



# Homes<sup>4</sup>D&G

Helping you find a home



Dumfries and Galloway's Common Housing Register

## Applying for social housing in Dumfries and Galloway

One form | One housing list | Shared information  
Simpler | Quicker | Streamlined

## WHAT IS HOMES4D&G?

Comprising of three of Dumfries and Galloway's Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), along with Dumfries and Galloway Council and our new partner Cunninghame Housing Association. Homes4D&G is the Common Housing Register for Dumfries and Galloway and is the route for applying for social housing across the region.

## WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?



**DGHP** is the largest housing association in Dumfries and Galloway, owning and maintaining more than 10,300 homes. Properties are spread across most of the communities in the region. DGHP began in 2003 when the transfer of Dumfries and Galloway Council's housing stock took place.



Cunninghame Housing Association based in Ayrshire, have recently joined the Homes4D&G partnership. They own and manage over 2300 homes, with their properties being spread across North and East Ayrshire. Plans are in place to build a number of developments across our region, with the first site expected to be completed in early 2019.



**Home Scotland**, part of the larger Home Group, is one of the largest providers of housing in the whole of the UK. The group, now a social enterprise and charity, owns and manages around 500 properties in Dumfries and Galloway. Around half of the properties are in Dumfries with most of the remainder in Kelloholm and Sanquhar and a small number in Annan, Eastriggs, Moffat and Dalbeattie.



**Irvine Housing Association**, part of the larger Riverside Group, was established in 1993 and currently owns and manages almost 400 homes in Dumfries in the Stakeford and Newbridge areas of the town, including a mix of houses and flats.



**Dumfries and Galloway Council**, although no longer owning or managing any social housing in the region, is the strategic housing provider and still has many responsibilities in housing, including - homelessness, managing the funding for housing support, planning and funding new homes as well as the management of the private sector landlord registration scheme.



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[enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk)

## MORE ABOUT HOMES4D&G

Applicants in Dumfries and Galloway will only have to complete one single application form to apply for social housing with all four of our partner landlords.

Once your application form reaches the Homes4D&G team, the details are shared among the applicants' chosen RSLs and included on a single housing list.

The partners of Homes4D&G can provide information and advice on all the social housing options available across Dumfries and Galloway.

All partner landlords use the same Common Allocation Policy making the process very streamlined. Applications also only need to be assessed once.

Overall, Homes4D&G makes the process much more straightforward for the applicant and allows the landlords to make the best possible use of their housing stock.

There is one form, one single access route for applicants, one housing list of all applicants and a shared provision of housing information and advice.

## COMMON ALLOCATION POLICY

DGHP, Cunninghame HA, Home Scotland and Irvine HA all use the same allocation policy. Because all partners use the policy, it is called a 'Common Allocation Policy'.

This means that **everyone** applying for housing will have their circumstances assessed in exactly the same way.

Because there's not enough social housing to meet the needs of every applicant in Dumfries and Galloway, we must have a policy that sets out a clear framework giving priority to those in the greatest need of housing.

Homes4D&G operates a 'group plus points' system to allocate houses, meaning that points are awarded to applicants who show they are in housing need - e.g. if they are overcrowded or living in a private rented house that is Below Tolerable Standard (BTS). Once points have been awarded, an application will be placed in one of three groups, best reflecting circumstances.

Most applicants will be placed on either the waiting list or transfer list. Applicants on the waiting list could be from the private rented sector, tenants of another housing association within D&G, be owner occupiers or they could still be living in the family home.

Transfer applicants will be from all partner landlords with Homes4D&G, living in Dumfries and Galloway, who are looking to move to another property.

The remaining lets will go to people, recognised as homeless by the local council. They will go through an assessment and if they are deemed unintentionally homeless, or have been threatened with homelessness, they will be placed in this category.



## WHO CAN APPLY FOR HOUSING?

Anyone aged 16 or over can make an application for housing to Homes4D&G. This does not mean, however, that an applicant has an automatic right to receive an offer of housing.

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR HOUSING?

To apply for housing with Homes4D&G all applicants must complete a housing application form. Forms can be obtained either in person, online, over the phone or by post.

**In person** - from any open office of the partners - DGHP, Cunninghame Housing Association, Home Scotland or Irvine HA

**Online** - by visiting [www.homes4dg.org.uk](http://www.homes4dg.org.uk) - you can either download the forms and complete them by hand, or you can fill them in online and they will be sent directly to us.

**Over the phone** - by calling Homes4D&G direct on 0300 123 1230. We are open Monday to Friday, 8am - 7pm to take your calls.

**By post** - if you let us know you'd like one, we can send you out a form and you can return it to us at our freepost address - Homes4D&G, Freepost RTHU-YA SL-XCJC, DG12 6AJ

## HOW IS MY APPLICATION PROCESSED?

Our target for assessing your completed application is **10 working days** from the date you submit the form to us. You will then be sent written confirmation of your housing application details, including the number of points you have been awarded. If you do not give us enough information, your assessment may be delayed as a result. If required, we may request additional information from you.

We will carry out relevant checks to make sure that you have been awarded the correct number of points.



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## HOUSING CATEGORIES

### HOMELESS GROUP

If the council finds that you are 'unintentionally homeless' it means you are homeless through no fault of your own and because of your circumstances you will be offered accommodation by one of the Homes4D&G partners. If this is the case, your application will be placed in this group and we prioritise your application, based on the date which you applied for a homelessness assessment.

### TRANSFER APPLICANTS

Transfer applicants are current tenants of Homes4D&G landlords who live in Dumfries and Galloway and want to move to a new home.

### WAITING LIST

Waiting list applicants are those who do not qualify in any of the other housing groups and who want to move into the social housing sector.

This group also includes applicants who are tenants of one of the Homes4D&G partners, but who do not live in Dumfries and Galloway.

The housing needs of applicants in the waiting list or transfer list groups will be fully assessed and we will award points depending on personal circumstances and current housing situation.

If applicants on either the waiting list or transfer list share the same number of points, they will be prioritised based on date of application. This means that if two applicants have the same number of points, the applicant who registered first will be given greater priority, if a suitable property becomes available.

We award points for eight main reasons -

- Overcrowding
- Under-occupation
- Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)
- Insecure tenure
- Medical needs
- Sharing facilities
- Providing or receiving help to live independently and
- Living in flats

Within the points system you can usually receive points in every category that applies to you.

In addition, points may also be awarded to Waiting List and Transfer List applicants, who qualify for priority points under the following categories..

- Looked After and Accommodated Children
- People at risk of/experiencing domestic abuse
- People at risk of/experiencing serious harassment
- Armed Forces personnel leaving active service
- People who require to leave their home as a result of regeneration activity
- Witness protection cases
- People who have been confirmed as bed blocking

We understand that our allocations policy can't cover all the circumstances that may lead to you wanting or needing to move home. Where our policy does not cover these, our partner landlords and/or the Homes4D&G team will be responsible for identifying individual cases of extenuating circumstance. The Homes4D&G team will be responsible for approving these cases. These type of applications will be held in date order; by the date the decision was made to award this priority.

## HOMES4D&G POINTS SYSTEM

We will award points to waiting list and transfer applicants based on your current living arrangements.

<b>OVERCROWDING</b>	You will receive points if you have less bedrooms in your current home than we assess your household to need. Points will be awarded for every bedroom you are short if you are moving to larger accommodation	One Bedroom - <b>40pts</b>
		Two Bedrooms - <b>80pts</b>
		Three Bedrooms or more - <b>120pts</b>
<b>UNDER-OCCUPATION</b>	If your home is too large for your needs and you are moving to smaller accommodation, points will be awarded to applicants under-occupying their property	One Bedroom - <b>5pts</b>
		Two Bedrooms - <b>10pts</b>
		Three Bedrooms or more - <b>15pts</b>
<b>BELOW TOLERABLE STANDARD (BTS)</b>	If your current house has been declared as significantly Below Tolerable Standard (BTS)	<b>60pts</b>
<b>INSECURE TENURE</b>	If you live in private rented accommodation and have a Short Assured Tenancy	<b>5pts</b>
	If you are under threat of losing your home through no fault of your own	<b>50pts</b>
	If you live in tied accommodation and you have been told you need to leave within 6 months	<b>70pts</b>
	If you are of no fixed abode (NFA)	<b>20pts</b>
	If you are living in a caravan	<b>20pts</b>
<b>PRIORITY POINTS</b>	Points will only be awarded to Waiting List or Transfer List applicants, who qualify for priority points under the following categories.	
	Looked After and accommodated Children	<b>75pts</b>
	People at risk of/experiencing domestic abuse	<b>75pts</b>
	People at risk of/experiencing serious harassment	<b>75pts</b>
	Armed Forces personnel leaving active service	<b>75pts</b>
	People who require to leave their home as a result of regeneration activity	<b>75pts</b>
	Witness protection cases	<b>75pts</b>
	People who have been confirmed as bed blocking	<b>75pts</b>
<b>MEDICAL NEEDS</b>	Points will be awarded following completion of a 'medical housing assessment'. Points will be awarded based on this assessment of your needs	Level 1 Low – <b>25 points</b>
		Level 2 Medium – <b>50 points</b>
		Level 3 High – <b>75 points</b>
<b>SHARING FACILITIES</b>	Points will be awarded if you have to share facilities with people who are not going to be re-housed with you, i.e. if you share a bathroom, kitchen or living-room	Sharing with family - <b>15 points</b>
		Sharing with non-family - <b>30 points</b>
<b>PROVIDING OR RECEIVING HELP TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY</b>	Points will be awarded if you need to move to provide help to someone to allow them to live independently. Points may also be awarded if you need to move so that you can receive help from someone to allow you to live independently	<b>10 points</b>
<b>LIVING IN FLATS</b>	If you have children, aged under 12, who are living in a flat, with a communal entrance and shared garden	<b>20 points</b>

## WHAT SIZE OF PROPERTY CAN I APPLY FOR?

When you apply to Homes4D&G, we will register your application on the housing list according to the type and size of property that you require. This helps us to make the best use of the housing stock that is available.

We will work out the number of bedrooms that you require, based on who will be living permanently with you in the household, and based on -

- No more than two people should have to share a bedroom;
- One bedroom for couples/partners;
- One bedroom for single adults/single parents;
- One bedroom for two children of different sex up to 8 years old;
- One bedroom for two children of the same sex up to 12 years old; and
- One bedroom for each child of 12 years or over

We will make common sense exceptions to these rules, depending on individual circumstances.

If you require larger accommodation than we would normally allocate within the Common Allocation Policy, we will ask you to provide further information in support of your application.

Please note - our size criteria for allocating homes is not based on the regulations set by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This means that you may not get housing benefit to cover any additional bedrooms you apply for, if you are made the offer of a property that has more bedrooms than you need.

We will notify you if you will be under-occupying the property and therefore liable for the under-occupation charge. This will allow you to make an informed choice about whether you want to proceed with the tenancy.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	NUMBER OF BEDROOMS YOU CAN BE CONSIDERED FOR					
	Bed-sit	1	2	3	4	5 +
Single Person	•	•				
Couple		•	•			
Couple/single adult and 1 other person			•			
Couple/single adult with 2 children, both under 8			•			
Couple/single adult with 2 same sex children, both under 12			•			
Couple/single adult with 2 opposite sex children and 1 is aged 8 or over				•		
Couple/single adult with 3 mixed sex children all under 8				•		
Couple/single adult with 3 same sex children, all under 12				•		
Couple/single adult with 3 mixed sex children and one is over 8				•		
Couple/single adult with 3 mixed sex children and one is over 12				•	•	
Couple/single adult with 3 mixed sex children and two are over 8				•	•	
Couple/single adult with 3 children all over 12					•	
Any larger household					•	•

## APPLICANT CHOICE

When you make an application for housing you will be able to choose -

- The Homes4D&G partner(s) that you would prefer to be your landlord
- The areas that you would most like to live in and
- The property types you would most like to live in

There are no limits on the number of areas that you can choose.

We will provide you with clear information about the stock held by all four Homes4D&G partners, so that you can make informed choices when selecting your preferred areas that maximise your opportunities for rehousing.

You can find current waiting list statistics at [www.homes4dg.org.uk](http://www.homes4dg.org.uk)

## DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTIES

### SHELTERED HOUSING

Sheltered housing properties allow older people to retain a high degree of independence within their home. You can make an application for sheltered housing if -

- You are over 60 or you have a current medical, social, safety or particular housing need that could be met by sheltered housing or if sheltered housing would benefit you in the future

If you live alone or as part of a couple, you are eligible to make an application. In the case of couples, only one applicant needs to meet the criteria above.

### ADAPTED PROPERTIES

These include houses purposely built for disabled people as well as homes that have been significantly adapted.

If you require a specifically adapted property because you have a particular health need or a disability, we will work with health and social occupational therapists to make sure that a full needs assessment is undertaken. When allocating adapted housing, the applicant's suitability will be the determining factor so it is important that we fully understand the type of property you need.

### OTHER PROPERTY TYPES

These include houses, flats, bedsits, maisonettes and bungalows.

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## MEDICAL ASSESSMENTS - TRANSFER AND WAITING LIST APPLICANTS ONLY

If your health, or the health of someone moving with you, is affected by your current housing circumstances, you will be asked to complete a medical housing assessment form which will be assessed by the Homes4D&G Registration Team.

We will add points to your application if this assessment confirms that your current home is unsuitable, the extent to which your home is unsuitable and whether the property could reasonably be adapted to meet your needs.

It is important to make it clear, however, that the focus of the medical housing assessment is not on the health condition itself, but on the way it affects how you manage in your home - for example, you may have been diagnosed with a serious illness or condition, but you can live independently in your current home.

You can apply for medical points at any time throughout the duration of your application. Points can be awarded at three levels - low, medium or high, depending on the degree of unsuitability of your current housing. In some situations it may be more appropriate to carry out adaptations to your current home. Medical assessment forms can be obtained by contacting Homes4D&G.

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Any personal information you give us when you apply for housing under this policy will be handled according to the legal responsibilities placed on us by the Data Protection Act 1998.



## YOUR HOUSING APPLICATION - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

When you fill in your application form, it comes to the Homes4D&G team who will input the details which will be shared across your chosen RSLs.

You will then be assessed using the single Common Allocation Policy and awarded points where necessary and placed within a housing list. You will be placed in the most relevant housing group for your situation.

If, at any time, you have any questions about your application please don't hesitate to contact us on 0300 123 1230.

### OFFERING YOU A PROPERTY

Joining the housing list does not mean that we will always be able to make you an offer.

This depends on -

- Your housing need
- Demand from other people on the list
- The number of properties that become available
- The number of allocations we need to make to applicants in the homelessness group.

When allocating a property we have to comply with the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 and Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and we must ignore the following (this is not exhaustive and more details are available in our Common Allocation Policy) -

- Your age, provided you are aged 16 or over and unless it involves housing designed or specifically adapted for people of a specific age, e.g. sheltered housing



- The length of time you have lived in Dumfries and Galloway
- Your income or that of your family
- Whether you own or have owned a property
- Any housing debt now repaid
- Any non-housing debt such as council tax
- Housing debt not owed by you
- Rent arrears where the amount is no more than one months' rent or where you have an arrangement for paying the arrears

When a property becomes available for let, we will decide which housing group that property will be allocated to, taking into account -

- The annual lettings plan
- Whether the property is required for homeless applicants or extenuating circumstance applicants and
- How to make the best use of our housing stock

Pre-tenancy checks will need to be carried out for all applicants prior to making an offer of housing to check your current housing circumstances. If you qualify for an offer of housing, we will offer you a Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) or a short SST in line with our legal responsibilities.

## OFFERS

We make offers based on your housing needs and preferences after contacting you to confirm that the details we hold on your application form are accurate.

We will normally make Waiting List and Transfer List applicants up to two offers of re-housing. If you turn down two offers that meet your choices without good reasons, we may suspend your application.

## JOINT TENANCIES

Under our policy you can apply to Homes4D&G landlords to have a joint tenancy with someone who is staying with you or someone you intend to stay with you.

## DEFERRED APPLICATIONS

You can apply and defer your application for a period of time. However, when your application is deferred we will not be able to provide you with list positions and you won't be considered for an allocation of a property.

## SUSPENDED APPLICATIONS

Everyone has the right to have their application added to our housing list, but there are some circumstances where your application will be suspended and you will not be eligible for an offer of housing.

Reasons for suspending your application can include -

- If you owe a tenancy related debt, of less than five years old, of more than one months rent, and you have not kept to an acceptable repayment arrangement for a three month period
- If you, or a member of your household, has behaved in an antisocial manner
- If you have given us false information on your application form
- If you, or any member of your household, have broken some condition of your tenancy agreement

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- Not providing information required to assess an application despite reminders to do so
- If you have refused two offers of housing and housing choices have not been reviewed when asked to do so

You will not be eligible for an offer of housing until -

- A specified period of time has elapsed
- It is evident that the conduct has changed or
- A change in circumstances has occurred

### **CANCELLING OR REMOVING YOUR APPLICATION**

Applications will be cancelled and removed from the Common Housing Register -

- If you are housed by one of the partners;
- If you request, in writing, to be removed from the list;
- If you fail to respond to a periodic review;
- If you fail to respond to two consecutive letters; or
- If the applicant passes away

### **REVIEWING APPLICATIONS**

Homes4D&G will review applications at least once a year. The date of the review is based on the date you registered your application with us.

As part of the review we will ask you to advise us, within 10 working days, if you wish to remain on the Common Housing Register. If no response is received within four weeks, we will cancel your application.

However, if you contact us within six months of the application being cancelled, you can have the original reinstated. In this case, if your circumstances have changed, you may be required to complete a new application form.

In addition to these reviews, you should always let us know of any change in your circumstances as this could affect your chances of being rehoused.



## MUTUAL EXCHANGES

Homes4D&G has its' own mutual exchange scheme. Mutual exchanges are when two or more tenants agree to swap properties.

The landlord must agree to the exchange, and they can only refuse permission if it is reasonable to do so.

You can apply for a mutual exchange through your landlord.

Some of the Homes4D&G partners are also part of a project, using the UK's leading mutual exchange service, HomeSwapper. To find out more visit [www.homeswapper.co.uk](http://www.homeswapper.co.uk)

Homes4D&G has a local version of HomeSwapper and more information is available on our website [www.homes4dg.org.uk](http://www.homes4dg.org.uk)

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## APPEALS

We will always try our best to give you an excellent service but we know sometimes things go wrong and you might want to appeal against a decision that we make about your housing application.

When you apply for housing, you have the right to appeal against -

- The points we award your application
- A decision to suspend you from receiving offers
- A decision to cancel your application or
- Any decision we make which you believe has not been dealt with in accordance with the Common Allocation Policy

Our appeal process -

1. You can contact any member of the Homes4D&G Team and verbally request that we review our decision. We will deal with this request within five working days.
2. If you remain dissatisfied with the decision, a written appeal can then be lodged with the Common Housing Register Manager. They will investigate your appeal and respond in writing within 10 working days.

## COMPLAINTS

If you are dissatisfied with the level of service you have received from Homes4D&G, e.g. regarding the actual allocation of a property not meeting our published service standards, each Homes4D&G partner has a complaints procedure that is simple and easy to use.

You can contact any Home4D&G partner to ask for a copy of their complaint procedure. If the complaint is about the way in which your application has been registered or anything that is directly associated with the Homes4D&G team/duties, you would follow DGHP's Complaints Handling Procedure.

Our complaints procedures will explain each step of our process, and how you can appeal to the Public Services Ombudsman. You must generally use our internal complaints system before contacting the Ombudsman.



## ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

This publication is also available on tape, in Braille, large print and community languages. For more information contact Homes4D&G's Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 1230 or email: [enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk)

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এই প্রকাশনাটি টেপে, ব্রেইলে, বড় ছাপার অক্ষরে এবং কমিউনিটির ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়। আরো তথ্যের জন্য Homes4D&G-এর গ্রাহক সেবা কেন্দ্রে যোগাযোগ করুন 0300 123 1230 নম্বরে বা ইমেল করুন এই ঠিকানায়: [enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk)

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یہ اشاعت ٹیپ، بریل، بڑے پرنٹ اور کمیونٹی کی زبانوں میں دستیاب ہے۔ مزید معلومات کے لئے Homes4D&G کے کسٹمر سروس سنٹر سے 0300 123 1230 پر رابطہ کریں یا [enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk) پر ای میل کریں۔

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**ONLINE**



**BY EMAIL**

[enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@homes4dg.org.uk)

Send us an email at any time. Please note, our advisors are only available to reply during office hours.



**BY POST**

Our postal address to send mail to is:

**Homes4D&G, Freepost  
RTHU-YASL-XCJC, DG12 6AJ**



**BY PHONE**

**0300 123 1230**

Homes4D&G can be contacted via our Customer Service Centre between the hours of 8am and 7pm, Monday to Friday.



**IN PERSON**

You can come into any open office of the partner landlords and talk to advisors about Homes4D&G but the easiest and quickest method is still to call us on 0300 123 1230.