

Lettings Policy

This policy sets out Bromford Flagship LiveWest’s approach to the fair and transparent letting of our homes, in support of delivering safe, fair and responsive services to our customers. It is underpinned by legal duties, regulatory expectations, and a commitment to fairness, accountability, and transparency.

Department	Customer Experience (Bromford & Flagship) / Operations (LiveWest)
Policy owner	Regional Director – Customer Director of Neighbourhoods
Approved date	
Date for review	May 2029
Approving body	Customer & Place Committee
Associated legislation/regulation	Housing Act 1996 (as amended) Homelessness Reduction Act 2017- duty to co-operate Equality Act 2010 Immigration Acts 2014 & 2016 Welfare Reform Act 2012 Localism Act 2011 Human Rights Act 1998 Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR Consumer Standards 2024 (Tenancy Standard) Regulator of Social Housing – Transparency, Influence & Accountability Standard (2024) Housing Ombudsman Scheme (SI 1996 No. 2465, as amended)
Legal advice from	Internal Legal Team
Equality impact assessment date	To be refreshed prior to Board approval
Version number	1.1
Publication status	Internal Intranet and Customer Website

Purpose/principles

The purpose of this policy is to set out how Bromford Flagship LiveWest allocates and lets homes fairly, consistently and transparently, making the best use of our homes to meet local need while supporting customers to establish and sustain successful tenancies.

In delivering this policy, we will:

- **Be fair and transparent** – ensuring decisions are objective, consistent, evidence-based and free from discrimination or bias.
- **Put customers first** – supporting customers with vulnerabilities, support needs or reasonable adjustments to access and sustain suitable housing.
- **Promote sustainable tenancies** – seeking the best possible match between the applicant, the home and the wider community, taking account of household needs, vulnerabilities and local factors.
- **Make the best use of our homes** – allocating homes efficiently, minimising void periods and meeting our obligations under nomination agreements and other allocation arrangements.
- **Work in partnership** – collaborating with local authorities and partner organisations to support local housing strategies, housing mobility and sustainable communities. Where appropriate, we will apply local connection criteria and local lettings plans that are transparent, proportionate and consistent with agreed arrangements.
- **Comply with the law and regulatory requirements** – meeting our statutory obligations, including the Housing Act, Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Right to Rent requirements, the Equality Act 2010, the Consumer Standards and the Housing Ombudsman's principles of fairness, transparency and accountability.
- **Protect our homes and communities** – preventing fraud, illegal occupation and the misuse of our homes, while ensuring decisions are lawful, proportionate and take account of individual circumstances. Where evidence demonstrates disadvantage or different needs, we may apply proportionate positive action in accordance with section 158 of the Equality Act 2010.

Scope

This policy applies to lettings of:

- general needs housing
- key worker accommodation
- sheltered housing
- housing for older people
- housing with care
- supported housing
- temporary accommodation owned and/or managed by Bromford Flagship.

It excludes:

- market rent homes
- shared ownership homes
- student accommodation
- leasehold or retirement leasehold properties

This policy applies to all customers, applicants, and colleagues of Bromford Flagship LiveWest involved in the letting of homes.

Roles/responsibilities

Board / Committees provide oversight and assurance that the policy aligns with strategic priorities, customer outcomes, and regulatory requirements.

Executive Leadership Team / Directors are accountable for ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across their areas of responsibility and that compliance is maintained.

Heads of Service / Service Leads are responsible for embedding the policy within their service areas, ensuring colleagues are aware of and follow the requirements, and providing assurance on compliance.

Relevant colleagues are responsible for applying this policy and the associated procedures in day-to-day service delivery, supporting customers and escalating issues where appropriate.

All colleagues are expected to understand the policy as it relates to their role, complete any required training, and seek support where clarification is needed.

Policy content

How we let our homes

We allocate homes in a fair, transparent and consistent way, making the best use of our homes while meeting our legal, contractual and regulatory obligations.

- The majority of our homes are allocated through local authority nomination agreements and choice-based lettings schemes. All allocations are made in accordance with the relevant nomination agreement for the scheme or area, ensuring we meet our obligations while making the best use of our homes.
- Where permitted by legislation, nomination agreements or organisational policies and procedures, alternative allocation routes may be used. These may include emergency housing, decants, temporary relocations, regeneration programmes or other exceptional circumstances. All such allocations will be managed through the appropriate governance arrangements and, where required, agreed with the relevant local authority.

- Supported housing is allocated in partnership with local authorities and relevant support providers, in line with agreed referral arrangements.
- Temporary accommodation is allocated by local authorities in accordance with their statutory duties and local arrangements.
- Customers may also move home through mutual exchange, succession or other statutory or contractual rights, in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.

Finding a home

Our adverts are designed to be clear, accessible, and transparent, setting out key details about each property such as:

- home type, size, floor level, permitted occupants, parking.
- any local connection requirements (S106 agreements).
- any local lettings policies agreed with the Local Authority.
- sensitive let restrictions.
- adaptations for disability needs.
- age restrictions (if applicable).
- any eligibility criteria that apply to the property or letting.

Applying for a home

All applicants, whether nominated by a local authority or applying directly, will be subject to appropriate checks and assessments to ensure they are eligible, suitable and able to sustain the tenancy.

As part of the application process, we will:

- assess eligibility for the home, taking account of housing need, affordability, previous tenancy conduct and the ability to sustain a tenancy
- consider household size, composition, support needs and any reasonable adjustments required
- work with applicants and partner agencies where support needs are identified to help sustain the tenancy
- complete affordability assessments, which may include reviewing financial information where appropriate
- undertake Right to Rent checks for all adult occupiers in accordance with the Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016, retaining evidence as required by law

- request references or supporting information where appropriate to inform our decision-making
- provide applicants with an opportunity to view the property before accepting an offer, where this is reasonably practicable
- make a formal offer confirming the tenancy or licence type, rent and any other relevant terms.

The level of verification undertaken will be proportionate to the type of letting and the circumstances of the application and will be carried out in accordance with our lettings procedures.

Working with Local Authorities (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)

We will co-operate with Local Authorities in preventing and relieving homelessness, including sharing relevant information (lawfully), engaging with reasonable steps in Personalised Housing Plans, and responding to enquiries about suitability and availability of accommodation.

Withdrawing Offers

We may withdraw an offer of a home in certain circumstances, including where an applicant:

- fails to respond to or engage with the offer within the required timescales
- refuses three reasonable offers, where this applies under the relevant nomination agreement or allocation process
- fails to complete the required pre-tenancy verification process or provide the requested evidence within the required timescales
- provides false, misleading or fraudulent information in support of their application.

Refusals

Applications will only be refused where there is a lawful, proportionate and evidenced reason for doing so. Each application will be considered on its own merits, taking account of the applicant's individual circumstances. Examples include:

- the applicant does not have the Right to Rent in the UK or fails the Habitual Residence Test
- the tenancy is not affordable
- there are unresolved housing-related debts or arrears

- the applicant has a history of serious anti-social behaviour (ASB), tenancy fraud or behaviour that presents a significant risk to others
- the property is unsuitable for the applicant's household size, medical or adaptation needs
- adequate identification or supporting information cannot be provided
- the applicant owns a property or has sufficient assets to meet their housing needs through the private sector, where this is permitted by the relevant allocation arrangements
- false or misleading information has been provided
- the applicant has previously breached the terms of a tenancy (for example, unlawful subletting, abandonment or causing significant damage to a property)
- the applicant does not meet the criteria for a local lettings plan or another scheme-specific eligibility requirement, where applicable
- where an existing BFL customer is applying to move, their current home does not meet the organisation's property condition requirements or other move criteria, where these apply.

Decisions to refuse an application or withdraw an offer will be based on clear, objective, and lawful criteria. We will consider individual circumstances, including vulnerability and equality impacts, and will clearly explain our decision and the right to appeal.

Decisions are made on objective criteria only. Where evidence shows disadvantage or different needs for particular groups, we may apply proportionate positive action under Equality Act 2010 s.158. Positive action will never override statutory requirements or nomination agreements.

Paying Rent

Customers are expected to pay rent in accordance with the terms of their tenancy or licence agreement.

- rent is payable in advance at the frequency set out in the tenancy or licence agreement
- customers are encouraged to pay by Direct Debit, although other payment methods may be available
- where customers experience financial difficulty, we will provide information about the support available, including signposting to money, budgeting and debt advice where appropriate
- where appropriate, affordable repayment arrangements may be agreed in line with our Income Management Policy.

- where temporary accommodation is provided to meet a local authority's homelessness duties, rent and charges may differ to reflect the nature of the accommodation and the relevant legal arrangements.

Appeals

Applicants have the right to appeal lettings decisions within these clear timeframes:

- appeals must be submitted within 14 calendar days of the decision being communicated
- appeals will be reviewed by a manager not involved in the original decision
- we will respond within 14 calendar days of receiving the appeal

Where an appeal relates to a Local Authority allocation decision, the appeal must be made through the relevant Local Authority's appeals process.

CORE (Continuous Recording of Lettings and Sales)

We will complete and submit CORE information for relevant lettings in accordance with statutory requirements and any guidance issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (or its successor organisation). We will ensure information is recorded accurately and used to support regulatory reporting, sector benchmarking and service improvement.

Type of tenancy offered

We offer a range of tenancy and licence types to meet different household needs, housing purposes and legal requirements. The tenancy or licence offered will depend on the customer's circumstances, the type of home, and the relevant legal and regulatory framework.

Customers will always be informed of the type of tenancy or licence being offered, the reasons for it, and any rights to review or appeal.

Where legislation provides protections relating to security of tenure, including the relevant provisions of the Localism Act 2011, we will ensure these are applied in accordance with our legal obligations when customers move between homes.

A full summary of the tenancy and licence types currently used across Bromford Flagship LiveWest is set out in Appendix A.

Supporting new tenancies

We are committed to helping new customers settle successfully into their homes and sustain their tenancy. Following the start of a tenancy, we may make early contact with customers to check they have settled in, identify any support needs, provide advice and signposting where appropriate, and help resolve any issues that could impact the success of the tenancy.

Probity

Allocations to colleagues, board members, or close relatives require governance approval under the Probity Policy.

Management of vacant homes

We will relet homes efficiently and to the published lettable standard, which is reviewed regularly.

Our commitments

When allocating and letting homes, we are committed to ensuring a fair, transparent, and customer-centred process. We will:

- treat all applicants with dignity, courtesy, and respect throughout the lettings process
- provide clear, accessible, and timely information about how to apply for a home, what to expect, and the outcome of applications
- make best use of our homes to meet local needs while fulfilling our nomination agreements with local authorities
- take account of vulnerabilities, support needs, and reasonable adjustments to give every applicant a fair opportunity to access housing
- be consistent and transparent in our decisions, explaining the reasons where an application or offer cannot proceed
- work with partner agencies and local authorities to support customers into successful and sustainable tenancies
- monitor lettings outcomes to ensure they are fair, inclusive, and compliant with our regulatory and legal duties
- keep applicants informed throughout the lettings process, including where there are delays, changes or additional information is required.

EIA statement

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for this policy. The EIA ensures that the policy is fair, inclusive, and does not negatively impact any protected groups under the Equality Act 2010. The outcomes of the assessment will be monitored, and actions taken where needed to promote equity.

We recognise that we may not have identified all adverse impacts on one or more protected characteristics. We welcome any feedback on, or examples of, things that we may have overlooked so that we can continuously improve our policy.

Training statement

This policy will be trained out to relevant operational colleagues through:

- induction and team briefings
- refresher updates linked to toolkit changes
- scenario-based training on equality, affordability checks, and decision-making

Measuring effectiveness

We will monitor effectiveness through:

- void turnaround times and void loss
- tenancy sustainment and tenancy failure rates
- audit, quality assurance and compliance activity
- compliance with nomination agreements and CORE reporting
- customer feedback, complaints and appeals
- equality and lettings outcome monitoring

Review period

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years. An earlier review may take place if required due to changes in legislation, regulation, organisational priorities, operating model or structure, or following feedback from colleagues, customers or stakeholders. Any updates will be approved through the appropriate governance route.

Approval

This Policy was approved by the Customer & Place Committee and is applicable to:

- Bromford Flagship Ltd*
- Bromford Housing Association Ltd (operating as Bromford)*
- Bromford Home Ownership Ltd (operating as Bromford)*
- Merlin Housing Society Ltd (operating as Bromford)*
- Flagship Housing Limited (operating as Flagship)*
- LiveWest Homes Ltd (operating as LiveWest)*

Any references to Bromford Flagship LiveWest should be interpreted as equally applicable to all the above.

Appendix A Tenancy and Licence Types

The tenancy and licence types described below reflect the current position across Bromford Flagship LiveWest. They may change over time in response to legislative changes, including the Renters' Rights Act, and the continued harmonisation of tenancy arrangements across the organisation.

Tenancy / Licence Type	Used For	Typical Duration	Legal Basis
Starter Tenancy	New customers where this tenancy type remains in use across BFL.	Normally 12 months (may be extended in line with organisational policy where applicable).	Assured Shorthold Tenancy
Assured Periodic Tenancy	Core tenure for general needs customers.	Ongoing	Housing Act 1988
Fixed Term Tenancy	Legacy cases only, where still applicable.	Variable	Housing Act 1988
Secure Tenancy	Legacy customers with preserved secure tenancy rights.	Ongoing	Housing Act 1985
Protected / Enhanced Assured Tenancy	Legacy tenancy types retained in parts of the organisation.	Ongoing	Contractual terms / Housing Act 1988
Assured Shorthold Tenancy (Supported / Short-Term)	Supported accommodation or other short-term housing where applicable.	Variable	Housing Act 1988
Equitable Assured Shorthold Tenancy	Customers under 18 (where applicable).	Until eligible for a standard tenancy.	Equitable AST
Excluded Licence	Hostels or interim accommodation.	Variable	Housing Act 1985 / Protection from Eviction Act 1977
Protected Licence	Accommodation where exclusive possession does not apply.	Variable	Protection from Eviction Act 1977

Tenancy / Licence Type	Used For	Typical Duration	Legal Basis
Decant Licence / Contractual Tenancy	Temporary accommodation provided during planned works or redevelopment.	Temporary	Contractual
Family Intervention Tenancy (FIT)	Used in exceptional circumstances where applicable.	Variable	Relevant legislation / contractual arrangements
Joint Tenancy	Offered where appropriate, based on household circumstances and organisational policy.	As per tenancy type	As per underlying tenancy

Version control

Note: minor updates approved by delegated authority increase version number by 0.1; major updates and formally approved versions increase version number by 1.0.

Version	Detail	Approved by	Date
1.0	<i>First issue</i>	Customer SLT	16 December 2025
1.1	Policy enhancements to strengthen clarity, consistency and alignment across BFL, supporting integration with LiveWest. No material change to overall policy intent, although the approach represents a more significant shift in structure and application for LiveWest.		August 2026