



Sheltered Transfer Policy (Existing tenants transferring within a Sheltered Housing scheme)

Reference	OP008	Version	2
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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to enable existing tenants living in a Sheltered Housing scheme to transfer to alternative accommodation within the same scheme where they have an assessed need to move as their circumstances change.
- 1.2 This policy will identify those tenants to whom a reasonable preference will be given to allow them to move to more suitable accommodation within their current scheme. This will also enable them to continue living in familiar surroundings and help to maintain the continuity of any support services they receive and their community network.

2.0 References

- 2.1 This policy has been drafted with regard to our current Allocations Policy and the Bucks Home Choice Allocations Policy.
 - *Section 166(A) of the Housing Act 1996 requires that every local housing authority in England must have an allocation scheme for determining priorities (and the procedure to be followed) in allocating housing accommodation.*
 - *Bucks Home Choice is the scheme that is used to allocate affordable housing in four local housing authority areas – Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe.*
 - *We will implement local lettings policies (LLP) when required, either for particular properties or in particular areas, in order to seek to achieve balanced and sustainable communities. These may arise as a result of specific issues in an area and following consultation with a community and relevant stakeholders. All LLPs will be advertised on our website.*

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Head of Business is responsible for this policy.

4.0 Legal framework

- 4.1 Housing Act 1996 (Part V1) as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002.
- 4.2 Section 167 (2E) of the 1996 Act enables housing authorities to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories.
- 4.3 Local lettings policies may be used to achieve a wide variety of housing management or other housing policy objectives.
- 4.4 From time to time a member of the Bucks Home Choice partnership may adopt a local lettings policy that will apply to a small proportion of the properties it advertises. Each local lettings policy will state clearly the justification for it being operated and adopted.

- 4.5 All such local lettings policies will be published on the Bucks Home Choice website and will be available in hard copy by request.
- 4.6 When a property affected by a local lettings policy is advertised, the advertisement will state which applicants will be eligible to express an interest in the property.
- 4.7 The Homes and Communities Agency's Regulatory Framework sets out the expectations and obligations of housing associations. The standards relate to associations being viable, properly governed and properly managed.

5.0 Definitions

- 5.1 For the purposes of this policy, a sheltered housing scheme is defined as providing housing for those aged sixty or over or for those with identified support needs.
- 5.2 A local lettings policy is as defined by Section 167(2E) of the Housing Act 1996: it states that the allocation of particular housing accommodation can be made *to persons of a particular description (whether or not they are within subsection (2) [reasonable preference categories])*.

6.0 Policy statement

- 6.1 Through effective management, we will seek to ensure thriving, diverse and sustainable sheltered housing schemes.
- 6.2 We will seek to maximise income from all of our homes to support our business plan and achieve our vision.
- 6.3 We will seek to let our homes to provide good quality affordable homes for those on the housing register currently managed by Bucks Home Choice.
- 6.4 Where a vacancy occurs within a sheltered housing scheme, reasonable preference will be given to any existing tenant who lives at that scheme where they are registered on Bucks Home Choice and have an assessed need for a move to more suitable accommodation.
- 6.5 An assessed need for a move will include at least one of the following:
 - a) A need to move for Health & Safety reasons. This will include any tenant(s) who lives on the first floor and above and needs to move to the ground floor due to being unable to evacuate their home independently, or use the stairs, or access a place of safety.
 - b) Where adaptations are required to their current property and the tenant's need can be resolved by moving them to a ground floor property, to a suitably adapted property or to a property that is more suitable for adaptation within the scheme than that currently occupied.

- c) Where there is an assessed medical need to move in accordance with section 4.2 of the Bucks Home Choice Allocations Policy.
 - d) Where there is an assessed welfare need to move in accordance with section 4.3 of Bucks Home Choice Allocations Policy.
- 6.6 Where an assessed need to move has been identified priority will be given to tenants living in the scheme in accordance with the appropriate banding and date order system.
- 6.7 Where there is more than one tenant living in the scheme who qualifies for consideration and they have the same priority banding then the property will be offered to the person according to the date order of their application.
- 6.8 All applicants (existing tenants) will be advised in writing of any decision not to offer them alternative accommodation, the reasons for this decision and of the facility to appeal if they are not happy with the decision.
- 6.9 Where there are joint applications for sheltered housing, at least one of the applicants must be over 60 years of age to qualify for sheltered housing with us. In such circumstances we will offer a sole Assured (shorthand) 'starter' or Fixed Term tenancy to the applicant who is 60 years or over.
- 6.10 Where the joint applicants are existing Red Kite joint tenants, and only one of the applicants is 60 years or over, we will offer a sole tenancy only. In the event of the death of the sole tenant we will follow the processes outlined in our succession policy and procedures, however the remaining spouse/partner must meet the age criteria and any other relevant criterion to remain at the scheme.

7.0 Related documents

- 7.1 The following policies and strategies are related:
- Allocations Policy
 - Nomination Rights Arrangements with Wycombe District Council
 - Bucks Home Choice Allocations Policy
 - Succession Procedure

8.0 Policy Review

- 8.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Head of Business unless there are relevant changes in legislation or regulation.