

Lettings Policy

In this policy, 'Flagship Homes' ('we') means the Private Lettings team.

Department	<i>Market Rented</i>
Policy Owner	<i>Director (Strategic Asset Management)</i>
Approved Date	November 2023
Date for Review	November 2026
Legal Advice From	<i>In-house counsel</i>
Equality Impact Assessment Date	<i>6th September 2023</i>
Version Number	1.0

Purpose and scope

- This policy outlines the approach to letting homes owned or managed by Flagship Homes.
- How we will ensure a consistent approach to letting and make the best use of our properties.
- Our approach to letting properties is to ensure we are contributing to Flagship's vision and ensuring our tenants are part of a sustainable community.

How our homes are let

We let our homes to make the best use of our portfolio offering choice to our tenants and contributing to Flagship Group's vision of solving the housing crisis.

When we let homes, we will:

- Undertake credit checks and referencing to ensure suitability and affordability
- 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

Most of our homes will be advertised and let via Rightmove.

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 Assured Shorthold tenancy agreements, the details of which will be explained as part of our process.

We are responsible for checking an applicant's right to rent and we will carry out the relevant 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 let a home to an applicant without good reason; however, there are some circumstances in which we may not offer a home:

- Applicant does not have the 'Right to Rent' in the United Kingdom
- Applicant is 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
- Applicant has outstanding rent arrears or recharge debt with Flagship Group or any other landlord.
- Applicant has been evicted for a serious breach of tenancy

- Applicant has ever been evicted for another reason. The specific reason will be taken into consideration
- Applicant, or someone in their household, has committed anti-social behaviour that has had a significant impact on neighbours or the community
- Applicant, or someone in their 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 the applicant a home and this has resulted in significant cost to the Group. This could include end of tenancy, 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 the applicant's household. When we assess this, we will consider whether the property is over-occupied
- Applicant has failed to provide adequate identification or other information to support your application
- Applicant has previously sub-let a property to someone else without permission
- Applicant has not maintained their existing home in line with their tenancy
- We are unable to obtain satisfactory references
- Applicant intends to run a business from the property, the activities of which would have a significant impact on neighbours and the community

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

Appeals

You may make an appeal if we refuse to let 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.

Review

This Policy is formally reviewed every three years.

EIA Statement

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken for this policy on 6th September 2023 and all identified negative impacts have been mitigated.

Training Statement

The policy framework will be trained out to all policy owners and the policy hub on bob will include the most recent policy guidance and templates.

Measuring Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the policy framework will be measured through:

- Policy Workshop Sessions including actions and follow-ups
- Sense checks with teams
- Frequency of appeals/formal complaints received