

Title	Market Rent Allocations Policy
Document Owner	Director of Housing
Next Review Date	April 2019
Corporate Aim	Create great neighbourhoods where people and communities flourish

1. Policy Purpose and Aims

- 1.1 This policy details the principles to be adopted by whg when allocating properties at market rent. It is an addendum to the Tenancy Strategy and supplements the Allocations Policy as these tenancies are marketed, allocated and managed independently of our social and affordable rent lettings. New properties that are built or acquired by whg outside of the affordable rents programme may be let as market rentals.
- 1.2 Customers applying for these properties do not have to meet the allocations criteria for social or affordable housing as the properties are let outside of whg's choose and move scheme. For this reason a policy is required to ensure that we are open and transparent about the mechanism that we will use in order to let the properties and also the procedures for management of the tenancies.

2. Our Policy

2.1 Qualification Criteria

whg will ensure that when properties are let at market rent, the financial circumstances of the tenants are such that the tenancies are affordable and sustainable. In order to do this, successful applicants for these tenancies must fulfil the following criteria;

- Be at least 18 years of age and have a regular income which is not a means tested benefit. The total net annual income of the customer that is required will vary dependent upon the rental level of the accommodation on offer but a rough guide is 30 times the monthly rental charge
- Have proof of unlimited right to rent or time limited right to rent in relation to their immigration status
- Agree to a full credit check and financial appraisal. Customers must have a good credit history with no outstanding record of unpaid County Court judgements, loan defaults, bankruptcy or individual voluntary arrangements.
- Undertake our affordability calculation based upon their income and the size and type of property

- Not cause overcrowding in line with the Government's room standard

2.2 Restrictions

Properties advertised as market rentals will be marketed outside of whg's choose and move scheme and therefore the financial elements of the restricted access policy are not appropriate to the customer base that we are seeking. whg will however restrict access in the following circumstances;

- Applicants under the age of 18
- Applicants who do not agree to a full credit check and financial appraisal
- Applicants who fail to provide suitable employer and landlord references where appropriate
- Applicants who do not meet the affordability criteria
- Applicants where there is evidence that they, identified members of their household or their visitors, have acted anti-socially such that they would have been in breach of the whg tenancy agreement
- Applicants where they, members of their household or their visitors are persons whom the Police, Social Services or Probation Services formally advise us that they should not be allowed access to whg properties. This could be in order to protect the community or to prevent or reduce crime and disorder in the area.
- Applicants who have demonstrated through use or threat of violence towards whg colleagues (including verbal abuse), an intention not to co-operate with whg.
- Applicants who have knowingly or recklessly failed to provide accurate information or have knowingly withheld relevant information from their application form or in interviews with whg colleagues.
- Applicants with an outstanding legal action against them.
- Applicants, tenants or former tenants who have a legally recoverable debt with whg or another Registered Provider.
- Applicants who are European Union nationals from one of the East European states that joined the EU since May 2004, who cannot demonstrate evidence of either self employment or enrolment in the UK Worker Registration Scheme. In the latter case, this continues for 12 months. After that time these foreign workers enjoy right to reside and are treated as any other EEA /UK citizen.
- Applicants who are foreign nationals with time limited leave to remain in the UK and who are ineligible for access to public funds.
- Applicants and household members who are not British citizens, EEA or Swiss nationals and cannot demonstrate evidence of their right to rent.

.2.3 Property Advertisement

Properties advertised as market rentals will be advertised outside of our choose and move scheme.

Dependent upon the location and number of properties we may develop a marketing plan to determine whether specific advertising is appropriate. If properties are close to a hospital we may want to advertise using media which is accessed by NHS staff. If properties are in an area with a high BME population we may decide to advertise in places of worship or through local community groups.

Properties may be advertised using a range of media but the primary choice will be on line using the most popular property sites.

3. Performance Measures and Targets

- 3.1 As whg is a not for profit organisation we must ensure that market rents do not compromise our charitable status. We will monitor the number of market rents that are let and the amount of income that is generated but anticipate that we will not let more than 200 properties without considering whether market rents should be administered through one of our subsidiary companies.

4. Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 We will monitor the Policy in line with strategy and associated procedures annually. The Policy will be reviewed formally every 3 years.

5. Associated Documents and Policies

Tenancy Strategy
Allocations Policy
Restricted Access Policy
Rent and Service Charge Policy
Immigration Act 2014