



Women's Pioneer Housing

Allocations and Lettings Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. WPH as a small HA has a limited resource. Therefore we need to balance the ongoing and sometimes urgent housing needs of our existing residents with meeting the immediate housing needs of new residents.
- 1.2. Our approach to allocations also aims to balance the needs of different groups of women and aims to engage with a broad range of women and agencies who support them to meet a wide range of housing need.
- 1.3. We must balance supply of our homes with demand from our current residents and potential new residents.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This policy sets our WPH's approach to allocations and lettings of general needs and sheltered housing.

3. Our policy

- 3.1. Whichever route a new letting takes place through we will conduct an affordability and suitability check for the new tenancy. In some situations we will decline sign ups where we reasonably believe either the tenancy will be unaffordable or unsuitable for the resident. In the scenarios we will always explain our reasoning and provide housing advice. Full details are outlined in the Allocations and Lettings Procedure.

4. Existing WPH tenants

Transfers

- 4.1. Wherever possible, we will prioritise transfers for existing residents over local authority nominations who will be offered the resulting void from a move.
- 4.2. We will allocate the remaining voids equally between the waiting lists and referral agencies.
- 4.3. We will prioritise internal transfers according to the following order. This order may change from time to time in reaction to emerging needs.
 1. Tenants subject to or at continuing risk of physical and/or mental harm because of harassment, domestic violence, impaired ability to evacuate the building in the event of fire, the impact of hoarding (where a move would enable control of hoarding and facilitate safety checks)
 2. Tenants being decanted for repairs to or redevelopment of property
 3. Tenants with a Category A or B medical priority - as assessed by our independent advisor
 4. Tenants with a spare bedroom who are subject to the Bedroom Tax and wish to move to a smaller (cheaper) flat
 5. Tenants who are severely overcrowded
 6. Tenants with a Category C medical priority
- 4.4. In exceptional circumstances we will prioritise decants over residents at risk of harm if this decant is urgently required to facilitate the delivery of new homes.
- 4.5. In the case where a resident meets multiple categories they may receive a higher priority. Priority one, which aims to prevent harm will be the top priority regardless of how many other categories some residents meet (apart from when 3.5 applies).
- 4.6. Should a resident be in a situation with two of any other priorities they will be higher priority than a resident with one, and any resident with three would be higher than two etc.
- 4.7. In the event more than one resident meets two of the priority categories, the resident with the highest ranking priority will be transferred first. For example if one resident is both overcrowded and has a category A or B medical priority and the other resident is both bedroom taxed and has a category A or B medical priority, the second resident would be transferred first because bedroom tax is higher priority than overcrowding.

Mutual exchanges

- 4.8. We aim to support residents to move home through mutual exchanges, this will include providing advice and support throughout the process as well as working with partners to widen the pool of women's housing swaps available. The details of how we facilitate these swaps is outlined in the Allocations and Lettings Procedure

New lettings

- 4.9. Once we have satisfied our internal transfer list we will then meet our nomination agreements with local authorities. Any remaining voids will be divided equally between waiting lists and referral agencies.

Nominations

- 4.10. We will work with local authorities to ensure our nomination agreements are suitable to meet our social purpose, namely single women who require women-led accommodation.

Waiting lists

- 4.11. We will operate waiting lists, available for women not eligible for support from the local authority to join. The criteria to join the waiting list for Collingham Gardens is:

- Aged under 35
- Income below £40,000 per annum
- Savings below £30,000
- A demonstrable need for women's housing
- Not eligible for housing support from the local authority.

The criteria to join the waiting list for general needs is:

- Aged 35 or over
- Income below £40,000 per annum
- Savings below £30,000
- A demonstrable need for women's housing
- Not eligible for housing support from the local authority.

- 4.12. The criteria to join the waiting list for sheltered housing is:

- Aged 60 or over
- Income below £40,000 per annum
- Savings below £300,000
- A demonstrable need for women's housing
- A demonstrable need for sheltered accommodation
- Not eligible for housing support from the local authority

- 4.13. Each waiting list will be prioritised in order of current housing needs includes issues such as long term and ongoing unsuitable accommodation which is unresolvable through the applicants means or through local authority support.
- 4.14. WPH commit to advertising the waiting list to a wide range of female audiences, how this is done may vary over time.

Referral agencies

- 4.15. We will work with a wide range of referral agencies to house women with urgent housing needs. This includes agencies helping a range of women such as young women suitable for Collingham Gardens accommodation and older women suitable for sheltered accommodation.
- 4.16. The referral agencies we work with will vary over time and be regularly reviewed on the criteria that the agency can support WPH to meet our purpose of making a positive difference to women's lives. In particular, we will prioritise referrals for women who specifically need women led housing.
- 4.17. We will also annually review the referral agency's nomination's tenancy success on the following grounds:
- Clear rent account at six months
 - No reported ASB/all ASB resolved at six months
 - Access given for any repair or safety checks at six months
 - Proportion of starter tenancies converted to fixed term tenancies at 12 months (should be 90% plus)
- 4.18. We will remove a referral agency from our list should they no longer meet the criteria outlined above. Equally should we encounter a new referral agency who meets our criteria we will add them to our list, accept referrals and appraise them regularly on the criteria outlined above.
- 4.19. We will consider the property type, surrounding neighbours and neighbourhood when making allocations in order to create balanced communities which meet the needs of existing and future residents.
- 4.20. A clear decision making, application making and appeals process is outlined in the Allocations and Lettings Procedure.