

# Bridgewater Housing Association Ltd Policy

Approved by Board 30 May 2018

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## ALLOCATION OF EXTRA CARE HOUSING

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Bridgewater Housing Association is based in Erskine where we own and manage around 850 properties. We have 2 Extra Care Housing Developments - Robertson House in North Barr and Clayson House in Bargarran.

We are committed to the provision of housing for older people so that they can continue to live independently in their own home, with any care and support that they need coming directly to them.

We recognise that there is an unmet demand for extra care housing throughout Erskine and because of this, housing will be allocated on the basis of demonstrable need.

The purpose of this policy is to set out how applicants will be assessed and selected for vacant properties in our Extra Care Developments.

A summary of the policy is available in leaflet form and can be obtained from the Association's office.

### 2. THE SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) monitors, assesses and reports on how social landlords perform their housing activities as well as their financial wellbeing and standards of governance. The SHR will intervene to secure improvements where necessary. The SHR has published a set of Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management and the relevant standards in relation to this policy are:

1. The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
2. The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.

### **3. THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER**

The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve for their tenants and other customers when performing their housing activities.

The relevant standards and outcomes for the Allocation of Extra Care Housing Policy are:

#### **Outcomes 7 and 8: Housing options**

Social landlords work together to ensure that:

- people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them
- tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options.

#### **Outcome 10: Access to social housing**

Social landlords ensure that:

- people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and on their prospects of being housed.

#### **Outcome 11: Tenancy Sustainment**

Social landlords ensure that:

- tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure that suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

### **4. AIM OF THE POLICY**

The Allocation of Extra Care Housing Policy sets out who we will let our houses to, and how allocations will be achieved. Our aim is to comply with all relevant legislation and good practice in the allocation of our extra care housing to achieve positive outcomes for older people, who wish to move to this type of housing with support.

### **5. ALLOCATION OF EXTRA CARE HOUSING**

We recognise the importance of ensuring that extra care housing is available to those who most need it, and will hold a separate housing list for this type of accommodation.

We maintain an open housing list - applicants may apply for housing at any time and select the Development/s of their choice.

Applicants wishing to apply for extra care housing must qualify for this type of accommodation and meet the following criteria:

- Be aged 65 or over, or in the case of joint applicants, at least one person must be aged 65 or over.
- If an applicant has some other particular housing need which would be met through the allocation of extra care housing, exceptions to the age restriction may be made on a discretionary basis.
- Be in need of assistance with daily living activities and assistance with food preparation and personal care.

Where a joint applicant, or other person in the application, is significantly under 65 years old, and would therefore not meet the criteria for housing for older people, an offer of extra care housing may not be made which would include that person.

Our Allocation of Extra Care Housing Policy sets out the rules we follow to select people for our empty extra care properties. When we talk about allocating a house we are referring to the process of selecting people from our extra care housing list, offering them a house, and if they accept, signing a tenancy agreement with them.

This policy was initially developed in consultation with Renfrewshire Council Social Work Department/Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership; a cross-section of our tenants and housing applicants; community groups, other landlords, agencies and stakeholders.

## **6. ASSESSING APPLICATIONS**

The assessment process for extra care housing is three fold:

- Bridgewater staff will be responsible for assessing housing need
- Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership (RHSCP) staff will be responsible for assessing applicants' care and housing support needs.
- The Joint Allocations Panel will determine the overall priority to be given to individual applications.

All applicants will require to complete an Extra Care Housing Application Form. The form will enable applicants to describe their housing, care and support needs.

Housing need will be assessed by Bridgewater staff in line with its Allocations Policy for general needs housing.

A copy of each application form will be provided to RHSCP so that a Carenap/Single Shared Assessment can be completed for each applicant. This assessment will enable applicants to be fully assessed to determine whether they need the level of care and support provided by extra care housing. This will inform each applicant's overall assessment.

In addition, assessments may be supplemented by input from other departments within Renfrewshire Council, such as, but not only, Community Alarms. All applicants will be informed whether they qualify for this type of housing, care and support.

All applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their assessment for extra care housing.

**7. JOINT ALLOCATIONS PANEL**

Although Bridgewater owns and maintains the extra care housing and successful applicants will ultimately be our tenants, we are not responsible for the provision of the care and support service, and have no control over the funding of this service. This is the responsibility of RHSCP.

A Joint Allocations Panel has been established, comprising representatives from Bridgewater and Renfrewshire Council – with input from Health (District/Community Nurse) - with responsibility for prioritising all applications and selecting applicants for all re-lets to the extra care developments. A Housing Officer will represent the Association on the Panel.

Bridgewater and RHSCP will work closely together to ensure full occupancy of the Developments, and will meet regularly to assess new applications.

All applications will be considered by the Panel. Void properties will generally be let to applicants with the greatest assessed need and capacity to benefit from the support available at the Extra Care Development. RHSCP will assess care and support needs and Bridgewater will assess housing need in accordance with its general needs Allocations Policy.

Applicants with no housing need will nonetheless have their care and support needs assessed, and may be considered for extra care housing based on their overall assessment.

**8. PRIORITIES**

The Panel will give priority to each application received. This will be based on the following criteria.

Priority for Extra Care Housing	Applicant’s Needs
Priority 1+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently in hospital and cannot return home because current home is unsuitable for applicant’s needs</li> </ul>
Priority 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current home is unsuitable; or</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to extra care housing will prevent a hospital admission; or</li> <li>• At home, but care is breaking down, for example, likelihood that carer could go into care or require respite; or</li> <li>• Unable to cook/prepare meals (in conjunction with other Priority 1 needs); or</li> <li>• Has 4 or 5 visits per day from home care</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 2+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to cook/prepare meals (in conjunction with other Priority 2 needs); or</li> <li>• Has high personal care needs ; or</li> <li>• Needs support to manage behaviour/has a cognitive impairment;</li> <li>• High risk of falls</li> <li>• Socially isolated</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to cook/prepare meals (in conjunction with other needs); or</li> <li>• Has high personal care needs; or</li> <li>• Has a cognitive impairment;</li> <li>• Requires other input from family or informal carers</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has minimum personal care needs</li> <li>• Unable to cook or prepare meals – but can prepare snacks</li> </ul>
<b>Priority 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can provide own meals</li> <li>• Has no personal care needs</li> <li>• Needs are being met where applicant currently lives</li> </ul>

## 9. ALLOCATION OF VOID PROPERTIES

Where applications have been assessed and a property becomes available for re-let, RHSCP members of the Joint Allocations Panel will be contacted to select the applicant most in need of the service. This arrangement will also apply where more than one applicant has been awarded the same priority.

However, from time to time, the care and support service provided by RHSCP may be unable to fully support new tenants with high priority needs within the context of the overall number of approved hours of care delivered in the development. Therefore, in these limited circumstances, an applicant with a lower priority may be made the offer of housing following full consultation with Bridgewater staff. The reasons for such allocations will be fully documented.

**10. OFFERS OF HOUSING**

There will not normally be any restrictions on the number of offers made and applicants/their next of kin or advocate will be encouraged to advise us of any changes in circumstances, which are likely to affect their application.

**11. TRANSFERS**

We will maintain a transfer list for Extra Care Housing. Applications will be considered by the Joint Allocations Panel so that the reason(s) for moving can be fully addressed. Tenants may also wish to move to an extra care development out with Erskine and moves within Renfrewshire would be facilitated through the Panel.

**12. ALLOCATION TARGETS**

We will allocate housing by setting annual targets for the extra care housing list and the transfer list. The targets will be a percentage of the overall lets in a year and will show the lets that we aim to give to each group. They will be based on the estimated turnover of our empty properties; the number of applicants within each group; and the needs that people have. Targets will be reviewed during each year and will be changed if necessary to reflect the actual turnover of properties.

**13. RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Applicants have the right to appeal against decisions that we have made about their housing application.

If an applicant disagrees with any decision regarding his/her application - the priority given, the care and support service, or its funding - he/she may write to Home Care Manager at RHSCP, stating clearly the reasons for asking the decision to be reviewed. Once the decision has been reviewed, if the applicant remains dissatisfied, he/she can appeal to the Director of Social Work, with whom the final right of appeal lies.

Where the disagreement relates to the assessment of housing need, or an offer of housing, this will be referred to the Housing Services Manager, where the final right of appeal lies.

**14. COMPLAINTS**

Applicants who are dissatisfied with the way that we have handled their application may make a complaint under our complaints procedure. A copy of our complaints leaflet can be obtained from our office. Telephone: 0141 812 2237 or email: [admin@bridgewaterha.org.uk](mailto:admin@bridgewaterha.org.uk).

## **15. REMOVAL AND CANCELLATION OF APPLICATIONS**

The Association may remove applications from the housing list in specific circumstances. These include:

- Where the applicant has requested removal from the register – this will normally be obtained in writing;
- On the death of the applicant; and
- The failure of the applicant to respond to the review of the housing list.

In addition, members of the Joint Allocations Panel may be aware of circumstances where it will not be possible or appropriate for an applicant to move, for example, having obtained a permanent place in a care home etc. Under such circumstances, the application will be cancelled.

Applicants will be notified in writing that their application has been cancelled and the reason for this.

## **16. APPLICATION PACK**

The Application Pack will be updated annually and will contain information on rent, property related service charges and heating costs for individual flats. Costs associated with the meal service and care and support service will be provided by Renfrewshire Council.

## **17. CONSULTATION**

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory obligation on the Association to consult with tenants on changes to our housing management policies, 'where the proposal, if implemented, is likely significantly to affect the tenant'. This includes changes to our policy on the Allocation of Extra Care Housing.

We have compiled an action plan for consulting with tenants and community groups and will include a sample in reviews of this policy should significant changes be proposed.

## **18. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

The Association's strategy is to ensure that our Equality and Diversity Policy is applied fully, fairly and consistently across the Association, as an integral part of business planning processes and the services we provide. It recognises that all people are different and aims to ensure that we treat each individual with dignity and respect. To achieve the aims of our overall strategy we will take action to address discrimination experienced by particular groups, as well as action to promote and achieve diversity in employment, governance and service delivery.

This Policy may be made available in different languages and formats. We will help applicants to fill in the Housing Application Form if required, and

where practicable arrange for an interpreter if an applicant speaks a language other than English.

**19. CODE OF CONDUCT – ALLOCATIONS TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD & BRIDGEWATER STAFF**

The Codes of Conduct for Board members and staff require specific interests to be declared. These include:

- Tenancy of a property (by a board/staff member or someone to whom they are closely connected) of which we are the landlord.

In the event of such an interest occurring in relation to an allocation of extra care housing, board/staff members must make an entry in the Register of Interests as soon as any allocation is made.

**20. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This Policy will be subject to regular review and will be reviewed at least every three years.