

Lettings Policy

This policy sets out Bromford Flagship LiveWest's approach to the fair and transparent letting of our homes, in support of delivering safe, fair and responsive services to our customers. It is underpinned by legal duties, regulatory expectations, and a commitment to fairness, accountability, and transparency.

Department	Customer Experience
Policy owner	Regional Director - Customer
Approved date	December 2025
Date for review	May 2028
Approving body	Customer SLT
Associated legislation/regulation	Housing Act 1996 (as amended) Homelessness Reduction Act 2017- duty to co-operate Equality Act 2010 Immigration Acts 2014 & 2016 Welfare Reform Act 2012 Localism Act 2011 Human Rights Act 1998 Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR Consumer Standards 2024 (Tenancy Standard) Regulator of Social Housing – Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard (2024) Housing Ombudsman Scheme (SI 1996 No. 2465, as amended)
Legal advice from	Internal Legal Team
Equality impact assessment date	October 2025
Version number	1.1
Publication status	Internal Intranet and Customer Website

Purpose/principles

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Bromford Flagship allocates and lets homes in a way that is:

- **fair and transparent** - avoiding discrimination or bias.
- **customer focused** – supporting customers with vulnerabilities or support needs to access housing successfully
- **efficient** – contributing to reduced void turnaround and tenancy sustainment.
- **compliant** – meeting statutory and regulatory duties, including the 2024 Tenancy Standard and Housing Ombudsman Code principles of fairness, transparency and accountability
- **responsible** – ensuring housing is allocated in accordance with nomination agreements and making best use of our homes
- **protective** – preventing fraud, illegal occupation, or misuse of homes.
- **lawful & proportionate** - comply with Right to Rent duties (Immigration Acts 2014/2016), co-operate with Local Authorities under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, and apply proportionate positive action under Equality Act 2010 s.158 where evidence shows disadvantage or different needs

Scope

This policy applies to lettings of:

- general needs housing
- key worker accommodation
- sheltered housing
- housing for older people
- housing with care
- supported housing
- temporary accommodation owned and/or managed by Bromford Flagship.

It excludes:

- market rent homes
- shared ownership homes
- student accommodation
- leasehold or retirement leasehold properties

This policy applies to all customers, applicants, and colleagues of Bromford, Newtide Homes, Samphire Homes, Victory Homes and Flagship Homes involved in the letting of homes.

Roles/responsibilities

Board/Committees provide oversight and assurance that the policy aligns with strategic priorities, customer outcomes, and regulatory requirements.

Executive Leadership Team/Directors are accountable for ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across their areas of responsibility and that compliance is maintained.

Heads of Service/Service Leads are responsible for embedding the policy within their service areas, ensuring colleagues are aware of and follow the requirements, and providing assurance on compliance.

Customer-facing colleagues are responsible for applying the policy in day-to-day service delivery, supporting customers, and taking action or escalating issues in line with procedures.

All colleagues are expected to understand the policy as it relates to their role, complete any required training, and seek support where clarification is needed.

Policy content

How we let our homes

We allocate homes in a fair, transparent, and consistent way, using a range of nomination and application routes.

- homes are allocated in line with the specific nomination agreement for each scheme/area – the proportion of local authority nominations and any permitted direct lets will always reflect the relevant agreement and will not be exceeded without written agreement from the Local Authority
- direct lets (e.g. emergencies, decants, regeneration) are used only where permitted by nomination agreements and recorded through our governance route
- in limited cases, we may direct let to an existing customer (e.g. emergencies, regeneration, disposals)
- supported housing is allocated through County Council arrangements in partnership with support providers
- temporary accommodation is allocated by Local Authorities
- customers may also obtain homes through mutual exchange or succession (see relevant policies)

Finding a home

Our adverts are designed to be clear, accessible, and transparent, setting out key details about each property such as:

- home type, size, floor level, permitted occupants, parking.

- any local connection requirements (S106 agreements).
- any local lettings policies agreed with the Local Authority.
- sensitive let restrictions.
- adaptations for disability needs.
- age restrictions (if applicable).

Applying for a home

All applicants, whether nominated by a local authority or applying directly, will go through checks and assessments to ensure fairness and suitability such as:

- application process checking household size, needs, and support requirements.
- affordability checks (may include review of bank statements)
- Right to Rent checks for all adult occupiers, in accordance with the Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016. we will verify, record and retain evidence as required by law. failure to comply can result in civil and/or criminal penalties; therefore, checks and record-keeping are mandatory
- references from previous landlords
- property viewing
- formal offer, stating tenancy type and rent charge

Where unmet support needs are identified, we will work with applicants and agencies to put support in place. We will also ask about reasonable adjustments.

Working with local authorities (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)

We will co-operate with Local Authorities in preventing and relieving homelessness, including sharing relevant information (lawfully), engaging with reasonable steps in Personalised Housing Plans, and responding to enquiries about suitability and availability of accommodation.

Withdrawing offers

We may withdraw an offer of a home in certain circumstances.

- fail to respond or engage
- refuse three reasonable offers
- fail to complete pre-tenancy checks or provide evidence

Paying rent

Customers are expected to pay rent promptly and in line with their tenancy agreement.

- usually, rent is charged monthly in advance
- customers must have a bank account (we can signpost support if needed)
- our preferred payment method is direct debit, though other methods may be agreed
- we can agree payment plans in exceptional circumstances

- in temporary accommodation, we charge a weekly rent due to the short-term nature of this type of housing

Refusals

There are limited circumstances where an application may be refused, such as:

- the applicant does not have the Right to Remain in the UK or fails the Habitual Residence test
- the tenancy is not affordable
- there are unresolved housing-related debts or arrears
- the applicant has a history of serious ASB, fraud, or risk of harm to others
- a property is unsuitable for household size, medical, or adaptation needs
- adequate ID or references cannot be provided
- the applicant owns property or has assets to rent privately
- false or misleading information has been provided
- the tenancy has been misused previously (e.g. subletting, poor condition, significant costs)

Refusal decisions will be clearly explained.

Decisions are made on objective criteria only. Where evidence shows disadvantage or different needs for particular groups, we may apply proportionate positive action under Equality Act 2010 s.158. Positive action will never override statutory requirements or nomination agreements.

Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal lettings decisions within these clear timeframes:

- appeals must be made within 14 days
- appeals are reviewed by a manager not involved in the original decision
- responses within 14 days
- homes will not usually be held vacant during an appeal
- local authority decisions must be appealed to the authority directly

Type of tenancy offered

We offer a range of tenancies and licences to meet different household needs and housing purposes. The tenancy type you are offered will depend on your circumstances, the type of home, and legal or regulatory requirements.

The main types we use are:

- **Starter Tenancy** – normally offered to new customers for an initial probationary period, before converting to an assured tenancy if managed successfully
- **Assured Tenancy (Non-Shorthold)** – the main tenure for most customers, providing long-term security
- **Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)** – used for short-term or supported housing, or in line with local arrangements

- **Secure Tenancy** – retained for some customers with rights dating before 15 January 1989
- **Protected Assured Tenancy** – Protected Assured Tenancy – offered only to (eligible) legacy Bromford customers transferring within Bromford Flagship LiveWest homes. (Not applicable to legacy Flagship customers)
- **Licences (Contractual, Excluded, or Protected)** – used for temporary accommodation, decants, hostels, or where exclusive possession does not apply
- **Other Tenures** – may be used in specific circumstances, such as Family Intervention Tenancies or joint tenancies assessed on a case-by-case basis

A full summary of tenancy and licence types is set out in **Appendix A**.

Customers will always be informed of the type of tenancy being offered, the reasons for it, and any rights to review or appeal.

Probity

Allocations to colleagues, board members, or close relatives require governance approval under the Probity Policy.

Management of vacant homes

We will relet homes efficiently and to the published lettable standard, which is reviewed regularly.

Our commitments

When allocating and letting homes, we are committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and customer-centred process. We will:

- treat all applicants with dignity, courtesy, and respect throughout the lettings process
- provide clear, accessible, and timely information about how to apply for a home, what to expect, and the outcome of applications
- make best use of our homes to meet local needs while fulfilling our nomination agreements with local authorities
- take account of vulnerabilities, support needs, and reasonable adjustments to give every applicant a fair opportunity to access housing
- be consistent and transparent in our decisions, explaining the reasons where an application or offer cannot proceed
- work with partner agencies and local authorities to support customers into successful and sustainable tenancies
- monitor lettings outcomes to ensure they are fair, inclusive, and compliant with our regulatory and legal duties

EIA statement

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for this policy. The EIA ensures that the policy is fair, inclusive, and does not negatively impact any protected groups under the Equality Act 2010. The outcomes of the assessment will be monitored, and actions taken where needed to promote equity.

We recognise that we may not have identified all adverse impacts on one or more protected characteristics. We welcome any feedback on, or examples of, things that we may have overlooked so that we can continuously improve our policy.

Training statement

This policy will be trained out to relevant operational colleagues through:

- induction and team briefings
- refresher updates linked to toolkit changes
- scenario-based training on equality, affordability checks, and decision-making

Measuring effectiveness

We will monitor effectiveness through:

- void turnaround, void loss, and lettings KPIs
- audit and compliance checks
- tenancy sustainment and rejection rates
- customer feedback and appeals

Review period

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years. Earlier review may take place if required by changes in legislation, regulation, organisational priorities, or following feedback from colleagues, customers, or stakeholders. Any updates will be approved through the appropriate governance route.

Approval

This policy was approved by the Customer SLT and is applicable to:

- Bromford Housing Association Ltd (operating as Bromford)
- Bromford Home Ownership Ltd (operating as Bromford)
- Merlin Housing Society Ltd (operating as Bromford)
- Flagship Housing Limited (operating as Flagship)

Any references to Bromford Flagship LiveWest should be interpreted as equally applicable to all the above.

Appendix A Tenancy and Licence Types

Tenure type	Used for	Duration	Legal basis
Starter Tenancy	All new customers in general needs housing	12 months (extendable by 6 months)	Assured Shorthold
Assured (Non-Shorthold)	Core tenure for general needs customers	Lifetime	Housing Act 1988
Fixed Term Tenancy	Legacy cases only, or linked to limited leave to remain	5 years (variable)	Housing Act 1988
Secure Tenancy	Pre-1989 legacy tenants	Lifetime	Housing Act 1985
Protected Assured Tenancy	Customers transferring with existing protected rights	Lifetime	Contractual terms
Assured Shorthold (Supported / Short-Term)	Supported accommodation or market rent homes	Variable	AST or Licence
Equitable Assured Shorthold Tenancy	Customers under 18 (with guarantor)	Until 18, then converts to Starter	AST (equitable)
Excluded Licence	Hostels or interim accommodation	Weekly	Housing Act 1985, PEA 1977 exemption
Protected Licence	Self-contained accommodation without exclusive possession	Weekly	Protection from Eviction Act 1977
Decant Licence / Contractual Tenancy	Temporary move due to works or redevelopment	Temporary	Contractual
Family Intervention Tenancy (FIT)	Customers with ASB risk	Variable	Discretionary
Joint Tenancy	Based on household needs and suitability	As per tenancy type	Assured or Secure

Supporting documents

This policy is supported by:

- Lettings Procedures
- Lettings Customer Service Standard
- Succession & Assignment Procedures
- Equality Impact Assessment
- ASB Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Mutual Exchange Policy
- Probity Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Vulnerability, Inclusive Services & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Version control

Note: minor updates approved by delegated authority increase version number by 0.1; major updates and formally approved versions increase version number by 1.0.

Version	Detail	Approved by	Date
1.0	<i>First issue</i>	Customer SLT	16 December 2025
1.1	Updated template (including the logos on titlepage footer and wording in approval section)	n/a	6 August 2026