

Rightsizing Scheme Policy

1. What is the Rightsizing Scheme?

The Rightsizing Scheme is an incentive designed to help make best use of social rented stock in Highland by increasing the supply of family sized and accessible homes available for re-let through the Highland Housing Register (HHR).

2. Who is eligible to receive a Rightsizing Payment?

Underoccupancy Eligibility

Any tenant of a Highland Housing Register landlord who meets all of the below criteria

- has no Live HHR Application
- a continuous tenancy for 12 months or more
- has no active court decree against them
- occupying a property of two or more bedrooms
- where one or more of the bedrooms is spare
- will accept an offer of a smaller house from the Highland Housing Register
- is given a satisfactory tenancy reference once a HHR Application is completed

Accessible Housing Eligibility - Properties designed or adapted for occupation by person(s) with special needs or which are in a group of houses designed or provided near to facilities for persons with special needs

Any tenant of a Highland Housing Register landlord who meets all of the below criteria:

- has no existing Live HHR Application
- a continuous tenancy for 12 months or more
- has no active court decree against them
- occupying a property which is accessible / specially designed or in a group of houses designed or provided near to facilities for persons with special needs
- where no one occupying the property has an accessible need for this property
- is given a satisfactory reference once a HHR application is completed

Under Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Schedule 2, Part 1. Paragraph 11, a social housing landlord has the right to seek re-possession of a tenancy if no person occupying it requires its special features. If the tenant cannot agree with their landlord to move under the Rightsizing Scheme, the landlord may consider taking court action to re-possess the tenancy and provide the tenant with a suitable alternative tenancy.

Under both eligibilities, a Housing Manager may use their discretion and agree to a Rightsizing Payment when

- there has not been a continuous tenancy for 12 months
- there is an unsatisfactory tenancy reference
- the tenant is an existing HHR Applicant

3. What is the incentive?

A financial payment of a one-off payment totalling at least £950 will be made, where budgets allow, after the tenant moves home.

£950 Basic grant for agreeing to re-locate

£350 For accepting a home with one less bedroom (i.e. giving up first spare bedroom)

£450 For each subsequent bedroom given up (i.e. giving up a second; third spare bedroom)

Example –

A tenant moving from a four-bedroom to a one-bedroom would receive £950 + £350 + £450 + £450 = £2200

A tenant moving from a two-bedroom accessible property to a one-bedroom non-accessible property would receive £950 + £350 = £1300

If a tenant has rent arrears or rechargeable repairs, this may be deducted from the total payment. This is subject to the agreement of the housing manager.

4. How is a tenant paid?

The payment will be made into the tenant's chosen back account after they sign for their new tenancy.

5. How is a tenant offered a Rightsizing Payment?

A HHR tenant will be approached by a Housing Officer to discuss a possible re-housing under the Rightsizing Scheme. A tenant will be asked to complete a HHR Application if they agree to proceed. The Rightsizing Payment will be approved after the HHR Application is processed and the Housing Manager has approved the move.

Being approached for the Rightsizing Scheme and/or falling under the eligibility criteria does not guarantee a tenant will be offered a Rightsizing Payment.

A tenant downsizing to a smaller or non-accessible property through the normal HHR process will not receive a payment, tenants will only receive a payment if they have been offered a Rightsizing payment before the move.

6. Supporting the tenant to move

Depending on the tenant's circumstance, they may receive help with moving home. For example, a tenant may receive help and support in

- organising a removal van
- organising a mail redirection
- contacting utility companies, internet providers etc. that will need to know about the change of address



- assistance in updating benefits

A Housing Officer will discuss with the tenant if support is needed and what can be provided.

7. Complaints and appeals

If a tenant is not satisfied with a decision made under the Rightsizing scheme, they should write to their landlord within 28 days of getting their decision.

This will be dealt in accordance with the landlord's complaint/appeals procedure.

Action	Date	Name of User
Created Policy	27.07.2022	A. Byrne