

Policy Owner	Managing Directors (Housing)
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Legal Advice	In-house counsel
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Allocations and Lettings Policy

This policy outlines the approach to letting homes owned or managed by Flagship Group, excluding market rented, student accommodation, shared ownership, temporary and supported accommodation.

‘Flagship Group’ (‘we’) means the housing teams trading as Victory Homes, Newtide Homes and Samphire Homes.

How our homes are allocated and let

We allocate to make the best use of our homes offering choice to our tenants and contributing to the relevant Local Authority housing strategy.

When we allocate homes, we will:

- Ensure to the best of our knowledge it is affordable for the tenant
- Consider the age and gender of children, and any need for live-in carers or additional space for medical reasons
- Comply with Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985 to avoid overcrowding
- Ensure they are not under-occupied where possible

Most of our homes will be advertised and allocated through Local Authorities either via nomination from local housing registers or choice-based lettings (CBL) schemes.

If a home cannot be let to a suitable applicant via the Local Authority, or we are permitted and choose to let the outside of the Local Authority letting system, we will look for direct applications and may use alternative methods of advertising.

Where there are specific eligibility criteria, we will make this clear when advertising the home, for example a local connection to the rural area where the home is located.

When assessing whether a home can be let to an applicant, we will follow a clear, transparent and fair process that does not disadvantage anyone with support needs, nor those who do not speak English as a first language or have difficulties with written English. This process will include affordability and reference checks, to create sustainable tenancies.

We offer different types of tenancy, and the details about these can be found in our Tenancy Policy. We will explain the details of the tenancy as part of our process. If the Local Authority is not responsible for checking your right to rent, we will carry out the relevant checks. If you take in a lodger, you are responsible for undertaking such checks.

Refusing to let someone a home

When we let our homes, we will consider each case on its own merits and we will not refuse to allocate a home to you without good reason; however, there are some circumstances in which we cannot offer a home:

- You do not have the 'Right to Remain' in the United Kingdom, or would fail the habitual residence test
- You are not able to pay the rent. This includes if you are unable to get public funding or other issues which could affect your ability to pay the rent
- You have outstanding rent arrears or recharge debt with Flagship Group or any other landlord. If there is a payment plan in place and the arrears are reducing, we may be able to allocate a home to you
- You have been evicted from a Flagship Group home for a serious breach of tenancy
- You have been evicted by another landlord. The specific reasons will be taken into consideration
- You, or someone in your household, has committed anti-social behaviour that has had a significant impact on neighbours or the community
- You, or someone in your household, poses a significant risk of harm to staff, local residents, or visitors to the property. We will consider criminal convictions when we assess that risk
- Flagship Group has previously let you a home and this has resulted in significant cost to the Group. This could include void costs, repairs to the property or legal costs, as well as others not listed here
- The home is not suitable for the size and/or make up of your household. When we assess this, we will consider whether the property is under/over occupied, existing adaptations or adaptations that are needed
- You have failed to provide adequate identification or other information to back up your application
- You have provided misleading information on your housing application to obtain a tenancy deceitfully
- You have previously sub-let your home to someone else without Flagship Group permission
- You have not maintained your existing home in line with your tenancy
- We are unable to get hold of satisfactory references

If, after a tenancy has started, it is discovered that false information was provided, we may take steps to gain possession of the property.

Housing mobility

To make best use of our homes and to support if you are at risk, we will work you and may be able to move you to another one of our homes if appropriate. We will agree this with the relevant Local Authority if necessary.

We promote the use of mutual exchanges, so you have greater choice when looking for a home.

Appeals

You may make an appeal if we refuse to allocate you a home. You must write to us with your appeal within 14 days from the date that you were refused the home. You will need to provide all relevant and supporting information by this time. If you are unable to appeal in writing, we will make reasonable adjustments for you.

Any home which was held as part of the initial application process will not be held during an appeal process.

Any appeal will be considered by members of staff who were not involved in the original decision and we will respond within 14 days of it being submitted.

Where the appeal is to do with a decision made by the Local Authority, we will be unable to review that decision.

Further information about this policy

This policy replaces the Flagship Homes 'Letting and Allocations Policy' (2018); Victory Housing Trust's 'Allocations Policy' (2018) and Suffolk Housing 'Lettings Policy' (2017).

Further information can be found in our Tenancy Policy, Mutual Exchange Policy, Rental Income Policy and Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

This Policy will be reviewed as necessary, and at least every three years.

Version Control

Version Number	Detail	Approved By	Date
1.0 dated August 2021	First issue adopted across Flagship Group	Local housing boards for Newtide, Samphire & Victory Homes	August 2021

