

Housing Application Guide

This document is available in other formats such as audiotape, CD, Braille and in large print. It can also be made available in other languages on request. Please contact 01389 73766.

Arabic

هذه الوثيقة متاحة أيضا بلغات أخرى والأحرف الطباعية الكبيرة وبطريقة سمعية عند الطلب.

Chinese (Cantonese)

本文件也可應要求，製作成其他語文或特大字體版本，也可製作成錄音帶。

Hindi

अनुरोध पर यह दस्तावेज़ अन्य भाषाओं में, बड़े अक्षरों की छपाई और सुनने वाले माध्यम पर भी उपलब्ध है

Polish

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany także w innych wersjach językowych, w dużym druku lub w formacie audio.

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਟੇਪ 'ਤੇ ਰਿਕਾਰਡ ਹੋਇਆ ਵੀ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

Urdu

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز دیگر زبانوں میں، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی اور سننے والے ذرائع پر بھی میسر ہے۔





About this guide

This guide tells you:

- **what you need to do to register and maintain your application for housing with West Dunbartonshire Council**
- **what proof you may need to give us in order that we can process your application**
- **what to do if you do not agree with our assessment of your application for housing**
- **the types of housing that may become available to let**

How to apply for housing

Anyone 16 or over can apply for housing. You can apply on your own or apply with someone else and have a joint application.

What do I need to do to get on to the West Dunbartonshire Council Housing Register?

You need to complete and sign a housing application form. You can get an application at our local area housing offices and on our website at www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk.

We can help you complete the application form if you have difficulty doing so. All you need to do is contact one of our local area housing offices to arrange an interview or, in some cases, we may arrange a home visit if you are unable to come in to one of our offices. We can also provide support services if you ask us, such as language interpreters or a signer if you require one.

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What proof do I need to send with my application form?

There may be certain instances where we may require proof so that we can give your application the right priority or decide the size of house we can consider you for.

You may send the documents you are using as proof with your application form or take them with you into one of our local area housing offices, where they can be checked by a member of staff and given back to you. If you cannot provide the proof required straight away, you should return the application form to us without it. When we receive your form, we will contact you and ask you to send the information.

You should check if any of the following circumstances apply to you.

Address

We may need proof of address from applicants, except those who are existing tenants of West Dunbartonshire Council (we can check these addresses from our own records). You need to send us one of the following items, which should be an original document, but not a photocopy:

- **bank statement**
- **utility bill** (for example, gas, electricity or water)
- **letter or paperwork from the Department of Works and Pensions**

Non-UK Citizen

If you are a non-UK citizen, we need to see your passport to check your entitlement to council housing.

Separation

If you have separated from your husband, wife or partner but are still living together, we need proof that you are separated so we can award points for sharing accommodation or sharing facilities. This proof could be a letter from a solicitor or from your partner confirming you have separated.

Shared access arrangements

We need proof of shared access arrangements if you want to be considered for an extra bedroom for children who live with you less than half of the time. This can either be a letter from a solicitor or the other parent confirming the arrangement.

You need to leave your current accommodation

If you have a date to leave your current accommodation, we will require proof to be able to assess your application with the correct number of points.

Loss of Tied Accommodation

If you are being asked to leave accommodation that has been provided as part of your job and it is ending, you will be required to provide proof of this.

Leaving HM Armed Forces

If you are leaving the armed forces, your cessation certificate, or the date when you are leaving, is required. If we are unable to provide alternative accommodation within 2 months of your leaving date, you will be entitled to priority need status under the homelessness legislation.

Homeless or threatened with homelessness

If you are homeless or threatened with homelessness within the next two months, you should contact the WDC Homeless Section at:

**Rosebery Place
Clydebank
Tel: 0141 562 8894**

or

**Dumbarton Homeless Office
6-14 Bridge Street, Dumbarton
Tel: 01389 608031**

Alternatively, you can telephone
0800 197 1004

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What can I expect after I have sent you my application form?

When we receive your application form, we will contact you to let you know we have received it. Our target for assessing completed application forms and adding them to the housing register is 14 days after receipt. Once your application has been assessed, we will write to tell you:

- **which allocation group you have been placed in**
- **the size of house you qualify for**
- **the areas that you want to be considered for**
- **how many points you have been awarded**

We may contact you if we require more information or proof to verify your circumstances. While we are doing this, your application for housing will be active on the housing register. However, you will not be able to accept an offer of housing until we receive the proof requested.

Medical Priority Assessments

Medical priority assessments are carried out by a dedicated officer within Housing Services. We aim to assess most applications within 4 weeks. It may take longer where additional information is required. We will write to you to tell you which medical award you have qualified for and if these points are for particular property types.

Housing References

If you are currently staying or have previously stayed in social housing, we will ask your landlord(s) for a reference for the previous 5 years which will help us identify issues relating to your tenancy. We will ask for information relating to the rent account, conditions of the tenancy, and antisocial behaviour.

Is there anything else I need to do once my application is on the housing register?

Once you are on the housing register, we will contact you every year, around the anniversary of your application, to check whether you are still looking for a house and to find out if your circumstances have changed. You need to complete and return the review form to remain on our housing list.



It is very important that you contact us if your circumstances change at any time throughout the year and not to wait until you receive your review letter and form.

A change in circumstance could be if:

- **you move to another address**
- **you have a baby**
- **you get married, or start living with a partner**
- **a grownup son or daughter leaves or returns to your household**

All these circumstances can affect:

- **your eligibility for a particular house size**
- **the points you are awarded**

If you do not inform us of any of these changes, you could miss out on an offer of housing.

You should also contact us if you want us to remove your application for housing from the housing register.

Will I be offered the house I want?

Although anyone can join our housing register, this does not necessarily mean that the Council will make an offer of housing. The demand for council housing in West Dunbartonshire outstrips the supply of available properties. Whether or not you receive an offer of housing will depend on these main factors:

- **your level of housing need as set out by the number of points you have**
- **the number of houses available for let**
- **the areas/types you apply for**

We will make offers of housing to applicants, as shown on their housing application form. It is important that you clearly state your choices for areas, types of housing and floor levels. We will not offer you a house that you state you will not consider. You should widen your choices for housing as much as possible to increase your chances of getting an offer of housing.

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Are there any reasons which will result in a delay in an offer of housing?

- **You are already a tenant but have not maintained your current tenancy with us for a period of 12 months. Unless there are exceptional circumstances you will not receive a satisfactory tenancy reference from your housing officer and therefore cannot be considered for another offer of housing, mutual exchange or a nomination to another housing provider.**

We may need to suspend your application for housing for the following reasons:

- **You have outstanding housing related debt of over a month's rent and have not kept to an arrangement to pay this for 13 weeks**
- **You have not kept to your conditions of the tenancy**
- **You are housed under a Short Scottish Secure Tenancy (SSST)**
- **You provide false information in your housing application**
- **You have refused 3 reasonable offers of housing from us**

Is there any reason why you would remove my application?

We will remove your application from the housing register if you:

- **Ask us to remove your application**
- **don't respond to the annual review; or**
- **die**

Before we cancel your application, we will make two attempts to contact you in writing. If you contact us within 12 months of us cancelling your application, we will reinstate it. However, if you have moved house, we will need you to complete another application, in order that we can assess your circumstances again.

What other help can I get from you?

You can contact us at any time to discuss your housing application or other housing options that may be available to you depending on your individual circumstances. This is called a housing advice interview and can include:

- **an explanation of how we work out your points**
- **the number of points you were given in the areas you have chosen**
- **advice and assistance in widening your areas of choice, if we think that this will give you a better chance of receiving an offer of housing**



How do I appeal if I do not agree with the number of points you have awarded me?

If you do not agree with the number of points that have been awarded to you, you should first contact the local area housing office that assessed the application. If you still do not agree with our decision you can appeal. A senior officer who was not involved in the initial decision will reassess your application. Appeals can be made in person, by telephone, in writing or by a third party. If the appeal is made by a third party, appropriate permissions must be in place so we can discuss personal information. You can make your appeal to the Section Head of Allocations and Homelessness. If you want any more information on appeals, you can ask for a copy of our appeals procedure from any of our local area housing offices.

What if I want to make a formal complaint, suggestion, or compliment?

If you want to make a complaint, suggestion, or compliment, you should contact any of the local area housing offices, where staff will be more than willing to assist you in this matter.

What is general needs housing?

Most of our properties are general needs housing. These houses have not been set aside for particular groups of people who require support, nor do they have special design features.

What is sheltered housing?

Sheltered housing is specially designed accommodation which meets the needs of older people.

In West Dunbartonshire Council's Sheltered housing, you live in your own house. Support is available 24 hours a day. This allows you to live independently in your own home and gives you the peace of mind knowing that trained help is available in an emergency.

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What types of property can I apply for?

End terrace house

A two storey house with stairs and its own front door. It is at the end of a row of other houses. Access around to the back of the house may be required by neighbours to remove rubbish and provide access to shared areas.

Mid terrace house

A two storey house has its own front door. It is between two other houses in a row.

Semi-detached house

A two storey house with stairs and its own front door and is joined to another house.

Bungalow

A house which has no stairs and its own front door.

Flat

A flat generally has a shared entrance with a common close. They are also known as tenements. Flats can be on the ground, first, second, or third floor, and can have four, six, eight or nine flats in a block.

Multi storey flat

A flat in a block with up to (15) floors, with a lift.

Four in a block flat

A building with four flats, two on the ground floor and two on the upper floor. Each flat has its own front door and no shared entrance or close. All the rooms are on the same level. The garden may include shared access for tenants.

Maisonette

This is two storey property with stairs which is in a block. It has a shared entrance and a common shared close. The maisonette entrance can be on the ground floor or on the second floor. The ground floor property can sometimes have its own separate entrance.

Ground floor accommodation will normally be given to people who have a need for that type of property.



**West Dunbartonshire Council
Local Area Housing Offices**

Dumbarton Area Housing Office

6 – 14 Bridge Street

Dumbarton

G82 1NT

Tel: 01389 737661 (Option 2)

Email us at: allocations@west-dunbarton.gov.uk