































ALLOCATIONS POLICY

UK legislation relating to this policy:

-  *Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974*
-  *Race Relations Act 1976*
-  *Mental Health Act 1983*
-  *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*
-  *Housing Act 1996*
-  *Human Rights Act 1998 (Article 8)*
-  *Crime and Disorder Act 1998*
-  *Human Rights Act 1998 (Article 6)*
-  *Data Protection Act 1998*
-  *Performance Standards Addendum 4 - Standard F Lettings – December 1999*
-  *Code of Guidance on the allocation of accommodation by the ODPM*
-  *Planning Policy Guidance No.3, March 2000, DTLR*
-  *Homelessness Act 2002*
-  *Commission For Racial Equality – Code of Guidance for rented housing*
-  *Housing Corporation Regulatory Circular 07/04 (July 2004)*
-  *Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003*
-  *Freedom of information Act 2005*

Additional documents/policies referred to in this policy:

-  Procedure MG10 Mutual Exchanges
-  Procedure MG19 Voids
-  Procedure MG49: Car Frees Schemes
-  Procedure MG58: Local Lettings and Starter Tenancies
-  Procedure MG61: Child Free Move Ons
-  Procedure MG62: Allocations; CORE
-  Procedure MG63: Performance Monitoring; Managing Agents
-  ~~Procedure MG64: Allocations; National Mobility and MoveUK~~
-  Procedure MG64: National Mobility Scheme
-  Procedure MG10: Mutual Exchanges
-  Procedure MG28 Decanting Residents
-  Procedure MG48 New Property
-  *Equalities Policy*

Aim of Policy Statement:

1. This policy is intended to ensure that the needs of those in housing need are recognised and that procedures are in place to ensure we let our homes to people in greatest housing need. The lettings policies and practices should be independent, fair, and accountable and make the best use of available stock and they should aim to let tenancies, which are sustainable in the long term and contribute to stable communities.
2. This policy should be read in conjunction with the operational procedures listed above.

Policy Statement:

Access Policy

3. The Association will:
 - Have a lettings policy and procedures which meet priority housing need and ensure that all new lettings would contribute towards achievable stable communities and sustainable tenancies;
 - Work with the local authorities to obtain adequate information on applicants from the statutory register so that they will be able to meet the regulatory requirements.
 - Ensure that it has sufficient information from the Register to assess whether an applicant meets its criteria.
 - *In meeting its statutory requirements for disabled applicants and residents, the Association will work with the Local Authority to make adaptations available to enable residents to remain in their home and applicants to have access to housing. The Association recognises that adapted homes improve the quality of life for residents and help promote independence.*

Housing Register Transfer Policy

4. The Association will demonstrate that their policies and practices make the best use of available stock and do not threaten the stability of communities. The Association should establish a target for internal transfers; monitor its performance against that target and establish procedures to ensure that it gives equal access to new residents and transferring residents to the more desirable stock.

The Associations Stance on Income:

5. The Association will:
 - Place a restriction on the eligibility for rehousing of households where they have financial resources sufficient to meet their housing needs through house purchase.
 - Avoid using an absolute income figure to assess affordability. Instead the Association uses a formula along similar lines to that used by mortgage lenders such that mortgage capacity is assessed based on gross income less the cost of household commitments. For example:
 -

The Association uses a formula similar to that used by Mortgage lenders for assessing mortgage capacity of housing applicants and for single income households. The formula is Gross Income (less specified deductions) x 3 if the applicant is single, or 2.5 if the application is in joint names. Therefore, should a single applicant's income be £37,000, their mortgage capacity would be: £111,000.

Specified deductions can include:

- Annual cost of child maintenance payments
- Annual cost of child care
- Annual cost of County Court judgments for essential items only
- Annual cost of student loan payment

Annual cost of (Finance for) essential items (essential items would include household goods including kitchen equipment; beds and other furniture, adaptations or special equipment for disabled members of the household; or abnormal living costs incurred due to particular circumstances of the household approved by the Operations Manager).

- Encourage sheltered housing applicants to find alternative accommodation if their personal finances are such that would afford them to purchase on the open market. The Income assessment process does not exclude sheltered applicants on the basis of income or equity.

Housing of Applicants Under 18 years of age:

6. The Association will:

- Welcome applications from all members of the community 16 years and over, giving priority to applicants according to their housing need
- Require applicants who are over 16 years, but under 18 years to provide the Association with details of a Guarantor who is over the age of 18 who is willing and able to act as Guarantor until the applicant/ resident is 18 years.

Lettings Policy – New Build Rural Schemes:

7. The Association will seek to minimise the loss of newly built and other homes by means of sale to residents with the preserved Right to Buy. It will do so by imposing restrictions when allocating the following properties:

- Newly built homes in rural areas and those acquired without social housing grant.
- Properties built for the elderly or disabled and properties in settlements of fewer than 3,000 population.

Local Lettings and Starter Tenancies:

8. A Local Lettings Policy applies to all new lettings made of properties in the studio bedsit accommodation at St Michael's Road, comprising of 36 flats, and 12 flats in St Lukes Close.

9. This policy allows the Association to:

- Consider other criteria in addition to housing need when allocating accommodation and allow an offer of accommodation to be withheld in appropriate circumstances. The Association will always seek to balance the

demands of the local Authority and housing needs to promote balanced communities.

- Use of a starter tenancy/ assured shorthold tenancy that offers reduced security of tenure allowing the Association to obtain possession without having to prove that a breach of the Tenancy Agreement has occurred, where this is considered necessary.

Special Lettings Policy for Town Centre Developments

10. The Association may elect to reserve properties in the town centre area for letting to households that do not include children. In such instances the Association will:

- Encourage a transfer to take place if a household in a childfree scheme undergoes a change in circumstances, which results in any child or children under the age of 16 years residing at the premises.
- Work in partnership with Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council to expedite a move to a suitable property where a 'child free' tenancy clause is not applicable. Transfers under these circumstances are not intended to provide a shortcut to rehousing through the Housing Needs Register.

Exclusion Policy:

11. The Association may exclude from rehousing any applicant who has:

- Previously been evicted from a Kingfisher Housing Association property for a breach of tenancy conditions
- An outstanding debt from a former tenancy with the Association
- Previously behaved in such a way as to constitute a breach of tenancy for which there are grounds for possession (including incidences of anti social behaviour) as a former tenant of either a public or private sector landlord. This includes any conviction for a relevant offence as raised through the Multi Agency Prolific Perpetrators Agency (MAPPA) forum.
- It must be emphasised that each case is assessed with regard to individual circumstances and the grounds for exclusion will not be used as a "blanket ban".
- Each case will be decided on its own merits and every effort will be made to resolve the ineligibility.
- Potential residents and current residents applications will be held on the Association's records as having a 'suspended application' if they are excluded on conditions to be met. This indicates that the applicant is invited to re-apply for rehousing for specified reasons or at the end of the suspended period. Which if successful will have the effect of lifting the exclusion. Exclusions will last for a maximum of 2 years.

12. Where assessments indicate vulnerability for whatever reason, Kingfisher Housing Association will work with the local authority and other agencies to arrange appropriate support so that it is available at the beginning of a new tenancy. An applicant may be excluded if they will be unable to meet the conditions of tenancy without additional support and:

- The association, despite every effort, is unable to ensure that appropriate support is available; or
- The level of support required would seriously undermine the association's ability to support other residents in a scheme.

13. Should an applicant wish to appeal the decision to exclude, the applicant is encouraged to follow the Association's complaints policy.

14. If after due consideration the Allocations section takes the decision to exclude, and or overlook an applicant a letter will be written to the applicant advising them of such. The letter also advises the applicant to contact the relevant local authority and Citizens Advice Bureau, and provide details of the Associations complaints policy in case the applicant wishes to appeal the decision.

CORE Log Completion: 15. CORE (Continuous Recording) is a system developed to monitor and record information on Housing Associations lettings and sales and is accepted by academics, policy makers and practitioners as an essential tool for monitoring housing association performance.

- The Association will collect data on a CORE Lettings Log about every property let using an Assured Tenancy. The data required includes detailed personal information about the new resident and his/her household and is therefore collected on a strictly confidential basis. *The core form must not identify the resident by name or address.*

Managing Agents:

16. The Association will require any Managing Agent employed, to provide monthly performance reports, including letting information required for CORE. The data is also used to complete the annual Registered Statistical Return.

Choice Based Lettings: 17. The Association will work with partner local authorities in the letting of properties on the basis of choice, where such schemes have been locally agreed and implemented.

18. When implementing Choice Based Lettings schemes, care will be taken to consult residents in changes to service delivery and take action in response to customer feedback.

Car Free Schemes:

19. The Association will ensure that properties within car free housing developments are allocated in accordance with the allocation process and that housing management procedures are clearly outlined so that prospective residents are fully aware of the position with regard to parking and the potential outcomes of related future conduct. *The Association will also consider the effect upon the environment if the scheme was not introduced.*

20. The involvement of the Housing Management Officer at sign-up will ensure that this matter is handled in a consistent and pro-active way.

National Mobility Schemes:

21. To enable tenants to relocate to homes across the country using the services of available mobility schemes.

22. There are currently 12 non-government funded schemes that aim to assist tenants in national mobility. The schemes are all based on an exchange ethos

23. Residents can locate exchange partners through national mobility websites, these can be viewed on the communities and Local Government website: www.communities.gov.uk.

Mutual Exchange Policy

24. A mutual exchange is a process whereby two or more residents assign, or exchange, their tenancy. It may involve residents of any Registered Social Landlord (housing association) or local authority.

25. Residents can exchange within properties belonging to their own landlord or with residents of a different landlord. Residents with licences or assured shorthold tenancies (including Starter Tenancies) do not have the right to mutually exchange their tenancies, and applications to do so will be refused.

26. Those residents with assured, or assured protected tenancies will exchange rights and responsibilities.

27. The Housing Act 1988 states that mutual exchanges cannot take place without consent of the landlord: Housing Act 1988, S15. No other restrictions are laid down within the terms of this Act.

Responsible Manager:

Operations Manager

Policy Audit Trail:	
Details of any policy superseded by this document:	This document replaces the following: Access Policy Dated March 2001 Housing Register Transfer Policy Dated May 1995 Income Policy Dated May 2003 Letting Policy for Under 18s Dated September 1999 Letting Policy for New Build Schemes Dated September 1999 Exclusion Policy Dated January 2003 Allocations Policy Dated December 2005

Author:	Louise Wilson: Senior Housing Officer (Allocations)
Date of approval by board:	13 December 2006 14 December 2005 12 September 2007
Date of review:	November 2006
Date of review:	August 2007
Date of review:	September 2007
Date of review:	