

Market Rent Allocations Policy

1.0 SCOPE

Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy details the principles to be adopted by whg when allocating properties let at market rent by way of assured shorthold tenancies. It is an addendum to the Tenancy Policy and supplements the Allocations Policy as these tenancies are marketed, allocated and managed independently of our social and affordable rent lettings.
- 1.2 It does not apply to leasehold properties, or to commercial leases. New properties that are built or acquired by whg outside of the affordable rents programme may be let as market rentals.
- 1.3 whg will keep all customer data secure. Data will be processed in line with GDPR principles and our Customer Privacy Notice.

Legal and regulatory framework

- 1.4 Customers applying for these properties do not have to meet the allocations criteria for social or affordable housing and the properties are let outside of whg's choose and move scheme. Market rent properties are not regulated in the same way as social assets and therefore 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.
- 1.5 Although this is the case we will give regard to the RHS Governance and Financial Viability standard such as to adhere to all relevant law.
- 1.6 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 from these properties to ensure we remain compliant with the Charitable Commission requirements. There is no limit to the number of Market Rent properties we may own.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Qualification Criteria

- 2.1 whg will ensure that when properties are let at market rent, the prospective customer is in a financial position to sustain a tenancy. In order to do this,

successful applicants for these tenancies must fulfil the following criteria:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be able to provide evidence of a regular source of income and meet the affordability criteria. 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 35 times the monthly rental charge;
- Can evidence at point of application the means to pay a month of rent in advance and a specified deposit;
- Have proof of right to rent in relation to their immigration status and be eligible for access to public funds;
- Can provide suitable employer and landlord details for references where appropriate
- 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. There may be instances where whg will use their discretion where outstanding debts are being paid however this will be based on the affordability and other supporting evidence of the ability to maintain the debt payments;
- Undertake our affordability calculation based upon their income and the size and type of property which may include providing bank statements and supporting documentation;
- The property size is appropriate and will not cause overcrowding in line with the Government's room standard.

Restrictions

2.2 Properties advertised as market rentals will be marketed outside of whg's choose and move scheme however will adhere to whg's Restricted Access Policy when considering applicants. whg will also restrict access in the following circumstances;

- Applicants where there is evidence that they, or identified members of their household or their visitors, have acted antisocially such that they would have been in breach of a current or previous 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 unacceptable behaviour which may include but is not limited to;
 - a threat of violence;
 - intimidating or aggressive behaviour towards whg colleagues or members of the community;
 - lack of cooperation with whg.
- Applicants who have failed to provide accurate information or have withheld relevant information from their application form or in interviews with whg colleagues;
- Applicants with an outstanding legal action against them if the cause of legal action would have been a considered a tenancy breach if the

- applicant was residing in a whg property at the time;
- 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.

Property Advertisement

- 2.3 Properties advertised as market rentals will be advertised outside of our choose and move scheme.
- 2.4 Properties may be advertised using a range of media but the primary choice will be online using the most popular property sites. However, in some instances we may consider alternative advertisement such as community centres, places of worship and/or other public spaces.

3.0 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- 3.1 We will monitor the following:
- Rent arrears as a %
 - Void loss as a %
 - Number of days to re let

4.0 MONITOR AND REVIEW

- 4.1 This Policy will be monitored by the Director of Housing and reviewed every three years by the Policy Group.

5.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1
- Tenancy Policy
 - Allocations Policy
 - Restricted Access Policy
 - Rent and Service Charge Policy
 - Immigration Act 2014

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| Document author | Tansy Crowley-Sweet, Income and Residential Property Manager |
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| Legal advice | Richard Dewsbury reviewed the policy to ensure it was up to date which he confirmed it was. |
| Consultation | Director of Housing, Service Manager and Legal Services Manager |
| Approved by | Policy Group April 2019 |
| Review Date | February 2023 |
| Corporate Plan aim | Grow and expand our services our reach and our range |
| Equality analysis | Hyacinth Austin has been consulted and an EA was completed |
| Key changes made | Removal of means tested benefit criteria, general review to ensure up to date and relevant |