



# Housing allocations policy Summary



[westlothian.gov.uk](http://westlothian.gov.uk)



West Lothian  
Council

Note: this document is intended to give an indication of how we will assess your needs in accordance with our Housing Allocation Policy. It is not intended to cover every situation or explain in detail how we process applications for housing. A copy of the full allocation policy is available from any of our Council Information Service Offices or from our website at [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk).

## 1. Applying for housing

Anyone aged 16 or over can apply to join the Housing List. It is important to remember that acceptance on to the list does not mean we will definitely offer you housing; this is because there are more people applying to us for housing than there are homes available. However, the number of people interested in housing does vary, depending on the type of house and where it is (for example, houses with gardens are more popular than high-rise flats). We will offer you advice about all of your housing options and your chances of being offered housing when you apply.

We will manage your application through the West Lothian Common Housing Register.

You can apply to us and other registered social landlords in West Lothian using a single form.

## 2. Assessing your application

For us to properly assess your housing need, we will need proof of your current circumstances. A note of the type of information we will ask for is included in the table below

Your circumstances	Proof we need to see
Whatever your circumstances	<p>Two forms of identity</p> <p>For example, we will accept a driving licence, a passport, an ID card that you were given when you started your job or your National Insurance card.</p> <p>If you do not have any of these but you have a different form of ID, please contact us to see if we can accept it.</p>
If you are homeless or could soon become homeless	We will assess you against legislation
If you have been asked to leave your current home	A valid notice to quite or a letter asking you to leave
If you need rehousing because your health is affected by your current housing	We will assess your housing needs through our Property Needs Assessment process
If you need a bigger home because you have access to your child and they want to stay overnight	A letter from your child's other parent, or a letter from a lawyer explaining your access rights to your child or children
<b>If you are moving for social reasons</b>	
Your circumstances	Proof we need to see
To be near services you need	A letter from the service you use, such as a school or medical centre, explaining your need to live near this service
To provide or receive support	A letter from the person receiving or providing support, explaining your need to be near them
To be closer to your place of work	A letter from your employer explaining your need to be near your place of work

## 3. Housing areas and house types

You can choose any number of communities. To increase your chances of being offered housing you should select as many communities as you can.

Normally, you can also choose whatever type of house you want (such as a house or a high-rise flat). The only exception is for housing that is designed for a particular group of people, such as sheltered housing.

If you need to move house for a health reason, we may limit the types of housing that we offer you with the health priority, so that the housing we offer you meets your health needs. *(continues on next page)*

We will not offer you housing that might make your housing situation worse.

We want to make sure that we match you with a property that is suitable for you. We will support you in making your housing choices – in terms of where you are thinking of living and what type of housing you need. Our Housing Application form contains information on the availability of Council Housing.

## 4. Changes to your application

If you wish to change your choice of area, type of house or advise us of a change in your circumstances, you must complete an amendment form. The form(s) is available from your local Council Office or can be downloaded from [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk).

## 5. Size of housing

Applicants may choose a maximum of two house sizes to suit family circumstances. If more than one house size is chosen the applicant may be offered housing of either size, whichever becomes available first and meets their needs.

The size of house you will be offered is based on the following rules:

- One bedroom for every adult aged 16 or over (who is not part of a couple)
- One bedroom for every child over 8 years old.

**The following rules will also apply when working out what size of house you should be offered:**

- We won't expect more than two children to share a bedroom;
- Couples and single people without children can choose whether they want to be considered for either a one or two bedroom property.

## 6. The points system

When you apply for housing we will give you points determined by your current housing needs. This allows us to prioritise applications.

**Your application will be categorised as**

- 'Homeless' – for all applicants who are assessed in terms of the homeless persons legislation as being unintentionally homeless and in priority need for housing;
- 'Transfers' – for all current West Lothian Council tenants who need to move house because they are overcrowded, are under-occupying or they have a health need to move;
- 'Applicant' – for all other applicants

## 7. The point's framework

The table below shows how we award points.

Category	Description	Points
Homeless	Homeless	400
Transitional	Previously looked after by a Local Authority and as part of planned transition into own tenancy	400
<b>Housing Needs</b>		
<b>Housing Needs HIGH</b>	Medical grade A	200
	Overcrowding 3+	
	Sharing 3+	
	Housing below tolerable standard	
	Social Support (Harassment and Victims of domestic abuse) 1	
<b>Housing Needs MEDIUM</b>	Medical grade B	150
	Overcrowding 2	
	Sharing 2	
	Social Support (Harassment and Victims of domestic abuse)2	
<b>Housing Needs LOW</b>	Overcrowding 1	100
	Unsuitable accommodation	
	Sharing 1	
	Insecurity	
	Social Support (applicants leaving care, and to give or receive support)	
	Family living apart/New Forming Families	
	Families in flats (per child under 8 years)	
<b>Non-Needs</b>		
Attained points	The use of waiting time points has been removed in line with legislative requirements. These points have been re-defined for existing applicants and will be treated as a protected points award effective from the introduction of the Allocation Policy.	Varied
Under-occupation	Points awarded per room under-occupied.  i.e. If under-occupied by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one room</li> <li>• two rooms</li> <li>• three rooms</li> </ul> Where two applicants qualify for an offer priority will be given to the applicant with the greater number of Needs points, then by date of application.	100 150 200

We will notify you in writing of the points you have been awarded.

## 8. Exceptional cases

Our Allocation Policy can never cover all the circumstances of all of our applicants. In exceptional circumstances we have a process in place to assess if priority should be given to an applicant. Any applicant given priority for exceptional circumstances will be made two priority offers of housing to alleviate their situation.

## 9. Bypassing for offers of housing

We will advise you if we bypass you for an offer of housing. The criteria for bypass are given in the full policy document.

## 10. Removal from our housing list

We will remove your application from our housing list if:

- You request this in writing
- You die
- You repeatedly fail to respond to correspondence.
- Your needs have been met through being housed by WLC, another Local Authority or RSL
- Your need has been met through any of
  - o Assigantion
  - o Succession
  - o Mutual Exchange

We will write to tell you why we have removed you from the housing list

## 11. How we allocate housing

We will always offer you a property that meets your needs, in a location that is suitable for you, and as close to services and support that you need.

When we know that a property is, or about to become, available we will allocate the property to the person with the greatest need (most points).

If a property has major adaptations the Allocations Team, prior to Short-listing, will ensure that the property can be matched to applicants with specific needs. Where an adapted property cannot be matched to an applicant with specific needs it will be allocated in accordance with mainstream policy.

Where two or more people have equal points, we will offer the property to the applicant who has had their current level of housing need (which is shown by the date of application) for the longest period of time.

## 12. Offering you a property

When we have matched you to a property we will write, phone or text to tell you. You will be required to tell us within one working day of the letter, phone call or text, if you want to reserve the property. If you do not tell us within one working day the offer will be withdrawn and offered to someone else. If you reserve the property we will contact you to arrange viewing.

At this stage we will check that there are no changes to your circumstances that might affect your application.

## 13. Accepting our offer

After viewing a property you have 24 hours to tell us if you are accepting the offer. If you accept our offer we will officially sign you up as a tenant. If you made a joint application you will 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 applying for, viewing and accepting the property and becoming our tenant. We will clearly explain your rights and responsibilities under the tenancy agreement before you sign.

## 14. Refusing offers of housing

If you refuse an offer of housing we will discuss with you your reasons. If you refuse a second offer we will review your housing choices. You will also be bypassed for offers of accommodation in accordance with the Council's bypassing rules

## 15. Applicants with support needs (such as people who need help managing their tenancy)

A Single Shared Assessment will be carried out and a package of assistance will be tailored to your needs to assist in ensuring your tenancy is sustainable.

## 16. Young People leaving care

Our allocation policy recognises the needs of young people leaving care through the points system. We will work with our social work services to make sure that we meet the housing and support needs of young people leaving care. We will also give them advice on their housing options.

## 17. Sheltered Housing

If you want to apply for sheltered housing, we will assess your application in a different way from other house types. In a sheltered housing assessment we will take your medical and social needs into account (for example, if you find it difficult to access support services which are available to you or if you are isolated in your current property). If you require further information about our sheltered housing assessment process please contact your local Council Information Service office.

## 18. Reviewing your application

We will review all the details on your application at least once a year. When we contact you to review these details you must provide us with all the information we ask for. You will be bypassed for offers if you do not provide us with the information requested.

## 19. Customer Service

We want to give everybody excellent customer service but we need to have procedures in place for when things go wrong. We have a complaints and an Appeals Procedure. If you need to complain we will tell you about our complaints procedure and give you all the information you need while we try to sort out your complaint. Full details of our Complaints and Appeals Procedure can be obtained from any of our Council Information Service offices.

For further details or information on our housing allocation policy or if you would like a copy of our full policy you can get this by contact your local Council Information Service office or from our website at [www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk).

هذه المعلومات متوفرة بلغة برايل وعلى شريط وبخط كبير وبلغات الجالية.  
الرجاء الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على الهاتف 01506 775000

এই তথ্য আপনি ব্রেইল, টেপ, বড় অক্ষরে এবং কমিউনিটির বিভিন্ন ভাষাগুলিতেও পাবেন। অনুগ্রহ করে ইন্টারপ্রেটেশান অ্যান্ড ট্রান্সলেশন সার্ভিসের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন। টেলি: 01506 775000

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Prosimy o kontakt z Usługami Tlumaczeniowymi pod numerem 01506 775000

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages.

Please contact the interpretation and translation service on **01506 775000**.

Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council. The text phone number is **18001 01506 464427**.

A loop system is also available in all offices. Published by West Lothian Council.