

## PROPOSED NEW DCC COMMUNITY HOUSING POLICY 2022

Department: Property

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 The draft Dunedin City Council (DCC) Community Housing Policy 2022 (the draft Policy) is presented to Council for consideration and is attached as Attachment A.
- 2 The draft policy enacts previous Council resolutions and replaces the DCC Housing Policy 1997 that is attached as Attachment B.
- 3 The draft Policy will ensure that DCC owned community housing units are offered to people with limited financial means and it prioritises people over 55 years of age with urgent housing need or that require a physically accessible home.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

**Adopts** the draft DCC Community Housing Policy 2022 with or without amendments.

### BACKGROUND

- 4 The DCC's Elderly Persons Housing Policy 1993 focused on providing housing for New Zealand citizens aged 60 years and over, as well as for those aged over 55 years of age with limited financial resources.
- 5 In 1995 the Council introduced the DCC's Interim Housing Policy and lowered the eligibility age from 60 years and above to 55 years and above. The eligibility age was lowered due to reduced occupancy in the DCC community housing portfolio and in response to an increased housing need for those aged under 60 years of age.
- 6 The DCC Housing Policy 1997 continued to focus on prioritising those aged over 55 years, with limited financial resources. The DCC Housing policy 1997 also introduced city-wide housing goals and housing objectives as well as management mechanisms which reflected Council's role in housing at this time.
- 7 In 2009 the Social Housing Strategy 2010-2020 was adopted by Council after consultation.
- 8 On 29 January 2020 Council requested that Property Services carry out a full review of both the Dunedin Housing Policy 1997, and the Social Housing Strategy 2010-2020 as part of the Long-Term plan 2021-2031.
- 9 Two further reports were provided to Council during Long-Term Plan 2021-2031 deliberations. Those reports gave an update on the Policy review and summarised the outcomes of public consultation.

- 10 At the 28 September 2021 Council considered the results of a review of Council's wait list criteria for Community Housing based on public feedback received during the 10-year plan 2021-2031 and following discussion Council resolved:

*Moved (Cr David Benson-Pope/Cr Christine Garey):*

*That the Council:*

- a) **Decides** to prioritise Council's community housing for people aged 55 years and over with limited assets and income and those with urgent and/or physically accessible housing need.
- b) **Notes** that the decision will be used to develop the waitlist criteria which will be included in the revised draft DCC Community Housing Policy.

**Motion carried (CNL/2021/179)**

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Proposed changes to the Policy**

- 11 The draft Policy reflects Council's resolutions to prioritise community housing for people aged 55 years and over with limited assets and income and those with urgent and/or physically accessible housing need through changes in the Community Housing Eligibility Criteria and the Community Housing Waitlist Prioritisation Criteria.
- 12 The draft Policy also introduces guidance for allocating houses and limiting the number of suitable housing offers an applicant may decline before it impacts their placement on the waiting list.
- 13 The draft policy is part of Council's response to changes in Dunedin's housing market. It complements the work being done through the Housing Action Plan. The Housing Action Plan work continues to partner with Kāinga Ora and other housing providers to improve the provision of housing across the city.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

- 14 To be eligible for a DCC Community Housing unit the draft Policy requires an applicant to have assets valued at less than the Asset Limit and annual earnings less than the Income Limit.

### **Income Limit and Asset Limit**

#### *Income Limit*

- 15 The draft Policy keeps the Income Limit equal to the Work and Income NZ income limit for Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement which are currently \$45,656.00 for a one-person household and \$63,908.00 for a two-person household.
- 16 The Work and Income NZ income limit for Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement is a nationally recognised tool for assessing whether a household has limited financial means.

#### *Asset Limit*

- 17 The DCC Housing Policy 1997 sets the Asset Limit as 50% of the median house price in Dunedin, as of April each year.

- 18 The draft Policy sets the Asset Limit as equal to two times the Work and Income New Zealand income limit for Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement. This change would mean the Asset Limit reduces from \$310,500 to \$91,312.00 for a one- person household, and to \$127,816.00 for a two- person household.
- 19 The Work and Income Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement income limits are adjusted each year usually from the 01 April.

### The Waitlist Prioritisation Criteria

- 20 The draft Policy amends the Waitlist Prioritisation Criteria to reflect Council resolutions and prioritises people over 55 years of age with urgent housing need or that require a physically accessible home

*Table 1 = Draft Policy Prioritisation Groups*

PRIORITY GROUP	CRITERIA
Priority Group One	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>AND</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
Priority Group Two	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>OR</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
Priority Group Three	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have a housing need,
Priority Group Four	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>AND</b> a need for physically accessible housing
Priority Group Five	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>OR</b> a need for physically accessible housing
Priority Group Six	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have a housing need.

- 21 The waitlist prioritisation complements Kāinga Ora's social housing provision in that Kāinga Ora are focused on the provision of housing for families and younger people. Kāinga Ora are also best placed to work other social agencies to assist people with complex needs.

### Allocation

- 22 The DCC Housing Policy 1997 does not include any guidance to staff as to how units should be allocated.
- 23 The draft Policy proposes that when a DCC unit becomes available it will be offered to the next eligible applicant on the waitlist within the highest priority group.
- 24 All physically accessible units will be offered to applicants with the highest priority rating who have demonstrated a need for a physically accessible unit.

### Housing unit offers

- 25 The draft Policy outlines that where an applicant turns down three offers of housing which otherwise meets their needs, the applicant will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist within their currently priority group as of the date of their refusal to accept the third suitable offer of housing.

**Potential Impacts on waitlist**

- 26 If Council adopts the draft Policy, the expected impact on the current waitlist is summarised in the table below.
- 27 Staff estimate 10 housing applicants with urgent and physically accessible housing needs will move to Priority Group One.
- 28 Staff estimate 32 applicants who are currently on the waitlist will no longer qualify for a DCC unit because they have income and/or assets that are above the proposed limits.
- 29 The potential impacts on the waitlist have been estimated by staff by completing a high-level review of all existing housing applications. If the draft Policy is adopted a thorough review of all applications would need to be completed.

*Table 2 – Summary of Waitlist impacts*

CURRENT WAITLIST GROUP	NUMBER OF APPLICANTS	IMPACT ON WAITLIST
Priority Group One	164	10 applicants will move to Priority Group One. 67 applicants will move to Priority Group Two 80 applicants will move to Priority Group Three 7 applicants will no longer be eligible
Priority Group Two	21	21 applicants will no longer be eligible
Priority Group Three	95	3 will move to Priority Group Four 25 will move to Priority Group Five 67 will move to Priority Group Six
Priority Group Four	4	4 applicants will no longer be eligible
	<b>284</b>	

- 30 If Council adopts the draft Policy, the estimated number of applicants in the new waitlist groups are summarised in the table below.

*Table 3 – Draft Policy Waitlist Groups*

<b>DRAFT POLICY WAITLIST GROUP</b>	<b>NUMBER OF APPLICANTS</b>
Priority Group One	10
Priority Group Two	67
Priority Group Three	80
Priority Group Four	3
Priority Group Five	25
Priority Group Six	67
	<b>252</b>

- 31 The DCC community housing waitlist will be reviewed annually. These reviews will consider whether a DCC housing applicant's needs, or circumstances have changed and may involve reassessing an applicant's eligibility and/or priority rating.

## **OPTIONS**

- 32 The status quo option is not presented to Council to consider as the direction has been clear from Council that the DCC Housing Policy 1997 is no longer fit for purpose and does not prioritise urgent and physically accessible housing need.

**Council has the option of adopting the draft Community Housing Policy 2022 with or without amendment, or providing direction to staff to undertake further work.**

- 33 The draft Policy ensures that DCC owned community housing units are offered to people with limited financial means and it prioritises people over 55 years of age with urgent housing need or that require a physically accessible home.
- 34 All existing tenants shall remain eligible to continue to reside in their housing unit.

### *Advantages*

- This draft Policy incorporates and responds to feedback from the community received as part of the 10-year plan 2021-2031 process and responds to changes in Dunedin's housing market.
- Applicants with urgent need would be prioritised and would potentially be on the waitlist for a shorter time.
- Applicants with physical accessibility requirements would be prioritised and would potentially be on the waitlist for a shorter time.

### *Disadvantages*

- Applying a new priority rating will mean some applicant's priority rating will change.
- Staff estimate that 32 applicants would no longer be eligible for a DCC unit.

## NEXT STEPS

- 35 If adopted all new and existing housing applicants will subject to the proposed eligibility and waitlist prioritisation criteria and staff will re-prioritise all applicants currently on the waitlist.
- 36 Staff will work closely with any applicants who are no longer eligible for DCC community housing to assess their current situation and potentially refer them to other agencies.
- 37 All current waitlisted applicants will be advised in writing of changes to the Policy and how this affects them personally.

## Signatories

Author:	Anna Nilsen - Group Manager, Property Services
Authoriser:	Robert West - General Manager Corporate and Quality

## Attachments

	Title	Page
<a href="#">↓A</a>	Dunedin City Council Community Housing Policy 2022	138
<a href="#">↓B</a>	Dunedin City Council Housing Policy 1997	142

**SUMMARY OF CONSIDERATIONS**
***Fit with purpose of Local Government***

This decision promotes the social well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

***Fit with strategic framework***

	Contributes	Detracts	Not applicable
Social Wellbeing Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic Development Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environment Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Arts and Culture Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3 Waters Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spatial Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrated Transport Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks and Recreation Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other strategic projects/policies/plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The draft Policy as presented links to several goals within Council's Strategic Framework.

***Māori Impact Statement***

Council has resolved to retain the prioritisation age at over 55 years of age to ensure that Māori and Paskifika access to DCC Community Housing is supported. Staff will continue to engage with Mana Whenua and Mataawaka to ensure Māori housing priorities are addressed.

***Sustainability***

Council decisions on prioritisation of DCC Community Housing support social sustainability by catering to the needs of some of the most vulnerable members of the community.

***LTP/Annual Plan / Financial Strategy /Infrastructure Strategy***

This report responds to resolutions from the 10-year plan 2021-2031.

***Financial considerations***

There are no financial implications for Council.

***Significance***

This decision is considered low in terms of the Council's Significance and Engagement policy.

***Engagement – external***

This report responds to feedback from the community received as part of the 10-year plan 2021-2031 process.

***Engagement - internal***

There is ongoing internal engagement with the Manahautū, Manahautu - General Manager Maori, Partnerships, Policy, Community Development, Property, Planning and the Housing Action Plan Advisor.

***Risks: Legal / Health and Safety etc.***

There are no identified risks.

**SUMMARY OF CONSIDERATIONS**

***Conflict of Interest***


There is no known conflicts of interest.

***Community Boards***

Many community Board areas have community housing located within their boundaries. How members of the community are prioritised for tenancy in those houses will therefore be of interest.



DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY HOUSING POLICY 2022

DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL | kaunihera a-rohe o Ōtepoti

Approved by:			
Sponsor:	General Manager Corporate and Quality		
Department responsible:	Property Services		
Date approved:		Reviewed:	
Next review date:		DOC ID:	

## BACKGROUND

The Dunedin City Council (DCC) is committed to providing community housing in Dunedin and is the second largest social housing provider in the city.

The DCC's community housing portfolio consists of bedsit and one-bedroom units and includes a small number of two-bedroom and physically accessible units. The DCC has historically provided housing for older people, including single people and couples.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Housing Policy 2022 (the Policy) is to ensure DCC housing units are allocated to people most in need. People aged 55 years and over with limited financial means and who have an urgent or physically accessible housing need will be prioritised.

## SCOPE

The Policy explains who is eligible for a DCC housing unit, how applicants will be prioritised on the waitlist and how different types of housing units will be allocated.

## OUT OF SCOPE

The Policy does not include information about housing rents as these charges are set by Council via the Annual Plan and Long-Term Plan process and can be found in the Fees and Charges schedule. The Policy also does not include information about the funding sources for community housing as this information is determined by Council's Revenue and Finance Policy.

## DEFINITIONS

**Asset Limit** - the maximum value of assets (both cash and non-cash assets) that an eligible applicant(s) may have.

**Eligibility** - a person that satisfies the Eligibility Criteria will be considered suitable for a DCC community housing unit.

**Income Limit** - the maximum amount of income an eligible applicant(s) can be in receipt of on an annual basis.

**Physically accessible unit** - a housing unit that is accessible to people with physical disabilities. For example, a unit with ramped access or flat access is physically accessible for people who use mobility aids or have impaired vision.

**Urgent housing need** - when an applicant(s) is homeless or at risk of losing their current accommodation as well as when an applicant's safety is at risk in their current accommodation.

**Waitlist** - The list of eligible applicants waiting for a DCC community housing unit.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **1. Eligibility Criteria**

1.1. A housing applicant needs to meet the following eligibility criteria before their application is accepted.

#### **1.2 Age and residency**

To be considered eligible an applicant must be:

- Aged 18+ years and over **AND**
- A New Zealand citizen **OR** have a permanent resident visa and have lived in NZ continuously for at least 2 years **AND**
- Able to live independently and care for themselves **OR** only require minimum supervision and support from community support workers.

#### **1.3 Income Limit**

1.3.1 The income limit is equal to the Work and Income New Zealand income limit for Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement.

#### **1.4 Asset Limit**

1.4.1 The household asset limit is equal to two times the Work and Income New Zealand income limit for Non-beneficiary Accommodation Supplement.

1.4.2 The Non-beneficiary income limit information is set annually and can be found on the Work and Income NZ website:

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/map/deskfile/extra-help-information/accommodation-supplement-tables/income-cut-out-points-for-non-beneficiaries-curren.html>

## PRIORITISATION

### 2. DCC Community Housing Waitlist Prioritisation

- 2.1 All eligible applications are given a priority rating according to their age and urgent and/or physically accessible housing needs. Applicants are then placed on the waitlist in order of their priority rating, and date of application.
- 2.2 When a housing unit becomes available the waitlist is examined and the housing unit will be offered to the next eligible applicant on the waitlist, within the highest priority group.

<b>Priority Group One</b>	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>AND</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
<b>Priority Group Two</b>	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>OR</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
<b>Priority Group Three</b>	Applicants who are aged over 55 years and have a housing need.
<b>Priority Group Four</b>	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>AND</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
<b>Priority Group Five</b>	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have an urgent housing need <b>OR</b> a need for physically accessible housing.
<b>Priority Group Six</b>	Applicants who are aged under 55 years and have a housing need.

- 2.2 The DCC community housing waitlist will be reviewed annually. These reviews will consider whether a DCC housing applicant's needs, or circumstances have changed and may involve reassessing an applicant's eligibility and/or priority rating.

## ALLOCATION

### 3.1 Allocation of physically accessible housing

- 3.2 All physically accessible housing units are offered to the applicant with the highest priority rating who has demonstrated a need for an accessible unit.
- 3.3 An applicant's need for a physically accessible unit are to be confirmed in writing by a registered clinical professional, for example an Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or a General Practitioner.
- 3.4 When no applicants on the waitlist have demonstrated a need for a physically accessible unit, the accessible unit will be offered to the next highest priority applicant who is likely to need the relevant modifications in the future. For example, an elderly person that has requested to live in a home with a wet area shower to future proof their living situation.

### 4. Housing unit offers

- 4.1 Where an applicant turns down three offers of housing which otherwise meets their needs, the applicant will be placed at the bottom of the list within their current priority group as of the date of their refusal to accept the third suitable offer of housing.

**5. Review**

5.1 This Policy will be reviewed every three years.

<b>Relevant Legislation:</b>	Local Government Act 2002 Part 2 s10 and s14 Residential Tenancies Act 1986
<b>Associated Documents:</b>	

**DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL****HOUSING POLICY****PREAMBLE****Background**

In July 1995, Dunedin City Council drafted and approved, after significant public consultation, an Interim Housing Policy. This policy set out the goals, objectives, and mechanisms for Council's relationship to the housing environment in the city. The main role of Council was seen to be in regulatory enforcement of housing standards, and in the provision of housing to members of the community whose needs are not otherwise met. The different Council departments responsible for the regulatory role and the provision of housing had had operating policies and management systems for some time, but there had been a lack of one unified policy document which stated Council's general role and involvement in the housing environment.

**Interim Housing Policy**

The Interim Housing Policy adopted in 1995, in addition to providing a holistic approach to Council's housing involvement, also changed the eligibility criteria for housing in its approximately 950 "Elderly Persons Housing" (EPH) Units. These EPH units make up the bulk of Council-owned housing; there are 52 other "General Housing" Units which are open to anyone at market rental, and approximately 16 Elderly Persons Ownership Units. Traditionally, these "EPH" Units had been offered only to older persons over the age of 55. However, it had become apparent to Council that there was a wider range of housing need in the community. Moreover, some of the EPH units were vacant and could help meet wider housing need without decreasing the amount of housing available to persons over the age of 55. For this reason, Council adopted a priority system for its "EPH" Units which, although still giving persons over the age of 55 a higher priority, allowed for younger persons, primarily those with limited financial resources and/or special housing need, to occupy a unit if it was not desired by an older person.

**Housing Needs Research**

Over the course of 1996, an in-depth look at housing need in the city was co-ordinated by Council. The goal was to develop and adopt a finalised Housing Policy which would be based on the Interim Housing Policy but which would also be based on community housing needs identified through research. At the same time, the interim priority system of housing allocation experienced its trial year.

The housing needs assessment that was co-ordinated by Council identified that in fact there was a wide range of housing need in the city beyond that of older persons. Low-income persons and persons with disabilities were specifically identified as groups with housing need, based on such factors as housing affordability, access, location, and design. This confirmed Council's belief that its housing should be made available to a wider range of community members. At the same time, it had become clear through both the introduction of

the interim priority system and the housing needs assessment that some older persons preferred the option of living in blocks of units with persons of a similar age group.

#### **Changes to the Interim Housing Policy**

The Housing Policy has been modified to meet these needs. The main change has been to divide the "EPH" units into two groups. Housing units in Group One are available to persons over the age of 55, subject to existing priorities related to income, assets, and housing need. Housing units in Group Two are available to all persons, with top priority still given to persons over the age of 55, as with the Interim Policy that has been in operation since last year. One modification is to give low-income persons under the age of 55 who are on the invalids benefit a higher priority than those low-income persons under the age of 55 who are on other benefits. This change is designed to make more housing available to persons with disabilities.

The percentages of the housing units which will be in Group One and Group Two is based on housing need and will be reviewed regularly, as will the designation of units into these groups. The aim is to provide as much stability as possible while still retaining the flexibility to meet housing needs in the most appropriate way.

Another change allows for the lease of Council units to professional residential caregivers for persons with disabilities or other special needs. Council recognises that other sectors in the community are better suited to provide social support services and wishes where possible to make its housing available to these organisations.

Council has also chosen to rename all its housing, including the units formerly known as "EPH", as "Council Housing," reflecting its broader role in the community. Former "EPH" units, as opposed to "General Housing" like Palmyra, will be called "Community Housing."

#### **The Future**

It has been recognised by Council for some time that many of its housing units, whether because of age or design, are becoming less suited to meet community housing need. For this reason Council will be pursuing a redevelopment program which will make Council housing better suited to the needs of the community. This program is not the focus of this policy but will directly enhance the ability of Council to fulfil Mechanism 3.1: to "make available housing suited to the physical, social and financial needs of the client groups."

#### **Consultation**

The draft of this policy was released, following Council approval, for an eight-week public submission period from 11 December 1996 through 4 February 1997. Following submissions, minor changes have been made to the draft version.



## **HOUSING POLICY**

### **GOAL**

**The Dunedin City Council will promote an adequate standard of housing for its residents**

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 3, Strategic Statement 8:**

"Council will encourage an affordable housing base and enforce basic environmental standards in residential areas."

***Commentary:** To date the Dunedin City Council has concentrated its efforts in housing in the following areas:*

- *Provision of low cost rental housing for older adults of limited means; and other groups who are housing disadvantaged.*
- *Regulatory enforcement.*

*Council has reconsidered its housing policy for the following reasons:*

- *More than 7% of all Council Housing units are vacant.*
- *There is a wide range of housing need in the community.*

*A study commissioned in 1996 by the Dunedin City Council, "Provision of Elderly and Special Needs Housing in Dunedin," shows there is a wide range of housing need amongst special needs groups. It is reported that the number of housing units for residents with psychiatric disabilities and older adults are generally considered satisfactory. The number of dwellings for low income earners and people with physical disabilities however are considered insufficient. It was suggested that the Dunedin City Council should continue to provide for older persons housing but to also consider the needs of other special needs groups.*

*In order to achieve the goal the Dunedin City Council needs to:*

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

**Carry out all of its responsibilities as a Territorial Authority with respect to The Building Act 1991, The Health Act 1956 and the District Plan under the auspices of the Resource Management Act;**

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 1, Strategic Statement 4:**

"Council will separate, where practicable, its policy and regulatory functions from its service supply functions."

*Commentary:* This is a statutory responsibility and a significant aspect of the Dunedin City Council's means of ensuring housing standards are adequate. These responsibilities are carried out entirely separately from the City Property Business Unit which supplies housing.

## **OBJECTIVE 2**

**Provide accommodation for those whose needs are not otherwise adequately met in the community provided there is no direct cost to the ratepayer. Council's primary focus is on the provision of housing for older persons, particularly those with limited financial means. It also has an interest in providing housing for younger persons with disabilities and/or limited financial means. Council does not have a focus on providing housing for larger families.**

*Commentary:* In the past the Dunedin City Council's policy was very restrictive as to whom it assists in this manner. The Interim Policy, adopted in 1995, allowed for the allocation of flats to those under 55 years under specific circumstances. This has had the effect of:

- Increasing Council's ability to react readily to special individual needs; and
- Addressing the under-utilisation of resources, i.e. numerous vacant flats.

*This policy has been modified to allow persons under the age of 55 in some units, rather than all units, so that persons over the age of 55 can have the choice of living with persons of a similar age. The 52 "General Housing" flats such as Palmyra will still operate at market rental and will be available to anyone, without priorities.*

## **MECHANISM 1: REGULATORY ROLE**

**Carry out Council's responsibilities with respect to The Building Act 1991, The Health Act 1956 and the District Plan under the auspices of the Resource Management Act.**

## **MECHANISM 2: CUSTOMER SERVICES ROLE**

**2.1 Encourage an informal network of service agencies involved in seeking accommodation for their clients, providers of accommodation and any other organisations which may have current and accurate information pertinent to the identification of poorly met housing needs;**

*Commentary:* As well as providing a service to the community this will also be the means of collecting information on a continuing basis in order to remain abreast of housing issues, homelessness or other housing shortfalls.

**2.2 On a regular basis collect information, identify housing deficiencies and report them to Council;**

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 1, Strategic Statement 5:**



"Council shall ensure that priorities for service provision...are formed through the systematic review and evaluation of needs and resources..."

*Commentary:* This will enable early identification of new housing demands and hence the timely updating of policy to meet those demands.

**2.3 Inform Council as to which groups are experiencing housing needs and to which Council should give priority in providing direct housing assistance;**

*Commentary:* This will provide the basis for the selection system to be used in allocating flats to applicants.

The majority of housing ("Group One") will be available to those persons 55 years and older, according to priorities outlined in Schedule 1.

A portion of housing ("Group Two") will be available to persons of all ages, according to the set priorities based on need and outlined in Schedule 1.

**2.4 Perform an advisory/referral service to individuals in need of assistance in obtaining accommodation;**

*Commentary:* It is not always possible for Council to directly provide the type of accommodation an individual desires and/or requires. Some of these people also need some assistance in actually seeking out housing. This may mean referring them to someone such as a social worker or it may mean putting them in touch with a provider of accommodation of the type they need.

**2.5 Perform an advisory/referral service to tenants in need of social support services.**

*Commentary:* It is not seen as Council's role to provide social support services to tenants however it is seen as appropriate to offer advice on where to access such services or referral to tenants requiring these services.

**MECHANISM 3: PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION**

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 1, Strategic Statement 6:**

"Council will review all its activities at least every three years to ensure that services are:

- still required;
  - efficient;
  - competitive when appropriate;
- effective in terms of a fair delivery of services."

**3.1 Make available housing suited to the physical, social and financial needs of the client groups; in terms of design, location and affordability.**

*Commentary:* The objective here is to provide sufficient housing which is appropriate to identified needs.

**3.2 Prioritise applicants (if necessary referring to a needs assessment done by outside professionals) and allocate housing according to policy;**

*Commentary: This will ensure that housing is allocated to those in need first. Housing will be divided into two groups, each with a set of eligibility priorities as set out in Schedule One. The percentage of units in each group of housing is based on need and will be regularly monitored and reviewed.*

**3.3 Provide blocks of flats to professional residential care providers if suitable blocks become vacant;**

*Commentary: Because Council cannot provide social support services to tenants, leasing of blocks of units is seen as a way Council can respond to those whose needs include a level of support.*

*It is recognised by Council that this type of support should be provided by professionals capable of managing services for such tenants.*

**3.4 Operate Council Housing in an effective, efficient manner in accordance with any relevant legislation and so that there is no direct cost to the ratepayer.**

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 7, Strategic Statement 1:**

"All functions of Council shall be undertaken in a transparent and efficient way to produce quality results."

Refer to **Dunedin City Council Strategic Plan: Goal 7, Strategic Statement 7:**

"Council will promote a user pays approach, where appropriate."

*Commentary: If Council is to continue to provide housing in the future it must preserve the viability of the operation.*

*It has generally been agreed that it is inappropriate for the ratepayer to subsidise Council Housing given that many of them are also financially stressed.*

**SCHEDULE 1**

**PRIORITIES AND RENTALS FOR COUNCIL COMMUNITY HOUSING APPLICATIONS**

**Group One (units for older persons)**

<b>PRIORITIES</b>	<b>RENTALS</b>
1.1 Top priority will be given to people aged 55 years and over, with financial resources less than the income limit and primary asset limit.	Break-even rent
1.2 Next priority will be given to those aged 55 year and over with financial resources less than the income limit and secondary asset limit.	Break-even rent
1.3 Next priority will be given to people aged 55 years and over who have greater financial resources than the aforementioned groups.	Market rent

**Group Two (units for wider community)**

<b>PRIORITIES</b>	<b>RENTALS</b>
2.1 Top priority will be given to people aged 55 years and over with financial resources less than the income limit and primary asset limit.	Break-even rent
2.2 Next priority will be given to those aged 55 year and over with financial resources less than the income limit and secondary asset limit.	Break-even rent
2.3 Next priority will be given to people aged 55 years and over who have greater financial resources than the aforementioned groups.	Market rent
2.4 Then priority will be given to those aged under 55 years who have financial resources less than the income limit and primary asset limit. Within this group, those on invalid's benefit will have higher priority.	Break-even rent

2.5 Finally, if a tenant cannot be found within these priorities, consideration will be given to other applicants.	Market rent or break-even rent according to affordability.
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#### **Note on Criteria**

Within each priority category in Group One and Group Two housing, those tenants who have been on the waiting list the longest will be allocated a flat first, with the exception of the application of the following criteria, which further prioritise within those priority categories.

##### a) Urgent Need

Where an applicant has an urgent housing need or is at risk in their current housing, Council's Housing staff will treat the application with urgency and give preference where the applicant is willing to accept accommodation in any flat.

##### b) Community Links

Where an applicant can show a personal or immediate or supportive family link to a community they will be given preference for a flat in that community over other applicants of the same priority category. This category only gives preference over another applicant who has been on the waiting list for a similar period.

## SCHEDULE 2 - DEFINITIONS

**"Break-even rent"** will be set at a level which ensures that income over all housing, is approximately equal to expenditure over all housing, where expenditure includes all amount to be accumulated for redevelopment and renewal. The redevelopment and renewal fund will ensure the sustainability of Dunedin City Council Housing and its ability to evolve to meet the changing needs of the community. This is the method for setting existing rents.

**"Market rent"** will be set in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 1986. It shall be the rent that, without regard to the personal circumstances of the landlord or the tenant, a willing landlord might reasonably expect to receive and a willing tenant might reasonably expect to pay for the tenancy, taking into consideration the general level of rents for comparable tenancies of comparable premises in the locality or in similar localities.

Market rent will be considered to be 'affordable' if either:

1. The tenant's combined assets exceed:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Primary Asset Limit</u> or	<u>Secondary Asset Limit</u> (ages 55+)
one person	\$20,000	\$47,000
two persons	\$23,500	\$47,000

or

2. The tenant's combined income exceeds:

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>Primary Limit for Combined Annual Gross Income</u> <sup>2</sup>
one person	\$20,143
two persons	\$29,516

<sup>1</sup> Based on the primary Asset Limit from existing policy.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the Income Support Income tests for the Accommodation Supplement; these criteria may change with the changing of criteria by New Zealand Income Support. Where this represents a substantial change from existing criteria, Council's Property Department will come back to Council for discussion and decisions on this matter.