



## Tenancy Sustainment Policy

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## 1. Introduction

Our Tenancy Sustainment Policy aims to ensure that we meet our landlord obligations in respect of tenancy sustainment.

We have 4 key objectives for Tenancy Sustainment:

- Minimising tenancy breakdown e.g. abandonments or evictions.
- Promoting sustainable and solid communities.
- Preventing homelessness.
- Minimising void turnaround, void loss and follow on void costs.

We will meet these objectives by:

### Providing tenancy support

Through signposting to other appropriate agencies or designing a tenant specific support package in partnership with other agencies. Tenancy support needs may change over time so we will carry out Annual Home Visit to ensure needs are identified and met.

### Pre tenancy support

Working with the tenant before sign up to identify any issues that could affect tenancy sustainment and designing an agreed Action Plan to deal with them in partnership with other agencies.

### Partnership working

Joint working with other agencies or organisations e.g. South Lanarkshire Council who have the resources to help support the tenant to remain in their tenancy

## 2. Key Principles

### 2.1 Allocating tenancies

We let our properties to those in greatest housing need and in a way that makes best use of available stock and helps sustain communities.

### 2.2 Tenant responsibilities

Every tenant is responsible for managing their tenancy (these are discussed at point of sign up and promoted through newsletter and website articles) and keeping to their tenancy agreement. We will identify tenants or households who have particular needs or are vulnerable and refer them to a relevant external support agency to receive the appropriate advice and assistance.

It is the Housing Management Team and other referring agencies decision if a tenant is potentially vulnerable and if this vulnerability could impact on their ability to sustain a tenancy.

The following list shows who we would consider to be potentially vulnerable (this list is not exhaustive):

- Households who have previously been homeless or have existing support needs.
- Those households with identified learning difficulties, mental health issues, or personality disorders.
- Older people who have/or may have support needs.
- Households with identified alcohol/drug or other addiction issues.
- Households who have suffered previously from domestic abuse or other types of violence.
- Households suffering from either racial or non-racial harassment.
- Ex- offenders.
- Those with disabilities who may or may not have support needs.
- Young people setting up home for the first time or care leavers.

### 2.3 Failed tenancies

We class a failed tenancy as one that ends by eviction, abandonment or termination of tenancy by a tenant within 12 months of the tenancy starting.

Failed tenancies can impact on the sustainability of the community as well as have financial implications for the Association.

### 2.4 Minimising new tenancy failures

To minimise new tenancy failures we will work with new tenants to:

- Ensure they know what their responsibilities are at point of sign up and who to contact at the association if they have any issues/questions.
- Provide starter packs for all new tenants and source furniture/other household goods for tenants who need them.
- They have an appointment within 6 weeks of moving in with the Financial Inclusion Officer (a qualified benefits and fuel advisor, who can ensure they are on the best fuel tariff and maximise income for the household).
- Identify any vulnerable tenants and source specialist support agencies (then work in partnership with them) to help the tenant maintain their tenancy.
- Carry out a settling in visit within 6 weeks of the date of entry to review any tenancy issues or support needs.

### **3. Legal, Good Practice & Regulatory Framework**

#### **3.1 Legislation & Good Practice**

We will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations, including:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 1987, 2001 & 2010

#### **3.2 Regulatory Framework**

In terms of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has identified key indicators relevant to tenancy sustainment by which it will measure landlord performance:

- Tenancy sustainment – tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisation;
- Value for money – tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

### **4. Equality & Diversity**

The Association aims to ensure equal treatment and opportunities for all Tenants irrespective of race, colour, culture, ethnic or national origin, religion, class, gender, disability, mental health, age, sexual orientation, family circumstances or marital status.

### **5. Alternative Formats**

If you need us to we can provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages (through Happy To Translate) and other formats such as computer memory sticks, audio, large print, Braille etc. Please just ask.

### **6. Consultation**

We will promote our Tenancy Sustainment Policy through our newsletters, website and tenancy handbook. Where we plan to make significant changes to the policy, we will consult tenants in line with our Community Involvement Strategy.

### **7. Performance Reporting**

We will assess our performance against the SHR Charter outcomes and report them via the annual ARC Return.

### **8. Tenancy Sustainment Budget**

Our Tenancy Sustainment budget will be reviewed by the Housing Management Team on an annual basis then a recommendation on the budget for the following year will be made to the Senior Management Team.

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