

## Lettings Policy

---

**1. Policy Statement** We will consider the individual circumstances, housing needs and aspirations of our customers in order to match them to the right home at the right time and make the best use of our homes. Our decisions will be fair and transparent.

We will offer clear and relevant housing options advice and support customer mobility by providing opportunities to exchange their homes.

We will contribute to our local authorities strategic housing functions and support them with their duties to meet identified local housing needs:

We will be efficient to minimise the amount of time our homes are empty.

---

- 2. Contents:**
1. Policy statement
  2. Contents
  3. Reference documents
  4. Legislative requirements
  5. How we find customers  
Management Moves
  6. Mobility scheme
  7. Making the best use of our homes
  8. Finding Bromford
  9. Deciding not to offer a home to a customer
  10. Housing employees
  11. Appeals
- 

**3. Legislative Requirements** This policy meets the requirements within the following relevant sections of legislation:

- [Housing Acts 1985; 1996](#)
- [Homelessness Act 2002](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Data Protection Act 1998](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [The Localism Act 2011](#)
- [The Welfare Reform Act 2012](#)

---

**4. How we find customers** We find new customers by;

- Advertising our homes on **Choice Based Letting Scheme websites** along with other social housing providers and partners.
- We market some of our homes on **external property advertising websites**.
- For a proportion of our empty homes, we work with our Local Authority partners who may **nominate** a new customer to us direct for an empty home.
- For some of our Supported Housing we have specific referral arrangements with various external agencies.

### **Management Moves**

Exceptionally, in an emergency or in cases such as regeneration we may use an available empty home to accommodate an existing customer.

---

**5. Mobility Scheme** We offer a web based mobility scheme which helps customers to exchange homes. This internet service means customers have access to HomeSwap Direct. When making decisions to agree exchanges we apply the legal grounds outlined in the Localism Act 2012.

---

---

**6. Making the best use of homes**

In order to make the best use of our homes we;

- Agree **local lettings plans** with our partners for some of our homes. These may give preference to particular customer groups depending on the needs of that locality and are time-limited.
- Match homes in accordance with any **Section 106 agreement** that we have with our partners.
- Have **bespoke lettings criteria** for each of our Supported housing schemes.
- Will aim to make use of **bungalows or adapted homes** by **giving preference** to customers/households whose **health/mobility** will benefit from these.
- Will address **under occupied and overcrowded** households by **prioritising under our banding system**.
- Will use the **DWP social size criteria** to offer accommodation; occasionally we will offer homes outside the social size criteria.

---

**7. Finding Bromford**

We want to get our Bromford Deal relationship with customers off to the best start and ensure that the offer of a home is the right step for the customer to start their journey with us. This involves getting to know our customer and ensuring that they are ready to move; including being able to make a rent payment in advance.

To do this, we will ask customers to;

- Complete an online survey,
- Provide us with clear income details;
- Provide proof of identity;
- Provide references or contact details from previous landlords or agencies that they are working with;
- Agree to meet with us in their current home;

Without the above we are unable to get our relationship with the customer off to a good start and therefore would not be able to consider the customer, however, where customers have difficulty with any of the above due to support needs, language barriers or lack of internet access, we will offer assistance to them.

---

**8. Deciding not to offer Home to a customer**

We will consider every customer's individual circumstances before making any decisions; each one will be based on its own merits. However, if we decide not to offer a home to a customer we will explain our reasons clearly, as well as what the customer needs to do in order to be re-considered in future, we will also confirm our decision in writing.

The list below is not exhaustive and merely provides some examples of what we consider when making our decision to offer:

**Having enough money:** Both new and existing customers will be required to demonstrate that the tenancy will be sustainable and that they can afford to pay the rent and service charges and have enough money left to live on. We have a framework with income thresholds to use when deciding if a customer has enough income to live on after paying their rent and service charges:

The minimum net weekly income (after housing costs) that each household requires for the home to be considered affordable is:

- 1<sup>st</sup> adult aged over 25yrs of age £73.00
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent adult aged over 25yrs of age £42.00
- 1<sup>st</sup> adult aged under 25yrs of age £58,00
- 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent adults aged under 25yrs of age £33.00
- Each child £53.00 plus child benefit of £20.00 (1<sup>st</sup> child) and £13.00 for each subsequent child

If a customer is not exempt and does not have enough money in line with our

---

---

affordability framework but they are willing to engage with us to find work, we will talk to the local authority to see if they can help fund any rent balance for no less than 12 months, we will explore all funding options available to the customer. If we are unable to find funding we will not be able to house the customer.

**Anti-Social or Unacceptable Behaviour:** We will not usually offer a home to customers or members of their households who have a history of anti-social or unacceptable behaviour. All relevant circumstances will be considered and we will examine the strength of the evidence against the customer and his or her household when making our decision.

We are unlikely to offer a customer a home due to anti-social behaviour if (but not limited to);

- the anti-social behaviour occurred in the last 5 years and the nature of the alleged anti-social behaviour is likely to have an impact on our community;
- there have been convictions as a consequence of the anti-social behaviour;
- the anti-social behaviour breach of other tenancy conditions caused the customer or any member of his or her household to be evicted;
- the customer or a household member has been verbally or physically abusive towards any Bromford colleague or any other person;

We are unlikely to offer a customer a home due to unacceptable behaviour if (but not limited to):

- the customer owes rent, mortgage or other housing debts;
- has a history of making sporadic or late payments to their landlord;
- has recently cleared arrears or housing debt in order to be considered for another home;
- has been evicted for rent arrears on a previous tenancy, in the last 5 years;
- has obtained or attempted to obtain a tenancy by deception, for example, by withholding information or by giving false or misleading information.

We will consider customers with housing debt if there is an agreed payment plan in place that is;

- Reasonable for the level of debt,
- Has been in place for no less than 6 months, or
- For customers with debts that required legal action to recover the plan has been in place for no less than 12 months.

**Re-housing sex offenders:** We will work with relevant agencies to make a full assessment and carefully consider any risks before making a decision to offer a home to a sex offender.

**Existing customers wishing to transfer:** We will not normally offer a home to an existing customer if they have lived in their current home for less than 12 months, or have breached their tenancy conditions. We will offer all our customers wishing to move housing advice including how to access housing and mobility schemes.

**Immigrations status:** We will ensure every adult over 18 has the legal right to rent our home, if a customer does not have the legal right we will offer them advice.

**Homeowners:** We will consider existing homeowners where the property that they own is going through a sale.

**Availability of appropriate support:** We will only offer a home to vulnerable customers where adequate support arrangements are in place. We will work with agencies to seek the required support before making the final decision. We will not offer a home where the customer refuses to or has demonstrated that they are unlikely to engage with any support that is put in place.

---

**Minors (under 18 year olds):** Anyone under 18 cannot legally hold a tenancy. We will only offer accommodation to under 18s if the tenancy is held in trust by a recognised agency, and have relevant support in place.

---

**9. Housing Employees** The Director of Housing will authorise offers of housing to existing or former employees, their close relatives or Board Members.

---

**10. Appeals** Customers can appeal against our decision not to offer them a home, if they feel we have not taken into account all relevant information or have made the decision unfairly.

Appeals must be made within 5 working days from the date of the decision not to offer letter. Bromford will not hold any homes empty whilst the appeal is being considered. However, if the appeal is successful, we will seek to offer a suitable alternative property.

An independent Manager who was not involved in the original decision will review the appeal. Customers will be notified of the outcome in writing within 15 working days or within a mutually agreed timescale.

If a customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal review, they should notify us within 5 working days from the date of the appeal response letter, the case would then be reviewed in line with our complaints policy.

---