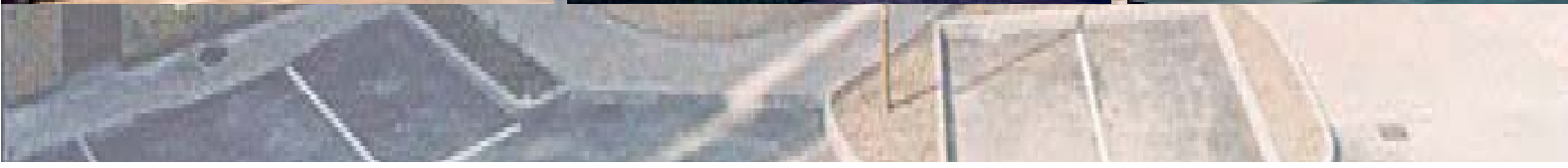




Your guide to
homehunt[®] Servite



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Welcome to *homehunt*[®] Servite

Servite aims to give you as much choice as possible when it comes to applying for a house. It should be quick and easy to register with us and our specially designed information pack will also let you know how you can apply for priority.

We don't hold "waiting lists" any more. All our vacant properties will be advertised and all you have to do is let us know which you'd like to be considered for, at the time you want to move. The information pack has more details.

The first step is to get yourself registered and you can do this online, over the 'phone or in person at our Broughty Ferry office.

Happy homehunting!



Christine Lindsay
Housing Services Manager

Data Protection Notice:

Servite Housing Association will hold the information you provide on this form or other additional related information you may provide together with any that is obtained by the Association from a third party in accordance with our homehunt policy and the Association will use this information solely for the purpose of operating the Association's homehunt service and for administrative and statistical purposes. The Association will not disclose any information without your written consent unless it is required to do so by law or by its regulators.

Registering

You need to register with us before you can apply for a house - but registration is a very quick and easy process.

All we need is your name, address and date of birth, and the names and dates of birth of everyone who will move with you, and we ask you to sign a few simple statements to confirm that you are eligible for housing under our scheme.

Registration is completed 'whilst you wait' at our Broughty Ferry office (or you can apply by post, telephone or online, although these methods will take longer as we will post out a short form for you to sign and return). As a registered homehunter, you will receive a **homehunt**[®] Registration Pack. This includes information about how to apply for advertised houses, and forms to register for Priority Passes (which are explained later on in this leaflet).

Applying for Houses

Once registered you can apply for any property that is advertised (as long as the property is suitable - e.g. it would not result in overcrowding, or there are no restrictions on who can apply stated in the advertisement - for example, sheltered housing is normally reserved for those of retirement age and above).

When you see an advert for a property you are interested in, you should apply for it by telling us your registration number and the property's address. You can do this in person at our Broughty Ferry office, or by 'phone, by post, or online - but you must do this before the closing date and time specified in the advert. If you have a Priority Pass, it will be recognised automatically.



Applying for Very Sheltered Housing

You will normally only be considered for Very Sheltered properties if you have a relevant health or support need. If you want to apply for any of our Very Sheltered properties, you should complete a Health/Support Needs Priority Pass application form, making sure that you tick the box marked "I would like to apply for Very Sheltered Housing". A Housing Officer may then arrange to visit you and your application will be referred to a Joint Panel consisting of representatives from Social Work, Health and Housing providers. This panel will help to decide whether a level of priority should be awarded to your application. Once you have a Health/Support Needs Priority Pass, you are free to apply for any suitable advertised properties.

You can apply for as many advertised properties as you wish at any one time. However if you qualify for more than one offer at the same time, we will assume that the property you apply for first is your first choice, and so on, in the order you chose to apply. If you qualify for an offer on one house, we will disregard any later applications you have made, so the order in which you apply could be very important to you. Similarly, if there is nothing you like advertised, or perhaps it is not a convenient time to move, there is no need to apply (although if you have a Priority Pass you risk losing it - see Losing Priority Passes). If you haven't applied for a property for a year, we'll write and check that you still want to remain registered with us.

Offers of Property

We will usually make offers on the same day as the closing date for applications. Once the closing date and time has been reached, we will look at everyone who applied for each property, and will normally make an offer according to the following steps:

1. Who would make 'best use' of the property - for example, by using disabled adaptations, or accessing associated support services.
2. If there is more than one applicant who would make 'best use' of the property, we will offer it to the person with the highest level Priority Pass.
3. If there is more than one person with the same level of Priority Pass, or if there is more than one person applying and no Priority Passes are being used, then the offer will go to the person who registered with the Association first.

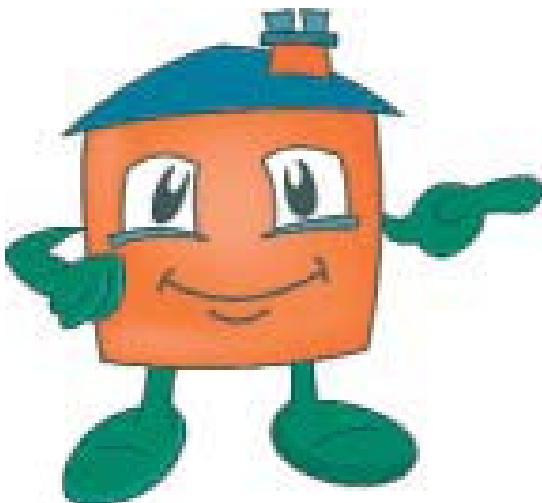
There are some exceptional circumstances when this may not apply - if you would like more information about this, we can give you full details of our **homehunt**[®] Servite policy.

If an applicant refuses a property when an offer is made without having reasonable cause for refusing, their registration will be put on hold for 24 months.

Reporting Allocations

After an offer of property has been accepted, we will publish details of how the allocation was made regularly, copies of which are available at our Broughty Ferry office. We will say whether or not 'best use' was made of the property, whether or not a Priority Pass was used, and how long the successful applicant had been registered.

This gives everyone some idea of the demand for different properties and can help you make reasonable choices about where you want to live - for example, is it more important to have a home sooner, and go for properties that are in lower demand, or can you wait for a 'perfect' property to come along? At the end of the day, it is better that **you** make that choice, rather than have someone make it for you!



To find out
which properties are
available see our ads in Thursday's
Dundee Courier or call our freephone
number **0800 328 7932**
or visit us online at
www.homehunt.info

Priority Passes

Priority Passes are awarded on four levels; Gold Plus, Gold, Silver & Bronze.

Passes are valid for 12 months. If the Pass simply hasn't been used when it could have been, then, at the end of the 12 months, it is lost. If, in fact, no suitable properties have been advertised, or you have applied for suitable properties but were unsuccessful, then the Pass will be renewed.

There are five categories in which a Pass can be awarded, as shown in the table below. Some qualify for just one level of Pass, others for different levels, depending on the circumstances. The table below sets out the cases and the levels of Pass available.



In all cases except homelessness, you should apply for the Priority Pass through us, not any other agency. The only exception is for homelessness, when you should contact your Local Authority as soon as possible, as we cannot provide any temporary accommodation for you.

PRIORITY PASS LEVEL				
Priority Type	Gold Plus	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Homelessness	✓			✓
Health / Support Needs		✓	✓	✓
Unsuitable Property		✓	✓	✓
Overcrowding			✓	✓
Need to be in a Specific Location				✓

Limiting Passes

If you are awarded a Priority Pass, there are a variety of circumstances in which they can be 'limited' to a specific area or areas, or to a type of property. In most cases, you can limit your Pass, but certain passes are limited by the Association, or by the Local Authority that help in the assessment process for Homelessness Passes. The table opposite shows how Passes can be limited, and by whom.

If your Pass is 'limited' (whether by us or by you), it means that it is only valid for properties that meet the 'limited' criteria. You may still apply for properties that do not meet the 'limited' criteria but you do not then get any priority from your Pass - you are taken as applying as an ordinary registered applicant with no Priority Pass.

So, for example, if your Pass was limited to Servite properties in Dickson Avenue, Dundee, then you could only use it in Dickson Avenue - but equally in this example, your Priority Pass would be renewed if no suitable properties had been advertised in Dickson Avenue, even if there had been suitable properties advertised in other places.

If a Pass is 'limited', you are less likely to get a house, but you are more likely to get a home that meets your requirements more closely. It is partly up to you to decide what is more important (and if you do limit your Pass, you can always change the limits you have put on it if you want).

Losing Priority Passes

If you do not apply for suitable properties (i.e. properties that would have been suitable for your needs), unless the advertised property was outside the limits set on your Pass, your Pass will be lost 12 months after it was awarded. Once it is lost, it cannot be awarded for the same circumstances for 12 months (although if your circumstances change, you could be re-assessed).

If you do lose your Pass, you are entitled to appeal if you wish. Even if you lose your Priority Pass you can still apply for houses as an ordinary registered applicant.

Who can limit Passes to areas		
Priority Area	Applicant	Servite L.A.
Homelessness*	✓	✓
Health/Support Needs	✓	✓
Unsuitable Property	✓	
Overcrowding	✓	
Need to be in a Specific Location		✓

*See information on "homelessness" Priority Pass form.

LA = Local Authority.

Servite Housing Association might also limit the property types you can apply for within our schemes as part of a Health / Support Needs assessment.

Who is not Eligible for Housing

In certain circumstances, registrations will be put 'On Hold'. You will not be able to apply for any houses until the 'Hold' status is removed.

As part of the registration process, you will be asked to sign several statements, to confirm that you are eligible for housing with us (see also **False Information**), and if any criteria are not met, then your registration will be put 'On Hold', until such time as you can demonstrate to us that the 'Hold' status no longer applies.

Examples of when registrations are put 'On Hold' include:

- Rent arrears, either with the Association or another landlord, are outstanding and no agreement to pay them off has been maintained satisfactorily.
- History of anti-social behaviour or criminal activity (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act) - when action has been taken (or is pending) by Police, Local Authority, landlord etc. The registration will be kept on hold until we are satisfied that any such behaviour is unlikely to re-occur.
- If an applicant unreasonably refuses an offer of property.
- If you supply false or misleading information - see below

If you would like more information about whether or not you are eligible, please contact us in strict confidence. If you are not eligible, we will advise you what action is required before you can apply through our normal system.

False Information

If you intentionally give false or misleading information in an attempt to secure an offer of property, we will immediately withdraw any Priority Pass you have, and your registration will be put 'On Hold' for 24 months. If a tenancy has started, we will immediately take steps to recover the property.

How to Apply for Priority Passes

In general, Priority Passes are available to registered applicants who have a 'significant housing need'. This means that the majority of applicants won't actually be eligible for a Pass - so don't worry if you don't qualify for one – we expect to offer many of our properties to people without a Priority Pass.

However, if your current housing situation means that you are entitled to a Priority Pass, you should apply straight away.

Please note that you cannot apply for a Pass and use it for any properties that are advertised at the time of your application. A Gold Plus Pass for Homelessness is a possible exception to this because we will recognise it as soon as we receive notification from your Council's Homelessness Service.

Applying for a Pass is straightforward (although if you require any help or advice at any time, please ask!). To apply, just follow the following three steps:

Step One – do you fall into one of the priority groups?

- Are you **homeless**?
- Is your **health** affected by your current housing situation?
- Are you **overcrowded**?
- Is your **housing unsuitable** because of its condition or lack of amenities?
- Is there some other reason why a move to another **location** is necessary?

Step Two – if you do fall into one of those groups, look at the application form for priority in that area, and read the notes about applying for a Pass in that category. The notes will also tell you what levels of Pass are available.

Step Three – if you still feel that you qualify for a Pass, complete the application form (taking care to complete all sections of the form and sign it), before returning it to our Broughty Ferry office or by post to: **SERVITE HOUSING ASSOCIATION, 118 Strathern Road, Broughty Ferry, Dundee DD5 1JW.**

Please note: Only complete the application forms for passes that you feel you qualify for – there is no need to fill in any details or return any of the other forms.

You can only qualify for one Priority Pass from your current housing circumstances. If you think that you qualify for more than one Pass, please complete all the forms that apply, but if you do qualify for more than one Pass, we will award only the highest level Pass to you.

Where to go *home*hunting

Our adverts appear weekly in Thursday's Dundee Courier, as well as in our Broughty Ferry office.

You can also log on to our website at **www.homehunt.info** or listen to recorded information about our available properties on 0800 328 7932.

To find out more about the Association and our services see our main site at **www.servite.co.uk**

Finally, if you need any help or advice at any time, or you have any comments you would like to make, please contact our Broughty Ferry office (the address and phone number is below).

Alternative formats and community language versions of this leaflet and other relevant documents are available on request.

The information requested by the Association in connection with any registration, application for a Priority Pass, offer or allocation will be used solely in connection with the assessment of applications, and the allocation of the Association's properties. Details will only be shared with third parties where it is necessary for the Association to do so in the normal operation of the Association's **homehunt**[®] policy. The Association may also use information contained within applications for statistical purposes. To promote choice the Association gives a public report on each house allocated. This is anonymous but will state whether or not 'best use' was achieved, whether or not a Priority Pass was used, and the date of registration of the successful applicant.



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