



ALLOCATIONS & LETTINGS POLICY

Freebridge
COMMUNITY HOUSING



Allocations and Lettings Policy			
Last Reviewed	June 2026	Next Review	June 2027
Responsible Officer	Director of Operations		

Policy Statement: This Policy sets out our standard for practice, demonstrating that we let homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way, make best use of our homes and work with our Local Authority partners to assist them in meeting their housing duty.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our [Tenancy Policy](#) which outlines our commitment to creating sustainable communities and tenancies, whilst also making best use of our housing stock by offering a range of tenures. Our [Rent Setting and Service Charges Policy](#) outlines our position in respect of the rents we charge.

Policy Detail:

General Responsibilities

We will:

- Regularly review arrangements with partners to ensure that allocation processes are working effectively and agree changes as appropriate.
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- Work in partnership with Local Authorities to manage applications for housing through a Choice-Based Lettings system. We will also operate clear application, decision-making, and appeals processes for mutual exchanges and management moves. Cooperate with our partner Local Authorities to assist in the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless individuals or households.
- Work collaboratively with other Registered Providers and local charities to expand supported accommodation, including shared housing, with scheme-specific lettings criteria and arrangements. Work with the National Probation Service to provide direct let accommodation for ex-offenders through Integrated Offender Manager Schemes and Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements.
- Support witness relocation via the National Witness Mobility Service by making direct offers of accommodation.
- Provide existing tenants with information and support relating to mutual exchanges through the House Exchange scheme and process mutual exchange requests in line with statutory requirements.
- Refuse tenancies to applicants who present a substantial risk to colleagues, the local community and our tenants.
- Confirm all our decisions, whether to proceed with an offer of a tenancy, or to refuse a nomination, clearly, in writing in a timely way.
- Provide a method of appeal (see [Appeals Policy](#)) where we have refused an

allocation following a nomination.

- Remove 'hard to let' stock from choice-based lettings for direct offers, following three unsuccessful advert cycles.
- Allocate homes based on the information provided at the point of application. Where false or misleading information is identified, we may take action under Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996, including prosecution and/or seeking possession of any tenancy granted as a result of such information.

Support Needs

In assessing housing applications, we will consider individual and household's, circumstances, the impacts of the current accommodation, and support needs. This will include:

- Anticipated level of support and/or health care needed to live independently in the accommodation.
- Suitability of the accommodation in meeting the household needs, including existing or potential adaptation needs.

Accessibility

. We are committed to ensuring that all current and prospective customers can access our services. Where alternative arrangements or additional support are required, we will take reasonable steps to assist.

Examples of support we provide throughout the lettings process are:

- Supplying auxiliary aids to assist in communication (such as sign language, interpreters and Induction Loops).
- Providing information in alternative formats (e.g. large print, Braille, coloured paper, audio etc.)
- Sending emails or communicating via telephone in preference to hard copy letters.
- Communicating with a nominated family member or third party such as support agencies or advocates.
- Providing a named contact to work alongside you throughout the process.

We will always:

- Carry out accompanied viewings.
- Provide all new tenants with a comprehensive sign-up pack.
- Carry out post lettings visits and satisfaction surveys to monitor our service.

Customers can let us know about any additional support needed at any point during the process. We will always try and meet the needs of our customers. There may be instances where this isn't possible. When this happens, we will do our best to work with you to find another solution.

Applications for Housing

- We do not accept direct applications for housing.
- Local Choice Based Lettings Schemes advertise properties on behalf of Freebridge and administers the initial allocation of these units.
- We may promote available homes via our website or other media, particularly for new developments or hard-to-let properties.

Existing tenants wishing to transfer must apply through the relevant CBL scheme for the area.

Reviewing Nominations

A successful bid does not automatically guarantee the offer of a tenancy.

Prior to an offer being made, **we shall assess** the:

- Accuracy of information received regarding the applicant(s) circumstances & household need.
- Anticipated level of support and/or health care needed to live independently in the accommodation.
- Suitability of the accommodation compared to the household needs including existing or potential adaptation needs.
- Anticipated sustainability of the tenancy.
- Potential impact on existing tenants and residents within the locality.

Reference from previous housing provider

All nominations will be dealt with in accordance with the National Housing Federation's Code of Conduct 2022, that ensures Board members, staff, involved customers and those with whom they are closely connected receive no preferential consideration for housing, over and above the housing priority determined by the relevant Local Authority.

Refusing a Nomination

We may refuse a nomination in the following circumstances:

- Where the applicant or a household member has a history of unacceptable behaviour that would make them unsuitable as a tenant, and there is no evidence that this behaviour has been addressed.
- Where previous legal action has been taken, including for:
 - Rent arrears or other housing-related debt
 - Property damage or neglect
 - Anti-social, threatening, immoral, or illegal behaviour
 - Eviction for tenancy breaches or abandonment following legal action

We will take a balanced approach and will not unreasonably refuse a nomination where there is evidence of sustained improvement, such as a successful tenancy or active steps to address previous debt.

We may also refuse a nomination where:

- The property is not suitable for the applicant's needs or household size.
- Support needs are identified that are likely to affect tenancy sustainability and cannot be met.
- The accommodation is assessed as unaffordable following a financial assessment.

Applicants will be informed in writing of any refusal decision, including the reasons and their right of appeal, within two working days.

Suitability of Accommodation

While CBL schemes determine initial eligibility and property size, we will assess suitability at the nomination stage.

We will:

- Apply the following household size guidance:

Property Size	Maximum Occupancy	Minimum Household Size
Studio/1 bed	2	Single person or couple
2 bed	4	Minimum 2 people, or 3 if including couple
3 bed	5	Minimum 3 people, or 4 if including a couple
4 bed	6	Minimum 4 people, or 5 if including a couple *
5 bed	10	Minimum 5 people, or 6 if including a couple*

*Preference may be given to larger families.

- Consider under-occupation in line with household need and the Social Sector Size Criteria.
- Assess statutory overcrowding in accordance with Section 10 of the Housing Act 1985.
- Carry out a financial assessment to determine affordability and long-term sustainability.

Ground floor, Adapted and Sheltered properties

We will:

- Assess nominations to ensure a clear and ongoing need for such accommodation.
- Only offer properties where this need is evidenced and expected to continue.

Decisions will be based on information provided by the CBL scheme and/or qualified medical professionals.

Sheltered Housing Applicants

To be eligible for our sheltered accommodation, all applicants (and members of their household) will need to meet the following criteria:

- 55 years old or more with a proven medical need for sheltered accommodation.
- 60 years or more.

We may exercise discretion where there is a clear medical or social need.

Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal an allocation decision that directly affects them. They should be submitted in writing and follow our Appeals process.

Local Lettings Plans

We may implement Local Lettings Plans to address local priorities or community needs (e.g. anti-social behaviour). These will be clearly stated in property advertisements and agreed with the relevant Local Authority.

Transfers

As with prospective new tenants, if a nomination is received then an interview will be carried out to determine whether an allocation will be made.

A move from one Freebridge home to another, will usually only be permitted if there is:

- No current breach of the existing tenancy agreement; or
- Outstanding housing related debt on any current or previous tenancy; and
- Subject to the condition of the existing property being inspected prior to the transfer being agreed.

However, where the health or wellbeing of an applicant(s) or their family, or their ability to maintain their current tenancy is being jeopardised by their current housing, additional consideration will be given as to whether it is reasonable to refuse a transfer because of existing tenancy breaches including, but not limited to, where rent arrears accrue as a result of the existing accommodation being demonstrably too expensive for the tenant(s).

Where a transfer is permitted with arrears outstanding, the arrears shall form part of the new tenancy agreement.

Direct Transfer:

In exceptional circumstances, we may offer a direct transfer to protect the health, safety, or wellbeing of a tenant, for example where:

- Major repairs cannot be completed with the tenant in situ; or
- Serious hazards exist that cannot be mitigated.
- There is risk to life, domestic abuse or police recommendation

Temporary Moves

If it is necessary to carry out improvements or repairs, including in respect of structural defects, or adaptation works to a property that cannot be safely completed with the tenant in occupation, we will also make available stock to offer as a temporary relocation

Temporary Accommodation

We will work with Local Authorities to support their statutory homelessness duties by providing temporary accommodation, subject to assessment.

We may decline nominations where applicants:

- Were evicted from our properties within the last 12 months; or
- Have a history of serious anti-social behaviour without evidence of sustained improvement.

Shared Houses

We will work with the Local Authority and other charitable organisations to provide and manage shared houses to target specific housing needs in the area.

Criteria for eligibility for shared accommodation will be defined within scheme specific service level agreements.

Succession & Assignment

In the event of the death of a tenant, we will work closely with the Local Authority to ensure the housing needs of the remaining household are met as far as possible.

For tenancies commencing prior to 1 April 2012, regardless of the wording of the tenancy agreement, a Statutory (or automatic) Successor can only be a Spouse, Partner, Civil Partner or adult living with the tenant as such prior to their death.

For tenancies commencing after 1 April 2012, anyone listed in the tenancy agreement as a Successor will have the automatic right to succeed provided that they meet the criteria as set out exactly.

There will only be one succession to each tenancy.

For all joint tenancies, when one tenant dies the tenancy automatically passes to the living tenant by a process called Survivorship, which also counts as the one and only Statutory Succession.

If a succession ('passing on') of the tenancy has already occurred, or that someone other than a Statutory Successor wishes to remain in the property, the granting of a new tenancy will be considered at our discretion. Depending on the makeup of the remaining household and their specific housing needs, we may also instead offer a tenancy at an alternative property.

An assignment will be considered as a 'Living Succession' meaning that no further Statutory Succession can happen. This includes where one joint tenant assigns the tenancy to the remaining tenant, such as in the event of a relationship breakdown etc.

Tenancy Amendments

We recognise that our tenants' circumstances change, and that during a tenancy some tenants may wish to reflect this by making changes to their tenancy agreement.

For 'lifetime' (assured periodic) tenants, a joint tenant can be removed, on agreement of both tenants, through the assignment of the tenancy – however this will mean that no further assignment or succession will be allowed.

Alternatively, a partner or civil partner can be added to the tenancy as a joint tenant, provided that no previous assignment or succession has occurred.

Mutual Exchange

We will assess all exchange requests to ensure suitability and affordability. Exchanges will normally only be permitted where:

- There is no legal action for tenancy breach;
- The move would not result in under- or over-occupation;
- The property is not restricted (e.g. adapted housing).

Inspections will be carried out and tenants will accept properties "as seen", subject to essential repairs.

Where rent arrears have accrued because of the existing accommodation being demonstrably too expensive for the tenant(s) then further consideration will be given and a decision made on the balance of information provided. Where an exchange is permitted in these circumstances, an agreement will be entered into with regards to any arrears outstanding that are owed to Freebridge.

Tenancy Fraud

We are committed to ensuring that our properties are available to those who are eligible and in housing need.

We will be vigilant to indications of tenancy fraud and provide our staff with training and robust procedures to tackle concerns. We will also work closely with the Local Authority to use the provisions of the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 to take appropriate and robust action against those believed to be committing the criminal offence of subletting.

We will provide clear information regarding the requirements of the tenancy agreement to all new tenants, and no Tenancy will be offered to a nominee unless photographic or other government approved form of identification can be produced.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our allocations process. We will ensure that all applicants and tenants are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

We will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of protected characteristics, including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

In delivering this policy, we will:

- Ensure that our allocation decisions are fair, transparent, and based on housing need and clearly defined criteria.
- Take reasonable steps to remove barriers to access and provide additional support where required, including making reasonable adjustments for applicants with disabilities or other specific needs.
- Consider the diverse needs of our customers and communities when assessing applications, including cultural, health, and support requirements.
- Monitor lettings outcomes to identify and address any unintended inequality or disadvantage.

This policy supports our wider commitment to fostering inclusive, sustainable communities and ensuring equal access to housing opportunities for all.

This policy adheres to the following legislation:

Legislation:

Housing	Act	1996
Localism	Act	2011
Equality	Act	2010
Homeless Reduction Act 2017		

Definitions

Statutory Succession	The legal right of an eligible person to take over (succeed to) a tenancy upon
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	the death of the tenant, as set out in the relevant housing legislation
Survivorship	Where a tenancy is held jointly, survivorship will apply. This means the remaining joint tenant will automatically become the sole tenant upon the death of the other joint tenant.
Living Succession	Where a tenancy transfers from joint to sole by assignment.
Discretionary	The granting of a tenancy to a person who does not have a statutory right to succeed, but whom the landlord agrees may take over the tenancy at its discretion, in accordance with this policy.