

# Council Housing Waiting List and Allocation System

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## Who can apply for Council housing in Shetland?

- Anyone aged at least 16 is entitled to be registered on to the Council's waiting list.
- HomeSwapper applicants (who must be public sector tenants, e.g. in Council, Housing Association or similar housing, somewhere else in the U.K. and registered with the Scheme).
- Existing tenants, of either the Shetland Islands Council or Hjaltland Housing Association may apply for a transfer to a Council house.

## Where and how to apply for Council housing?

Anyone who wishes to become a Shetland Islands Council tenant must first fill in an application form. The form can be obtained by writing to, phoning or visiting either of the Housing Offices listed below. The Application Pack can also be downloaded from both organisations' websites.

### Shetland Islands Council

Department of Education and Social Care

#### Housing

Fort Road

Lerwick

Shetland

ZE1 0LW

Telephone: 01595 744380

Fax: 01595 744395

email: [housing@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:housing@shetland.gov.uk)

website: [www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Housing\\_Application\\_Pack.asp](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/Housing_Application_Pack.asp)

### Hjaltland Housing Association

2 Harbour Street

Lerwick

Shetland

ZE1 0LR

Telephone: 01595 694986

Fax: 01595 692229

email: [mail@hjaltland.org](mailto:mail@hjaltland.org)

website: [www.hjaltland.org.uk/properties/apply.html](http://www.hjaltland.org.uk/properties/apply.html)

All applicants will be given leaflets that summarise the application system and Allocation Policy and Points System. The SIC Allocation Policy can be downloaded [here](#). Prior to completing the application form it is recommended that applicants read the leaflets provided carefully. However, if an applicant needs any advice or assistance to complete the application form, staff at SIC Housing will be happy to assist.

## The Council's housing allocation policy and points system

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- The Council decides the policy to be used in allocating properties and it is the responsibility of SIC Housing to implement this policy and allocate Council housing in Shetland.
- A points system is used to decide which applicant on its waiting list should be offered the tenancy of any property that becomes vacant. The greater an applicant's housing need the

greater the applicant's chance of being offered a Council house. It must be kept in mind that however near the top of the waiting list an applicant is at a particular moment in time, other applicants may subsequently receive a higher number of points and therefore be housed prior to them.

- Each year the Council sets a target of the percentage of properties that are to be let to each category of applicant. This is to ensure that there is a balance of allocations to general needs (normal waiting list), transfer (to another house in a different area), homeless (nowhere to stay) or special case applicants. Please see the Allocation Policy leaflet link in the bottom right menu for further information on the targets.

### **The importance of providing full and up to date information in the application form**

- It is very important for applicants to provide accurate information when filling in the application form. If an applicant is not sure whether a piece of information about their circumstances is important then the Council's housing staff are happy to provide advice. It is better to include too much information on the application form than too little and risk housing need not being identified accurately. It is important for the form to reflect the applicant's circumstances, some of which may be of a personal nature, but all applicants are assured of confidentiality.
- If applicants remember something they forgot to put on the form after they have submitted it, or if their circumstances change, they should let the Council's housing staff know in writing as soon as possible so that their application form can be amended and the points total adjusted accordingly.

### **What happens next, after the Council has got the application?**

- The Council's housing staff go through the form carefully and then points are awarded through the computerised allocations system according to housing need. The points awarded by the Council for different categories of housing need are detailed in the [Allocation Policy leaflet](#).
- The applicant will then be sent a letter by the Council. This confirms the number of points allocated and the areas he/she has chosen. *Please remember that positions can change from week to week, according to whether other applicants come onto or leave the waiting list or whether the circumstances of other applicants change.*

## **The Allocation of Council Housing**

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The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced legislation covering the allocation of Council Housing. When allocating properties the Council cannot take into account:

- How long an applicant has lived in Shetland
- Any outstanding debt relating to the tenancy of a property e.g. rent arrears, where the applicant is not the tenant of that property
- Any previous debts e.g. rent arrears which are linked to the applicant's tenancy of a house

but which is no longer outstanding

Any debt e.g. rent which is outstanding but which is:

- not more than one months worth of rent; or
- The applicant has agreed with the landlord an arrangement for paying the outstanding debt and has made payments in accordance with that agreement for at least 3 months and is continuing to make the payments.
- The Council will take no account of whether an applicant is resident in Shetland if the applicant
  - is employed, or has been offered employment in Shetland; or
  - has special social or medical reasons for requiring to be housed in Shetland
  - wishes to move to Shetland and the Council are satisfied that the purpose is to seek employment; or
  - wishes to move to Shetland to be near a relative or carer; or
  - is subject to conduct amounting to harassment within the terms of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and wishes to move to Shetland; or
  - runs the risk of domestic violence and wishes to move to Shetland

It is therefore important that all applicants ensure that they maintain their rent payments to their landlord as having rent arrears may result in the applicant not being allocated a Council property.

<b>Home visit</b>	<b>How many houses will an applicant be offered?</b>
When an applicant is close to the top of the waiting list a member of the Council's housing staff will visit the applicant at home to confirm the details on the application form, that the points awarded are correct and to confirm their eligibility to be allocated a property.	An applicant will normally be made a maximum of two offers. The second offer is only made after refusal of the first offer. If there are 2 offers made and the refusals are considered unreasonable, the Council will not make another one for at least three months after the date of the applicant's second refusal.
<b>How long will an application be held on the Waiting List?</b>	<b>Notifying the Council of changes of address, or other circumstances</b>
Applications are only held on the waiting list for one year. A form is then sent out to the applicant that he/she has to complete to confirm that they still wish to remain on the waiting list. The Council sends out a reminder after 2 weeks but if no reply is received the application will be cancelled.	It is very important, therefore, that applicants tell the Council if they change address after they have submitted their application form - or there is a danger that the letters from the Council may never be received by the applicant, whose name will be removed from the list if no contact is made with the Council's housing staff. It is in the applicant's best interest to maintain regular contact with housing staff and notify them as soon as possible of any changes in their circumstances.

# SIC Housing Allocation Points System

Some of the most commonly awarded category of points are outlined below. However, you can download a full copy of the Council's [Allocation Policy](#). This provides more detailed information and advice on all aspects of the allocation process and policy.

Category		Points Level
Bedsit		40
Insecurity of Tenure/No Fixed Abode		100
Lack of Amenities	Severe structural problems/severe penetrating or rising dampness/no piped cold water system/no piped hot water/no fixed sink with both hot and cold water/no inside WC/no fixed bath or shower/other degrees of unfitness	20/20/50/15/15/30/15/10
Medical Need	Unsuitable home—low need/Serious/Severe/Urgent	20/50/75/100
Overcrowding	For each single bedroom lacking/For each double bedroom lacking	25/35
Children under 5 at or above first floor		25
Social Care	Moderate need/Serious need/Severe Need/Urgent Need	20/50/75/100
Support Points (moving to another area)		30
Travel in excess of 24 miles to work		15
Under occupation	For each additional single bedroom/For each additional double bedroom	20/25
Unreasonable to remain		35
Waiting time points	Applicants residing in mobile homes/other applicants	10/3



**Shetland Islands  
Council**



This leaflet is a reproduction of the Housing Options Guide – Council Housing (Waiting List and Allocation Process) section. Please note you may wish to download the [Allocation Policy Leaflet](#) and [Allocation Policy](#) which supplements this leaflet.

If you would like this information produced in any other format, please telephone 01595 744360 or email [housing@shetland.gov.uk](mailto:housing@shetland.gov.uk).

## Useful Links

Allocation Policy Leaflet

[www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/documents/SICAllocationPolicyLeaflet.pdf](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/documents/SICAllocationPolicyLeaflet.pdf)

Allocation Policy

[www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/policyandprocedures/operationalprocedures.asp#AllocationPolicy](http://www.shetland.gov.uk/housing/policyandprocedures/operationalprocedures.asp#AllocationPolicy)