130</b> <b>64%</b>	9 4%	4 2%
To Larbert/Smuir	3 3%	2 2%	2 2%	13 12%	4 4%	2 2%	14 13%	7 6%	9 8%	<b>48</b> <b>43%</b>	7 6%

## Section 9

### Equalities and Applicants Housed

9.1 A breakdown of equalities information available regarding applicants housed is set out below, the main points to note as follows:

Table 18



#### Age

There is a larger proportion of young people aged between 18-25 being housed than are represented on the housing list, however, many of the young people have complex housing needs and have high priority to reflect this. A smaller percentage of elderly people are being housed than are represented on the housing list. However a number of those applicants do have any housing need.

#### Gender Profile

60% of the applicants housed were female, 40% of applicants housed were male which is representative of the housing list.

#### Disability

30% of applicants housed provided information that they considered that they have a disability; whilst over half of these applicants indicated this in relation to a physical disability or mobility problems.

### Ethnicity

The allocations made is broadly representative of the waiting list and as such 67% of applicants housed were White Scottish, 5 % of applicants housed were Other White British, 0.2% of applicants housed were Black Scottish British African and 24 % of applicants housed of did not complete the ethnicity question.

### Religion

60% of applicants housed either provided no information about their religion or indicated that they had “no religion”. The remaining applicants housed were 23% Church of Scotland; 12% Roman Catholic and 4% of applicants housed were Other Christian

### Sexual Orientation

About 13% of applicants housed did not provide information about sexual orientation and 86% of applicants housed were heterosexual.