



Transfer Policy

Policy Statement

The Trust will ensure that its housing transfers are made in a fair and transparent way to those tenants who have the greatest housing need.

Effective Date

October 2004

Scope

This policy describes how the Trust will prioritise and allocate properties to existing Trust tenants who wish to transfer.

There is a separate policy that covers the allocation of properties to nominations and direct applicants.

Staff within the Housing Services Department have principal responsibility for operating this policy and the procedures that accompany it. This policy also has close links with:

- The Equalities Policy
- Assured Tenancies & Licenses Policy
- Allocations Policy – Nominations & Direct Applicants

Principles

In applying the transfer policy the Trust will adhere to the following principles:

- Operate a fair and open transfer points system, which will take account of housing need.
- Acknowledge that the demand for transfers is high and ensure that tenants are given realistic advice about their opportunity to move.

- Maximise tenants opportunities to move through the promotion of Local Authorities choice based systems or common housing registers.
- Maximise tenants opportunities to move by maintaining and regularly updating a mutual exchange register that is made available in all Trust offices.
- Ensure the Trusts transfer policy is widely publicised and freely available to all tenants.
- Monitor transfers through an annual lettings plan, which will be reported to the relevant Board/Committee. This will monitor performance against agreed transfer targets.

Application

Eligibility

All existing tenants can apply for a transfer however tenants must meet the following criteria qualify for an offer of alternative accommodation:

- Have a clear rent account
- Have no other outstanding debt with the Trust
- Have arrears or other debt under £250 and have stuck to a payment plan for at least 12 weeks
- Have no other breach of tenancy

Where tenants do not meet the eligibility criteria their application will be suspended and they will be advised of what action is required in order to qualify.

Assessment of need

Occupation of bedrooms

All bedrooms are considered suitable for two people, except in the following circumstances:

- Children of the same sex, where the eldest is eight or over
- Children of opposite sexes, where the eldest is seven or over
- Parents and children
- Adults who are not cohabiting
- Where there is an over riding medical need for separate bedrooms
- Where the bedroom is smaller 6.5sm

For a child to be considered on an application it must:

- Live with the applicant the majority of the time

Or

- Where a child spends an equal amount of time with each parent the child will be considered on the application of the parent who receives child benefit.

Medical Assessments

All medical assessments will be carried out by Trust staff and based on the following criteria:

- Urgent Need: where the applicant, or member of their household is either unable to live in the accommodation or is housebound due to an ongoing medical condition or the applicants home is directly impacting upon a life threatening illness and a move to alternative accommodation will significantly improve their well-being.
- High Need: Where the applicant or member of their household has a serious medical problem and where a failure to re-house them would lead to a deterioration of the persons condition in the short term.
- Low Need: Where an applicants housing is contributing to their medical condition in some way and in the longer term a move to alternative accommodation would alleviate this.

In circumstances where the assessment is not possible by staff a referral will be made to a designated medical officer for assessment.

Management Points

Discretionary management points may be awarded when tenants need to move for social or other reasons. Examples of situations where these points may be awarded include:

- Domestic Violence
- Harassment
- Tenants who need to be rehoused due to major repair works or redevelopment.
- Under occupation of properties in high demand
- Families living apart, where both are tenants
- Properties without adequate heating or other essential facilities
- Other special circumstances

Allocation of points

Taking into account the above, points will be allocated on the following basis:

Bedroom Shortage	1 Bed Short	250
	2 Bed Short	350
	3 or more Beds Short	Urgent
Medical Grounds	Low Need	100
	High Need	250
	Urgent Need	Urgent
Discretionary/ Management (including harassment, domestic violence, families living apart, inadequate accommodation)	High Need	250
	Urgent	Urgent
Children in flats above ground floor	1st/2nd Floor	10
	3rd/4th Floor	20
Mobility Points	Where established	10
Local Connection	Where established	10

- Where there are two or more applicants with the same number of points priority will be given to the applicant that applied first.
- Mobility points will be awarded where there is a need to move to an area for work, family support or schooling, and the distance from the current home is not easily commutable.
- Local connection points will be awarded to those people in rural areas who have lived in a village for a significant portion of their lives and wish to return, or remain there.
- Upon assessment of the application tenants will be placed in one of three categories:
 - Low Need** (10 –249 points)
 - High Need** (250 – 499 points)
 - Urgent** (500)
- Where the tenant is in low need they will be informed that subject to a change in circumstances they will be unlikely to be considered for a transfer and encouraged to seek rehousing via the relevant Local Authority or through a mutual exchange.

Procedures

There is a set of procedures that accompany this policy which detail the processes that the housing management staff need to follow in implementing the policy.