

Applying for a House with Wishaw & District Housing Association





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What is Wishaw & District Housing Association?

Wishaw and District Housing Association is a registered social landlord which means it is monitored and regulated by the Scottish Housing Regulator to ensure that it adheres to the law and good practice in its provision of services. The Association's primary function is to provide high quality, affordable houses for rent and to allocate these to people in housing need. In doing so, the Association also seeks to promote safe, attractive and stable communities by making the best use of the available housing stock and ensuring that houses offered are suitable for the needs of the household.

Who can apply to the Association for housing?

The Association operates an open waiting list to allow people in housing need to have the opportunity at all times to apply for housing.

Anyone aged 16 or over has the legal right to apply to the Association for housing and to be assessed and accepted onto the waiting list, regardless of where they currently live or whether they are currently tenants or owner occupiers.

When you choose to make an application to the Association there are some requirements placed on you and in particular you are expected to:

- Complete all parts of the application form that are relevant to you and your circumstances.
- Complete the form honestly and not deliberately lie in your application in order to get a house or withhold information that is relevant to your application. You will be required to sign the application form to confirm that the information you have given is a true record of your circumstances.

- **Respond to any letters or requests for more information as quickly as possible.**
- **Immediately inform the Association of any change in your housing circumstances.**
- **To conduct yourself correctly when dealing with members of staff.**

All applications will be assessed in accordance with the Association's Allocations Policy to ensure that applicants have the opportunity to have all their circumstances taken into account. However, there are certain standards relating to your current and/or any previous tenancies you have held that you are required to meet before you will be made an offer of housing with the Association. Where you do not meet these standards, your application may be suspended and an offer of housing withheld until such times as you do.

What happens when I apply for housing?

The Association will acknowledge receipt of your application within two working days of it being submitted at the office. If you do not receive an acknowledgment, you should contact the office.

Your application will then be assessed in accordance with the Association's Allocations Policy and we will advise you, in writing, of:

- **Your application reference number – you should quote this any time you contact the office regarding your application.**
- **The number of points you have been awarded and the categories of housing need you have been awarded points for.**
- **The waiting list you have been placed on.**
- **The areas you will be considered for (this will reflect the choices you have indicated in your application form).**

We will endeavour to send you this information within two weeks of your application form being received at the office but there may occasionally be delays due to holidays etc or if we have had to ask you for more information.

How will my application form be assessed?

The Association's Allocations Policy is based on housing need. As a means of identifying and therefore giving priority to applicants in the greatest housing need, the Association has identified categories of need and has attributed points to each category to reflect the perceived severity of each element of identified housing need.

You will be awarded points for each category that applies to your particular current housing circumstances.

How can I check that my application has been assessed correctly?

When you receive your letter advising of your points there will be an explanatory booklet enclosed which will detail the categories of housing need for which points are awarded.

You should check that you have been awarded points for every category that applies to your specific set of housing circumstances. If you believe you qualify for a category of points that you have not been awarded you should contact the office immediately.

What waiting list will I be placed on?

You will be placed on the waiting list for the size of house required to adequately accommodate your household. The size of house will be determined by the number of bedrooms required in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1 double bedroom for you or you and your spouse/partner.
- 1 double bedroom for every two children under the age of 10 years of age.
- 1 double bedroom for every two children of the same sex between 10 and 16 years of age (where the children are of different gender they will be assessed as requiring a bedroom of their own).
- 1 single bedroom (minimum) for every household member over 16 years of age.

Only the permanent members of your household and those using the house as their principal home will be taken into consideration in determining the size of house required unless:

- **A member of the household is more than 20 weeks pregnant.**
- **There is evidence of overnight access to children.**
- **The applicant has been officially accepted to provide fostering services.**
- **There is official approval for adoption.**

If you wish to apply for an extra bedroom for any of the above reasons you must submit the appropriate supporting evidence along with your application form.

Where your partner or a child under 10 years of age requires a bedroom of their own for medical reasons, you will be required to submit a medical certificate from your doctor along with your application

Will I automatically go to the bottom of the waiting list?

Not necessarily. Where you are placed on the list will depend on the number of points you have been awarded as all applications are placed on the appropriate list in numerical order. Where there are a number of applicants with the same number of points, your application will be placed in the group according to date of application.

Please remember that, just as your application did not automatically go to the bottom of the list, new applicants will also be added to the list according to their number of points. As a result, your position on the list may go up or down as new applicants are added and others are removed.

When will I be made an offer of housing?

Being added to the waiting list is no guarantee that you will be made an offer of housing by the Association as a number of factors will affect your chances of being made an offer including:

- The number of houses that become available to let because existing tenants are giving up their tenancy (*please note – the Association has a very low turnover of houses*).
- The availability of funding for the Association to build new houses for let.
- The number of points you have compared to other people on the list.
- The type of house you require and how many of that type we have.
- The areas you wish to be considered for.
- New applicants coming on the list above you.
- Applicants above you being rehoused elsewhere.
- Changes in your circumstances that affect your position on the list.

As such, it is impossible to determine how long it will take before a suitable house in the area you want becomes available. However, to help give you a realistic idea of the timescales that could be involved and allow you to make an informed decision about your re-housing options, you will be provided with information on:

- The number of houses that have become available for let over the last couple of years.
- The number of points that applicants that have been re-housed achieved.
- The length of time applicants that have been re-housed were on the waiting list.

If you want to discuss your housing options please do not hesitate to contact the office where staff will be only too happy to give you the advice.

Deferring your application

If for any reason you do not wish to be considered for housing by the Association for a period of time, you can ask for your application to be deferred. When you wish the Association to start considering you for housing again, it is YOUR responsibility to re-activate your application by informing the office.

You will not need to fill in a new application form provided that your circumstances remain the same. However, your new date of application will be taken as the date you instruct the office.

Your application may also be deferred where you are unable to immediately take up occupancy of any property offered and use it as your only principal home (for example if you are currently in tied accommodation). Again, it is your responsibility to make sure that you advise the Association when you are in a position to accept an offer of housing.

Review of application

Every year the Association contacts applicants on the waiting list asking them to confirm that their circumstances remain the same and that they wish to remain on the waiting list. We do this to ensure that the list remains correct and up to date. It is very important that you return your review form as your application will be cancelled and your name removed from the waiting list if you don't.

Confidentiality

The Association will treat all information you provide in your application with the strictest of confidence. Your personal details can only be disclosed to other statutory agencies with your express permission and you will be asked to sign a mandate authorising the Association to pass on or collect information required to assess your application. In sharing information the Association will at all times seek to comply with legislation on Data Protection and Access to Information.

Other housing options

All applicants are strongly advised to consider all their housing options including other social landlords such as North Lanarkshire Council and other Housing Associations and Co-operatives in the area. You can do this easily by requesting housing from these providers in your Common Housing Register form.

Information and advice on other housing options is enclosed with this pack or alternatively is available at the Association's office.

Can I nominate another person to discuss my housing application on my behalf?

Absolutely. You will however need to provide a letter or alternatively complete the Association's mandate giving the name and address of the person you have nominated to discuss your application. We would of course only speak of your application to your nominated person. The mandate can be obtained direct from our office or is available for download on our web-site.

English not your first language? Visually impaired?

This information leaflet and all other public information, application forms and documents produced by the Association can be made available in alternative languages and formats upon request.

Further information

Wishaw & District Housing Association Limited
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Tel: 01698 377200 • Fax: 01698 358712
E-mail: assoc@wishawdha.org.uk
Web: wishawdha.org.uk



Open: Monday – Thursday: 9.00am – 4.30pm and
Friday: 9.00am – 4.00pm
Closed for lunch: 12.30pm – 1.30pm