

1.1 Introduction

This policy sets out the approach that Caredig will take to enable people to access accommodation in **Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot** that is suitable for their needs and also affordable.

The policy will apply to general needs, older persons and intermediate rented accommodation.

Principles for administering the waiting list and allocating homes

The association will:

- Be fair and consistent
- Be transparent
- Prioritise housing need
- Aim to create balanced and sustainable communities
- Give a level of choice to applicants wherever possible
- Make the best use of our homes
- Allow current tenants to transfer where there is a clear need to do so
- Be clear about applicants' options and not raise unrealistic expectations of applicants
- Minimise void periods whilst complying with the above principles.
- Review the risk of tenancy failure prior to allocation and take steps where possible to minimise that risk e.g. affordability, previous tenancy failure
- Allocate in date order apart from in exceptional circumstances e.g. domestic violence
- Operate local/special letting policies where properties have a designated purpose.

Access to accommodation

Allocations to our homes will be made from:

- Our waiting list
- Local Authority nomination and Move on list
- Adapt register (adapted and bungalows only)
- Transfer list

Allocations

Applicants will be matched to homes based on

- Meeting the number of bedroom criteria (see appendix 1)
- Time spent on the list
- Local Authority nomination or Move on referral.

- Passing an affordability assessment prior to allocation.

In some circumstances applicants will have additional criteria to meet for example our intermediate rented properties where there is a salary criteria of £15-25K. Where there is no applicant who meets the intermediate criteria we may in some circumstances offer the home to the person who is the highest applicant on the general needs register. Some properties also have age criteria. We may also operate local/special letting policies and will publish these.

- Adapted properties will be matched to applicants on the ADAPT register.

In exceptional circumstances homes may be offered outside date order to someone who has to move as a matter of priority and by remaining in their home would result in serious risk of harm. Evidence will be required to support an exceptional circumstances allocation and will be approved by a senior manager.

Allocating Low Demand Homes

Where we are unable to allocate a property to an applicant from our waiting list or from our nomination agreement with the Local Authority we will adopt a practical approach to find an applicant and ensure the property is let and the rent loss minimised.

When we have a vacancy that we are unable to allocate we will advertise the property as immediately available. We will use a range of advertising methods including our website, Facebook, Twitter, property websites, local amenities etc. The same affordability assessment will be undertaken in order for the applicant to be considered for the property.

Application criteria

If the applicant meets the following criteria they will be registered on the waiting list.

Applicant criteria:

- Be over 16 and have the right to live in the UK
- Be in housing need
- No debt with the association or if they have, they must have maintained a payment agreement for 3 months.
- If transferring from one of our properties their existing property should be in good condition and to a lettable standard.

In addition, applicants must meet some of the following criteria:

- does not have a legal right to occupy your home;
- is overcrowded or too big;
- be sharing a bathroom or kitchen with others who are not going to be rehoused with you;
- cannot afford your current rent or mortgage;
- current home is in disrepair;
- need to move for employment or education;
- need to move for a medical or support need;

- current living situation means children cannot live with parents
- there is a serious risk of harm if the applicant remained in current home.

Exclusions

We will look to exclude any applicant who has or would have been evicted by a social landlord for Anti-Social Behaviour or rent arrears.

- Where the Association has a court order against the Tenant they will not be accepted onto the transfer list unless in exceptional circumstances which would be agreed by the Housing Manager.
- If an applicant needs support to manage their tenancy the Association will not allocate a property until they are satisfied that support is in place.
- We may not consider applicants who we deem to have the financial means to find their own accommodation.

Refusal of offers

We will make 2 reasonable offers of accommodation. Any appeals against these offers being fair and reasonable will be considered by the Housing Manager. After 2 refusals the application will be cancelled, and applicants cannot register on our list for 6 months.

Appendix 1

Number of bedroom applicants are entitled to

The Association uses housing benefit bedroom criteria to determine the size of accommodation that we will offer. This means that children:

- Under 10 years old, mixed sexes are expected to share a bedroom.
- Under 16 years old, same sexes are expected to share a bedroom.
- Over 16 years old, are entitled to their own bedroom.

Household Size	Entitled to
Single Adult	Bedsit/studio flat
Single Adult or Couple	1 Bedroom flat
Two Adults Sharing or a Couple with a medical, care or cultural need for separate rooms.	2 Bedroom Flat
1 or 2 Adults with 1 or 2 Children (depending on sex and age)	2 Bedroom House
1 or 2 Adults with proof of pregnancy	2 Bedroom House
1 or 2 Adults with 2 or 3 Children (depending on sex and age)	3 Bedroom house
1 or 2 Adults with 3 or 4 or more Children. (depending on sex and age)	4 bedroom House
1 or 2 Adults with 4 or more Children	4+ Bedroom House
Allocated through ADAPT	Bungalows and adapted Homes

Access to Children

We will not consider children who live with an applicant on a part time basis as being part of the household when assessing bedroom requirements.

The primary carer will be the person who receives Child Benefit, Child tax Credit or working tax credit in respect of the child/children. Any applicant who is not the primary carer will be deemed to have access to the child/children.

There will be exceptions to the above rules. Below are some examples of when under occupying would be permitted:

- Where there are no suitable applicants who would not be under occupying.
- Where there is an urgent housing need to move such as risk of violence or harm.
- To assist the Local Authority in cases of homelessness or urgent nominations where no properties of a suitable size are available.
- The property is being used to allow remedial works in another property.

We will consider each case on an individual basis and take into account the supporting evidence provided and current demand for the home in question.

In the cases of under occupancy an affordability assessment would be undertaken and an applicant would only be offered a property where the Association was confident they would be able to pay the rent and associated costs to maintain the tenancy.