

TENANCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

1.0 Introduction

This policy sets out the kinds of tenancies that Arhag offers to the tenants that it houses.

1.1 This policy outlines Arhag's approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions. The policy sets out.

- The type of tenancies we will grant and the circumstances in which we will grant tenancies of a particular type.
- Our policy on granting discretionary rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members.
- Our policy on granting tenancies at Affordable rents.

2.0 Legal Framework

2.2 This tenancy policy fulfils the requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and the requirements of regulator for Registered Providers to have a tenancy policy.

2.3 The Tenancy Standard requires that housing associations publish a 'clear and accessible' policy on their approach to tenancy management.

3.0 Policy Statement

3.1 Arhag will follow the guidelines provided by the regulator, the Housing and Communities agency.

3.2 Arhag will have regard to the tenancy strategies of the host local authorities within which it operates.

4.0 Aims of the Policy

4.1 The aims of the policy are to:

- To act to support and sustain tenancies;
- To ensure that housing circumstances do not become a barrier to our customers in achieving broader life aspirations
- Supporting the development of new homes and sustainable communities across the areas in which we work;
- Make the best use of available social housing stock, including reducing overcrowding, tackling under-occupation, and making the best use of adapted housing for those with a disability.

5.0 Implementation

Sustaining Tenancies

- 5.1 We will ensure that all new tenants are provided with clear information concerning the terms of their tenancy and of the consequences of failing to keep to those terms.
- 5.2 We will intervene at an early stage when we become aware of breaches of tenancy agreements. Following investigations, we will seek to ensure that tenants receive appropriate support to help them keep their home. Residents in supported housing will have a support plan identifying the type of support needed and these will be reviewed regularly. We will refer vulnerable residents in general needs housing to floating support services or other support services where applicable.

- 5.3 Where tenants have rent arrears, we will seek possession only where all preventative methods such as financial inclusion advice have been reviewed and exhausted.

Type of Tenancy to be Granted

- 5.4 We will provide new tenants with a written agreement (a Tenancy Agreement) that sets out their rights and responsibilities and our rights and obligations. This will be fully explained at the sign up interview.
- 5.5 We will grant new tenants the most appropriate form of tenure when letting our property. The new tenancy may be; ,
- An Assured Tenancy
 - An Assured Tenancy let at an affordable Rent
 - An Assured Shorthold Tenancy
 - An Assured Shorthold Tenancy (starter tenancy) 12 months
 - A Fixed Term Tenancy
 - Affordable Rent Tenancies
- 5.6 We will grant Assured Tenancies to new tenants where they already have security of tenure, (i.e. they already have an Assured Tenancy. These could be applicants who are transferring from within the association, have completed a mutual exchange/transfer from another registered provider.
- 5.7 We will grant Assured Shorthold Tenancies to residents of our hostel and residents in our Temporary Social Housing units.
- 5.8 We will grant Assured Tenancies at Affordable rent for all our new build homes and a small number of general relets.

- 5.7 We will grant Assured Shorthold Tenancies (starter tenancies) to most of our tenants in accordance with our Starter Tenancy Policy. Assured Shorthold Tenancies will run initially for 12 months. Should there be no breach within the first twelve months of this tenancy, this will automatically convert into an Assured Tenancy.

Affordable Rents

- 5.8 We will grant Tenancies let at Affordable Rent for our new build homes built under the Homes and Communities Agency's Affordable Housing Programme and a small number of general relets. The use of affordable rent is to ensure that we can continue to provide new affordable housing to respond to on-going housing needs. These tenancies are let at a rent rate which is 80% of the market rent in that locality and will be in accordance with our Affordable Rents Policy. These tenancies will be clearly marketed as such. A scheme by scheme approach will be taken rather than a borough wide approach will be taken and we will regularly review the availability of rent types by property type and location to ensure that a mix of rent types is maintained.

Fixed term tenancies

- 5.9 At present Arhag's position is that we will not use fixed term tenancies. We will keep this position under review and may choose to introduce fixed term tenancies in the future, following consultation with our customers and other stakeholders.
- 5.10 However, we recognise that the tenancy strategies of many of our local authority partners remain under development. We will therefore review our tenancy policy on a regular basis, ensuring that we have due regard for the tenancy strategies of local authorities with whom we work. Any decision to introduce fixed term tenancies will be subject to further consultation with our customers and key stakeholders.

Succession Rights

5.11 There are currently no changes to the existing rights of succession for tenants. These are:

Assured Tenancy: any succession would be to a tenancy of this type.

Assured Shorthold tenancy (all types): any succession would be to a tenancy of this type.

5.12 Where the right of succession is available this is dependant on the tenancy not being passed on originally. If this is the first succession claim, the tenancy can pass onto to a tenant's partner or a family member in the following circumstances:

- Upon the death of the tenant – a spouse or partner may be able to take over the tenancy as long as the property was their main or only home; if the tenancy does not go to the tenant's partner or spouse, we may give our agreement for another member of their family to get the tenancy if they have lived with the deceased tenant for at least 12 months. In all cases rules relating to properties with special features (i.e. adapted homes) and rules relating to under occupancy/overcrowding apply.
- Normally only one succession is permitted.

5.0 Equality & Diveristy

5.1 Outline how the policy addresses equality and diversity based on equality impact assessment carried out

6.0 Responsibility

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure that this policy is implemented.

7.0 Consultation

6.1 This policy will be reviewed in consultation with residents

8.0 Review and Board Approval

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed as required to take account of any changes to legislation that may occur.

Person Responsible for the review of this policy:

Date of this review:

Date of Board approval:

Date the next review is due: July 2017