

Allocations and Lettings Policy

1. Purpose of policy

- 1.1 This policy outlines Karbon Homes approach to allocating its homes and signposts to specific lettings policies in place across Karbon Homes' geographical locations.
- 1.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Allocations Procedures applicable to those respective policies.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 This policy ensures that Karbon Homes' approach to letting its properties, (irrespective of geographic location or specific policy provision,) fulfils the following policy objectives:-
 - Contributes to the development of balanced and sustainable communities;
 - Maximises access and informed choice for housing applicants;
 - Promotes social inclusion and equality of opportunity;
 - Provides an open, fair and transparent allocation process;
 - Makes effective use of available properties;
 - Maximises Karbon Homes income by minimising void losses;
 - Adheres to relevant legislation and/or regulatory requirement.

3. Policy detail

3.1 General

Karbon Homes participates in the Tyne & Wear Homes, Durham Key Options, Northumberland Homefinder and Compass sub regional Choice Based Lettings Schemes. Properties will be allocated in accordance with the policies associated with these schemes, except in the Sunderland area where there is no sub-regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Karbon Homes stock in the Sunderland area is allocated through local authority nominations agreement or in accordance with the provisions set out in this policy.

In exceptional circumstances properties may be allocated via a direct offer.

For supported housing allocations outside of Choice Based Lettings see 3.13.

3.2 Legal Context

Reasonable preference

The law says reasonable preference must be given to 5 groups of applicants:

- People who are homeless within the meaning of Part VII (7) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.
- People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2), or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985 or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3)).
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 will place new legal duties on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help, irrespective of their priority need status, as long as they are eligible for assistance. The Act will amend part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (which sets out the duties owed by English local housing authorities to someone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness).
- People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds.
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the authority's district, where failure to meet the need would cause hardship to themselves or others.

Additional preference

- Section 166A(3) of the Housing Act 1996 gives housing authorities the power to create an allocation scheme that gives higher priority to particular kinds of people who fall within the statutory reasonable preference categories and who have urgent housing needs.

3.3 Applying for a property

How to apply and who to contact

Applicants can apply online, or by telephone, email, letter or in person at one of Karbon Homes offices or home visit. Assistance with the completion of an application can be provided if necessary.

Who can apply?

Anyone over the age of 18 can apply, unless they are subject to immigration control. In some circumstances applications may be accepted from applicants who are 16 or 17 years of age; generally this is provided that the person is homeless or threatened with homelessness and there is a support plan in place.

Applicants must declare whether they or someone in their household is a Board member or an employee or a close relative of a Board member or any Karbon Homes employee. Lettings to board members, employees, involved residents and their family members require additional authorisation to evidence fair and transparent allocation of housing where eligibility can be clearly demonstrated.

All applications for housing will be considered, in line with the criteria set out in this policy, however, registration on the housing register does not bind Karbon Homes to offering the applicant a particular property or any property at all.

3.4 Verifying the information provided

Applicants will be required to provide information in support of their application at both application and offer stage. The information will be used to verify the accuracy of the application for housing. Information requested will include but is not limited to:

- A full housing history for the last 6 years, which we will check for any Housing related debt, for example rent and mortgage arrears, and for unacceptable behaviour, eviction etc;
- Proof of identification
- Proof of residency where possible (for example utility bill, letter from the person an applicant is staying with). If this is not possible, we will consider each case on its own merit;
- Evidence of an applicant's immigration status if they are not normally resident in the UK or have come to the country from abroad;
- Proof of income, so we can assess whether the applicants can afford the property we offer;
- Proof of joint custody, if applicants would like to be considered for a larger property than the household make-up would require;
- Proof of pregnancy to show the need for an extra bedroom where applicable;
- Proof of fostering or adopting status, if an applicant would like to be considered for a larger property than the household make-up would normally require;
- Proof that applicants and their partner cannot share a bedroom for medical reasons;
- Proof that 2 children cannot share a bedroom for medical reasons;
- Proof of an overnight carer from outside the household, if a larger property is needed to accommodate the carer.

We may seek references to determine whether an applicant is suitable to receive an offer of a Karbon Homes property this may include but is not limited to:

- Current and former landlord references
- Reference from mortgage provider
- Criminal record check

3.5 Who is eligible for a Karbon Homes property?

People are eligible only if they meet the requirements of section 160ZA of the Housing Act 1996 (and any subsequent legislation), which sets out the immigration status of people who have come to the United Kingdom from abroad. We cannot allow people from the following groups to join our housing register:

- People subject to immigration control unless they have refugee status; or they have exceptional or indefinite leave to remain; or they are the subject of a sponsorship undertaking, have been in the UK over 5 years and the sponsor has died;
- EU nationals required to leave the UK by the UK government;
- Some EEA nationals that are not eligible for social housing;
- Anyone not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area unless they are exempt.

The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 also state who we can help.

There are some exemptions to the Right to Rent. Please refer to Home Office guidance. However, it is good practice to check the immigration status of all customers.

3.6 Who qualifies to join the housing register?

Everyone who is eligible for social housing will qualify to join the housing register except applicants (or households) who fall into the categories outlined below:

3.6.1 The Localism Act 2011 enables Registered Providers to disqualify people whose behaviour makes them unacceptable to us. Applicants do not qualify to join the register if we are satisfied that they or a member of their household who will live with them:

- Has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour that is serious enough to make the person unsuitable to be offered housing and, when we consider the application, we believe that the person remains unsuitable to be offered housing because of that behaviour.

Karbon Homes may regard an applicant or any member of their household as having been guilty of unacceptable behaviour if any of the following statements applies to them (this is not an exhaustive list):

- They have been convicted of a drug-related offence;
- They have been convicted of a violent criminal offence that we consider makes them a threat to the local community;

- They have been convicted of a sex-related offence that we consider makes them a threat to the local community;
- They have any other conviction which, in our opinion, makes them a threat to the local community;
- They have perpetrated violence, domestic violence, racial violence or harassment;
- They have been abusive to, attacked or threatened staff;
- They have a history of anti-social behaviour or are subject to an anti-social behaviour order or equivalent;
- They have a record of unacceptable rent/mortgage arrears* to local councils or other landlords/lenders (including associated court costs);
- They have been evicted on any of the grounds in Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985 or any statutory amendment or re-enactment of it;
- They have unsatisfactory tenancy reports which may include condition of property;
- They have damaged a current or previous rented home, and owe money for 'rechargeable repairs';
- They have knowingly given a false statement or given false information when applying to join our housing register;
- Karbon tenants who have signed up to a new tenancy in the last 12 months and who we regard as adequately housed;
- Any applicant who has refused three offers and is making a new application within 12 months of the last refusal date.

3.6.2 People aged 18-21 who have no income to pay their rent.

In certain circumstances, single applicants aged 18-21 may not have any income to pay their rent and will be disqualified until they can provide evidence that their financial situation has changed. From April 2017, automatic entitlement to housing support as part of a claim for Universal Credit will be removed. Exemptions will apply to the following:

- Claimant households who are responsible for a child;
- All claimants who are not in the 'all work related requirements' conditionality group (broadly, this means certain people who are unable to work);
- Claimants who were previously in local authority care;
- Claimants receiving the care component of disability living allowance at the middle or highest rate or the daily living component of personal independence payment;
- Claimants who are subject to active multi-agency management (this means arrangements for managing risks posed by certain offenders);
- Claimants in temporary accommodation provided by a local authority under its homelessness duties;
- Claimants whose 'expected hours of work' have been reduced because of their caring responsibilities or physical or mental impairment;

- Those for whom work-related requirements cannot be imposed because of the range of time limited circumstances prescribed in sub-paragraphs (3) and (4) of regulation 99 of the 2013 regulations (the recently bereaved, those in treatment for addiction, etc.);
- Claimants who are in work;
- Claimants who are unable to live in the parental home because:
 - they are orphans
 - their parents live abroad, or
 - in the Secretary of State's opinion, it would not be appropriate for them to live in the parental home.

3.6.3 People who fall into any of the following categories/groups.

- In cases where the support needs and vulnerability are identified as requiring more intensive involvement than Karbon Homes can provide, the applicant may not be accepted onto the waiting list, or be considered for accommodation. In such instances, support and clear advice regarding alternative housing options will be offered;
- Karbon Homes will undertake a financial assessment before making an offer of accommodation. If the assessment demonstrates that an applicant is unable to afford the property, then we will not offer that property;
- Karbon Homes considers £60,000 per annum household income to be sufficient financial resource to buy a home or pay market rent in our region. Similarly, Karbon Homes considers that if a household has capital, savings and/or assets of £60,000 or more, this is sufficient financial resource to release to buy a home or pay market rent in our region. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not consider these applicants to be eligible for a Karbon Homes property.

3.7 Right to review

If we decide you are not eligible or do not qualify to join our register, we will notify you of our decision and the reason for it. We will also inform you of your right to review. You can find details of this process in Section 3.26 of this policy.

3.8 How Housing Need is assessed

Karbon Homes participates in all sub regional CBL schemes in operation across its geographical spread - Durham Key Options, Northumberland Homefinder, Tyne & Wear Homes & Compass.

Durham County Council Area:-

Applications will be assessed and banded by a Karbon Homes member of staff in accordance with the Durham Key Options Lettings Policy.

Northumberland County Council Area:-

Applications from tenants currently living in a Karbon Homes property and applying for alternative accommodation will be assessed and banded by a member of Karbon Homes' staff in accordance with the Northumberland Homefinder Allocation Policy. Applicants who are not Karbon Homes' tenants will need to register direct with Northumberland Homefinder.

Tyne & Wear Area:-

All applications are registered through Tyne and Wear Homes. The assessment and banding of each application will be carried out by the relevant local authority in accordance with their own allocation policy. So for example applicants wishing to live in the Gateshead area will be assessed and banded by Gateshead Housing Company.

Sunderland:-

Sunderland is not part of the Tyne & Wear Homes CBL scheme therefore applicants will need to register with Sunderland City Council. Karbon Homes participates in a nominations agreement with Sunderland City Council. Applicants complete the City Council's application form and specify the type of property and the areas they want to be considered for. Karbon Homes requests nominations for available properties and Sunderland City Council provides a list of applicants requiring that type of property in that area. Applicants on the nominations list are ranked in order of housing need by Sunderland City Council. Properties which are not let once the nominations list is exhausted will be offered to applicants registered on Karbon Homes own waiting list who have previously expressed an interest in such property types or areas. Available properties may be advertised by methods such as Karbon Homes website or Zoopla. Properties will be let to applicants with the highest points in the first instance and then on a "first come first served basis" thereafter.

Teeside:-

Tees Valley Area - All applications are registered through Compass. The assessment and banding of each application will be carried out by the relevant local authority in accordance with their own allocation policy.

Assessment of need – Karbon Homes' waiting list:-

Applicants will be assessed on their housing need and awarded points to reflect this. Details of how points are awarded can be found in appendix one.

Supported Housing outside of CBL see section 3.13.

3.9 Updating Applications

Applicants must advise Karbon Homes or the relevant CBL scheme as appropriate, of any changes in circumstances which may affect their application for housing or eligibility to remain on the waiting list.

Any change of circumstances identified at the point of offer will result in a reassessment of the application. Applications may be suspended and any offers made will be withdrawn while the reassessment process is undertaken.

Applications will be reviewed every 12 months to assess whether the information we hold is still up to date and there has been no change of circumstances. If there has been a change in circumstances this may result in a change of priority being awarded.

3.10 Removal from the housing register

An application will be removed from the housing register for the following reasons:

- Applicants or a member of their household no longer qualify for housing;
- An applicant asks for their application to be removed;
- An applicant has provided false or misleading information;
- An applicant refuses or does not respond to 3 reasonable offers of accommodation.

3.11 Property Entitlement

Karbon Homes aims to create balanced and sustainable communities and also to make best use of its housing stock.

Property entitlement is determined by the composition of the applicant's household. A separate bedroom is considered necessary in each of the following circumstances:-

- A single person aged 16 or over;
- A couple;
- Two children of the same sex under 16;
- Two children of opposite sex under the age 10;
- Any additional child including any unborn child on proof of pregnancy;
- A non-resident carer providing 24/7 care;
- A household member with a disability where there is medical evidence that they need their own room;
- A foster child.

Karbon Homes will allow under occupation in the following circumstances:

- Where there is a local letting policy in place;
- Properties in an area where there is a shortage or no provision of a particular property type for example one bedroomed properties;
- Properties which have been adapted and are suitable for certain applicants;

- For specific management reasons for example where properties have been through an advertising cycle and have not been allocated, we may permit under occupation.

Within County Durham, under occupation is only permitted where an applicant can demonstrate that they meet the affordability criteria.

3.12 Local Lettings Policies

Local lettings policies may be used to achieve policy objectives, to create communities that are balanced, safe, inclusive and sustainable, while encouraging community cohesion. Local lettings policies may also be used for example when letting new developments in accordance with section 106 agreements or for rural allocations. Property adverts will specify when a local lettings policy applies.

3.13 Supported Housing allocations outside of Choice Based Lettings

Supported Housing outside of Choice Based Lettings will be allocated following liaison with relevant agencies and in line with referral and allocation processes as follows:-

3.13.1 Floating support - dispersed accommodation

- Applications will be made via the Local Authority Gateway and referrals made to the relevant support provider.

The support provider will liaise with Karbon Homes and referrals made to Karbon Homes will be assessed according to need in conjunction with the support provider.

3.13.2 Floating support - cluster accommodation

- In addition to the stages outlined above, consideration will be given to the existing balance within the scheme, i.e. level and type of support needs of existing tenants.

3.13.3 Independent supported living - shared accommodation for people with a learning disability

- Referrals will be made to Karbon Homes via the Local Authority learning disability team who will assess suitability for the vacancy.
- Once an applicant is identified, the transition process will commence and the applicant will have the opportunity to visit the property, meet other tenants and have at least one overnight stay prior to the allocation being progressed.

3.13.4 Concierge Plus

- Concierge Plus allocations are made via the Local Authority learning disability panel where referrals are jointly assessed and verified.
- Once the application is accepted by the panel Karbon Homes will progress the application.

3.13.5 Managing agent allocations

- Some supported housing is managed by a managing agent on behalf of Karbon Homes. For this type of accommodation, the managing agents are responsible for allocations and their allocations policies and procedures are monitored by Karbon Homes.

3.13.6 Extra care and sheltered housing

- Applicants are assessed in terms of support needs and prior to any allocation consideration will be given to the existing balance within the scheme, i.e. level and type of support needs of existing tenants.

3.13.7 Supported Housing

- Referrals are made to Karbon Homes via Community Mental Health teams, Social Workers, CPN's, Care Co-ordinators and Gateway teams. Applicants are assessed in terms of support needs and suitability for the vacancy.

3.14 Lettings outside of the remit of this policy

Some properties owned or managed by Karbon Homes or any subsidiary companies are let outside the remit of this policy, examples include:

- Privately rented properties;
- Low cost home ownership schemes.

3.15 Garage allocations

Karbon Homes has a separate garage allocation policy.

3.16 Advertising properties

In the first instance, with the exception of known difficult to let properties, properties will be advertised on a weekly cycle on the relevant CBL scheme as follows:

- Northumberland Homefinder (all properties in Northumberland);
- Tyne and Wear Homes (all properties in Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside);
- Compass (all properties in Darlington and Stockton);
- Durham Key Options (all properties in County Durham).

If properties are not let via the relevant CBL scheme, Karbon Homes may use alternative methods to advertise vacant properties for example social media, Karbon Homes' website, local newspapers, property to let boards.

In exceptional circumstances Karbon Homes may need to withdraw an advert of a property either during the advertising cycle or after the advertising cycle has been completed. On occasions where a previously advertised property is no longer available Karbon homes is not obliged to offer an alternative property or give any priority for future vacancies.

Karbon Homes receives nominations for vacant properties in the Sunderland area from Sunderland City Council. Applicants who wish to live in a property in Sunderland must register with Sunderland City Council. If any of the nominations are not successful then Karbon Homes may advertise the property by various means or refer to Karbon Homes' waiting list.

3.17 Bidding for properties

Applicants can bid for properties in various ways including:

- On the relevant CBL scheme website;
- Contacting in person or by telephone;
- Through an advocate or Support Worker;
- Through the relevant Local Authority website.

Bids can only be placed during a lettings cycle. Bids received outside of the lettings cycle will not be considered under any circumstances.

3.18 Shortlisting

At the end of the lettings cycle a shortlist is generated by the CBL scheme which prioritises interested applicants in order of priority need.

In the event where there are 2 or more applicants on the shortlist in the same band, priority will be given to the applicant who has been in the band the longest. In some instances, priority will be given to those applicants whose family composition or housing needs are such that their household would fully occupy the size of property being advertised.

Where there are additional criteria for the particular property, for example it is an adapted property which is suitable for a disabled person or an older person's property, applicants who do not meet this criteria will not be made an offer of the property.

If an applicant is at the top of more than one shortlist they will be contacted and asked to specify which property they would prefer.

In some circumstances we may advertise properties as immediately available or advertise through alternative means. In these cases, the property will be allocated to the first person who expresses an interest in the property provided that they meet the criteria outlined in the advert. Shortlisting from Karbon Homes own waiting list will be done in order of applicants with the highest number of points first.

3.19 Verification of Circumstances at offer stage

When an applicant has been short listed or selected for a Karbon Homes property, we will confirm the details on the application form are correct and will undertake further verification checks including but not limited to:

- Current and former landlord references (where applicable);
- We may inspect an applicant's current home;
- Affordability checks;
- Police checks (if an applicant has declared a criminal conviction or we have reason to believe applicants have committed criminal offences or been involved in anti-social behaviour or there are significant gaps in an applicant's housing history);
- Proof of identity.

As part of the verification process we may need to carry out a home visit.

3.20 Making an offer

We will contact the successful applicant providing details of the offer including full details of the property including the address, property size and type, the weekly rent and any service charges (where applicable). We will also include a letter confirming the outcome of the financial assessment which is based on the information provided about an applicant's income.

Karbon Homes has the right to refuse to make an offer of accommodation or reject a nomination if there is evidence that an applicant's behaviour means that they are not suitable to become a Karbon Homes tenant.

If the financial assessment shows that an applicant is unable to afford the property then we may withdraw the offer of accommodation.

We will not make an offer of alternative accommodation to any Karbon Homes tenant who is not deemed to be in housing need or who has not held a Karbon Homes tenancy for more than 12 months.

If we do not make an offer of accommodation for any of the reasons above applicants will have the right to appeal this decision. Information about the appeal process is contained in Section 3.26 of this policy.

We may also withdraw an offer of accommodation if the property is required for exceptional housing management reasons or the outgoing tenant has withdrawn their notice of termination.

Obtaining social housing by dishonest means is considered to be fraud. If it is shown that an applicant has provided false or misleading information or has withheld information, the offer of accommodation will be withdrawn and the application may be suspended or removed from the housing register. The applicant may also be prosecuted and if they have already been allocated a property we will take action to recover possession of the property.

3.21 Viewing the property

If an applicant has been successful when bidding for a Karbon Homes property they will be invited to view the property with a member of staff.

Once the applicant has viewed the property they will have up to 48 hours in which to confirm their acceptance or refusal of the property.

3.22 Refusal of offers

If an applicant refuses 3 suitable offers within a 12 month period their application may not be considered for other accommodation for a period of 6 months.

Applicants do have a right of appeal against this decision. Further details of the appeal process is contained within Section 3.26 of this policy.

3.23 Direct lets

In some circumstances we may offer a property directly to an applicant outside of the normal bidding process. For example:

- Where there is urgent or immediate rehousing required;
- An emergency plan has been activated;
- Where the waiting list or advertising cycle has been exhausted;
- Where someone is being housed as part of a witness protection programme;
- Where a property has had significant adaptations which makes it suitable for specific housing need;
- Other exceptional housing management reasons.

3.24 Nominations

Any allocation made via the relevant CBL scheme will be considered to be a Local Authority nomination and will contribute to the fulfilment of our nomination agreements.

3.25 Mutual Exchanges

Karbon Homes has a separate mutual allocation policy.

3.26 Appeals Process

Karbon Homes has the right to reject an application for housing, a nomination or to refuse to make an offer of accommodation in accordance with the eligibility criteria set out in Section 3.5 of this policy. Applicants have the right to appeal against decisions in respect of their application for housing or refusal to make an offer of accommodation. In the County Durham area the appeal will be considered in accordance with the Durham Key Options CBL scheme. In Northumberland, Tyne & Wear and Teeside areas the appeal will be considered in accordance with Karbon Homes appeals process. For Karbon Homes own waiting list, applicants can appeal direct to Karbon Homes against decisions in respect of their application for housing.

4. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years. The review will be brought forward if there are significant changes to best practice, regulatory or legislative requirements.

5. Equality and Diversity

This policy is implemented in line with the Karbon Homes Equality and Diversity Policy and associated legislation. Consideration will be given to all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy and associated documents are available in different languages and alternative formats where necessary.

6. Data Protection and Privacy

Karbon Homes has a clear policy on data protection and sharing data with other partners/outside agencies under the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. This is clearly set out in our Data Management Policy which, along with the supporting Data Management Guidelines, must be followed throughout the operation of this policy.

Appendix 1

How we select people from our waiting list for our properties.

Karbon Homes will use points based assessments to identify those applicants in the greatest housing need and to reflect the aims and objectives of our policy. Applicants are assessed from the information they provide on the application form. In all cases applicants will be expected to provide supporting evidence to verify their application.

Points are awarded in recognition of various circumstances (Current Accommodation, Medical, Welfare, Social/Economic).

Generally the applicant with the most points is selected for interview, and if their circumstances are verified, will be offered the vacant home. However should the applicants circumstances have changed from the information provided on the initial housing application, then their application will be suspended and the offer of the property withdrawn. Applicants who give false or misleading information will be made ineligible and removed from the housing waiting list.

There are Eight areas that points can be awarded:-

- Security of Tenure
- Lack of Amenities
- Disrepair
- Overcrowding
- Under-occupation
- Medical
- Welfare
- Social/Economic

Some areas will be allocated a set number of points depending on the fact of the circumstance e.g. sharing a WC with another household will generate 20 points.

However, some areas will be awarded points on an incremental scale depending on the seriousness of the conditions that applicants are enduring e.g. Medical/Welfare Points are awarded at either 10, 30 or 40 points depending on the seriousness of the circumstance.

Restriction on Points Awarded

Applicants who are awarded points under the heading "Security of Tenure" cannot then be awarded points for:

- Lack of Amenities.
- Disrepair.
- Over-crowding.
- Under occupation.

As these categories apply to a person's permanent home. However they can be awarded points for Medical, Welfare and Social/Economic as these apply to the applicant. E.g. the applicant may be living in a hostel in Middlesbrough but needs to be re-housed in Newcastle to receive support from family/friends.

Karbon Homes staff will assess the application form and will be expected to make a judgement based on the information provided. However housing staff are able to re-assess the points awarded after interviewing the applicant and this may lead to an increase/decrease in the total amount of points awarded.

Security of Tenure

- Homelessness/threatened with homelessness within 28 days 60
- Living in a home with no security of tenure 40
- Sharing a home with another household 20

Applicants who have the least security of tenure are awarded the highest number of points:-

NB Applicants who have no current home (of no fixed abode) should be advised of the Local Authority Homelessness Service.

Homelessness/threatened with Homelessness

Maximum points should be awarded to applicants who have been referred to Karbon Homes via the Local Authority Homelessness Service and have been accepted as Homeless/threatened with Homelessness in line with Homelessness Legislation. Applicants referred in this way will be considered Nominations.

It is a local authority function to deal with homelessness cases and although Karbon Homes has a duty to assist local authorities fulfil their Statutory Duties, we must be an additional resource to the local authority, not an alternative to the Homelessness Service.

Living in a home with No Security of Tenure

40 points should be awarded to applicants who have accommodation but no security of tenure. This includes:-

- People living in hostels
- An applicant who has had some security of tenure but has been issued with a Notice to Quit/Notice seeking possession and the landlord is actively seeking to recover the property through the court process
- People leaving hospital, prison or care with a leaving date already established

Sharing a home with another Household

20 points should be awarded to applicants who are sharing a home with another household. This includes:-

- Adult offspring living at home with parents but needing to move out to become an independent household
- Adults who are living with friends or relatives and need their own accommodation
- Lodgers who are paying to rent a room in the home of another household
- People with no fixed address, staying with various households, one of which provides a contact address

Lack of Amenities

This relates to FIVE basic amenities that should be standard in every property. Each basic amenity lacking attracts 20 points.

1. Bath/Shower – The applicant has no access to a bath or a shower in their current home
2. Inadequate Space Heating – The applicant's current home does not have an adequate heating system. Because of the high standards now expected heating should be provided to all living rooms and bedrooms. Systems may be gas, electricity, oil or solid fuel. The circumstances of the applicant should be considered as to whether the system is adequate e.g. an elderly/disabled person could not be expected to cope with a solid-fuel heating system
3. WC – The applicant does not have exclusive use of a WC and is sharing this with another household
4. Inadequate Kitchen Facilities – The applicant should have access to facilities to cook/reheat food
5. Hot Water – The applicant should have a supply of hot water to the kitchen and bathroom

Disrepair

Disrepair points will only be awarded to private sector tenants who experience difficulty getting their landlord to fulfil repair obligations.

Owner-occupiers will not be awarded any points but will be directed to agencies that may be able to help e.g. Care and Repair Agencies.

Disrepair of the homes of Local Authority and Housing Association tenants is the responsibility of those landlords and the landlords should be taking action to remedy the problems. These tenants will not be awarded points for disrepair but will be advised to contact their landlord.

Any applicant who considers their home in a state of disrepair will be asked to give full details of the extent of the problems before points are awarded. They will be asked to provide more information on a form sent to them and if appropriate support this with evidence from Environmental Health, Surveyors, etc. Before making an offer of accommodation Karbon Homes housing staff may visit the applicant in their home to verify the condition of the property.

40 points will be awarded if the property is in a serious condition and is subject to a Statutory Notice issued by an Environmental Health Officer.

30 points will be awarded if the condition of the applicant's home is in such a state of disrepair that it is affecting the health and well-being of the occupants e.g. dampness which is causing breathing problems, dangerous floors, walls, stairs etc. that may be a hazard.

10 points will be awarded if the condition of the applicant's home is such that there are one or more items of disrepair that are causing the applicant inconvenience and the applicant would benefit from living in a home of a good standard.

Overcrowding

40 points will be awarded if the applicant's home is severely overcrowded. Points will be awarded where the number of people occupying the current home exceeds the available bed spaces in accordance with the criteria below.

The following can occupy a single room:-

- Any person

The following can occupy a double room:-

- People living together as a couple
- Any Single Parent
- Any two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- Any two children of the opposite sex under the age of 10

Any density that exceeds the above will qualify for over-crowding points.

Under-occupation

20 points will be awarded if the applicant's home is under-occupied by one bedroom. 30 points will be awarded for a home under occupied by two bedrooms

40 points will be awarded for a home under occupied by three or more bedrooms

Medical

Between 10 and 40 points will be awarded to applicants who have medical needs that make their re-housing necessary.

An applicant may be asked to provide confirmation of their medical condition, if the Karbon Homes housing staff member feels this is necessary after interviewing the applicant.

Points will be awarded on an incremental scale reflecting the effect that living in the current accommodation has on the medical condition.

Severe Medical Need for re-housing (40 points)

For example:

- Major mobility problems caused by design of property either interior or exterior – the applicant may live in a flat above the ground floor and cannot climb stairs
- The applicant cannot be discharged from hospital unless more suitable accommodation is secured.

Medium Medical Need for re-housing (30 points)

There is a significant need for re-housing e.g.

- Difficulty managing stairs inside the property.
- Only one WC when the property is on two levels and the applicant finds it difficult to manage the stairs.
- It is considered that re-housing would make a significant improvement to the physical or mental health of the applicant/family member.

Minor Medical Need for re-housing (10 points)

Current accommodation aggravates a less-serious medical condition and a move would e.g.

- Improve access to medical or other support facilities/services such as sheltered housing.
- Contribute to the physical and mental well-being of the applicant/family member.

Welfare

Between 30 and 40 points will be awarded to applicants who have welfare needs that make their re-housing necessary.

Applications from those suffering domestic violence will include those subject to actual or threatened violence or cruelty from a person who is associated with the applicant's household.

Applications from those suffering harassment or serious nuisance will be considered based on individual circumstances.

Serious Welfare Need

40 points will be awarded to applicants:

- Who have suffered from domestic violence and severe harassment (including racial harassment). The Housing Officer will seek confirmation of the above before any offer of accommodation is made.

Medium Welfare Need

30 points will be awarded to applicants:

- Who are experiencing harassment from neighbours or others who live nearby and this is affecting their quality of life
- Who need to move to dis-associate themselves from people who may have been an unsuitable influence on their lives

Social/Economic Needs

Between 10 and 40 points will be awarded to applicants who have social and economic needs that make their re-housing necessary.

Serious Social/Economic Needs

40 points will be awarded if:

- The applicant needs to move to access special education for a member of the family which is not available at his/her current home
- The applicant needs to move to take up a job opportunity and other housing options are not available e.g. moving into the area from another part of the country where the commute to work is not feasible.
- The applicant needs to move nearer to relatives/friends to receive support to enable him/her to continue living independently in the community.

Medium Social/Economic Needs

30 points will be awarded if:

- The applicant is unable to continue affording the upkeep of the current accommodation e.g. mortgage payments, repairs to their home, rent payments due to circumstances beyond their control.
- To be nearer schools, if the applicant's children have an unreasonable journey to the schools they attend.
- To give or receive support from family and friends who are recognised carers in receipt of carers allowance and who contribute to the applicant's well-being.

Minor Social/Economic Needs

10 points will be awarded if:-

- The applicant wishes to live closer to family and friends and currently lives too far away from them to benefit from contact e.g. to assist with childcare

- The applicant require support of family/friends, other community services to contribute to their quality of life or reduce social isolation.
- The applicant has previous ties with the area and wishes to return
- The applicant's financial position would improve if he/she was re-housed
- The applicant would like to live nearer to his/her work. E.g. reduce travel costs.