

<b>Full Name of Document:</b>	Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy
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Department Responsible:	Supported Housing	Document Author:	Head of Supported Housing

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Board	FADC	Moor Nook EMB	EMT	HoST
			11/09/14	18/06/14

<b>Date Approved by TDG or TDG Representative (compulsory)</b>			
At a Group Meeting	<b>Or</b>	TDG Representative	Date Approved
14 May 2014		N/A	

<b>Document Information</b>	
<b>Scope:</b> To ensure that homes are allocated to eligible and qualifying people in a fair, consistent and accountable manner, in accordance with relevant legislation and governmental guidance.	
<b>Key Objectives:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure through good practice that those applicants with the greatest housing needs are prioritised for housing;</li> <li>• Support sustainable communities by ensuring that allocations take into account the support needs of the individual applicant and the support needs within the scheme to which they are applying;</li> <li>• Ensure that support is provided to vulnerable persons and those with special needs as well as ensuring that the extension of choice to these applicants promotes wider social inclusion;</li> <li>• Increase customer satisfaction by simplifying the process for older people and supporting them to make their bids;</li> <li>• Comply with all equal opportunities legislations and guidance including the Equality Act 2010</li> </ul>	
<b>Links to Regulatory Framework for Social Housing:</b>	
<b>Links to Strategic Objectives/CGA Values:</b> Continually Improving Customer Services	
<b>Financial and Value for Money Implications:</b>	X
<b>Risk Implications:</b>	X
<b>Equality and Diversity Implications:</b>	X
<b>Links to Client Scrutiny:</b>	
The Supported Housing Action Group were involved in the approval process	
<b>Client Involvement and Consultation:</b> The Supported Housing Action Group	
<b>Outcomes for Customers:</b>	
That homes are allocated to eligible and qualifying people in a fair, consistent and accountable manner with consideration to support needs and maintaining a balanced community within each sheltered housing scheme.	

<b>Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy</b>
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## **Introduction**

1. The sheltered housing service at Community Gateway Association (CGA) provides accommodation and housing support services for older people who are able to live independently but have varying levels of dependency, whilst maintaining a balanced community within each scheme. Applicants for sheltered housing must therefore be able to demonstrate a housing need and require the housing support services.

## **Policy Statement**

2. The CGA Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy sits within the broader Select Move Allocations Policy and supports its general aims:-
3. To ensure that homes are allocated to eligible and qualifying people in a fair, consistent and accountable manner, in accordance with relevant legislation and governmental guidance. Homes will be allocated to prospective tenants after taking account of their housing needs and housing choices and with regard to the communities in which the homes are located.”

## **Specific Aims of the Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy**

4. In addition to the broader Select Move Policy we also aim within the sheltered housing service to:-

Ensure a well balanced portfolio of sheltered stock that meets the needs and aspirations of our customers. In practice this means that the needs of tenants are balanced to ensure that the schemes are sustainable and the Housing Support Officers are able to support and manage the needs within their scheme. By seeking to achieve a

“balanced community”, we will house people with a range of care and support needs including a proportion with minimal needs but who will benefit from the security and preventative support provided by the Housing Support Officer.

5. To ensure this balance is maintained applicants will be placed into a dependency banding (high, medium or low) according to CGA’s assessment of their support need. These bandings will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.
6. The following are the general levels of care and support which an applicant for sheltered housing will fall into in relation to the type of accommodation they might be considered for:-

#### Low

- Residents who do not have any moderate or significant health problems or social care needs and live independently without the need for support from others
- Residents who can manage their own personal care needs such as getting in and out of bed, washing, dressing and preparing food for themselves, without the support of others
- But residents at this level need would still require the security and reassurance of the call system and would benefit from the social aspects of sheltered housing

#### Medium

- Residents who have moderate health problems and require some support from others in relation to their personal care needs as described above. The support may be provided by family, public or private sector health or social care services or the voluntary sector
- Residents in this category would generally require assistance less than three times a week in relation to their personal care needs and well-being

### High

- Residents with significant health problems or other complex needs who require regular support from others in connection with their personal care and well-being. The support may be provided by family, public or private sector health or social care services or the voluntary sector
- Residents in this category will require daily assistance with their personal care needs and well-being
- Residents with high needs may also have some significant risks and need support to live safely.

7. The aim is to create a vibrant, active community within each scheme where older people can maintain their independence for as long as possible and have access to the housing related support service. Where it is apparent to us that a customer has care needs which are not currently being provided then we will take active steps, in agreement with the customer, to ensure that the customer has an appropriate referral for a community care needs assessment by social services. To achieve this, each scheme will need to contain people with a mix of care and support needs and as part of the allocation process we will assess the capacity and willingness of applicants to live independently within a shared community and the level of support required.
8. In the event that a resident of a scheme requires a move to a different property as a result of worsening health and personal support needs that resident will be given priority when a suitable vacancy arises.
9. Where properties have been adapted, priority will be given to applicants requiring adaptations to enable them to live independently. The specific needs of applicants will be matched to the specific adaptations in the vacant sheltered property.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

10. Applicants for sheltered housing must normally be aged 55 or over or have a need for sheltered housing due to a disability or some other vulnerability. For some schemes, i.e. The Filberts, Sunningdale and Windsor Court applicants must be 60 or over.
11. It is a condition of all tenancies within sheltered housing that tenants must agree to accept the support services offered, although support will be offered at different levels dependent on the tenant's needs, level of dependency and ability to maintain their independence. This will be discussed individually and agreed with each tenant during the "sign up" process.
12. Separate charges are made for these services as well as the Housing Management services provided (the service charge costs of managing the schemes) and these charges will be made in addition to the rent. A separate service agreement will be drawn up to outline the services provided.

## **Qualifying Criteria**

13. Subject to CGA's ineligibility criteria set out below, an applicant will qualify if he/she is:-
  - An eligible person as mentioned in Section 4 of this policy;
  - Normally retired from full time employment;
  - Able to demonstrate a local connection subject to the conditions outlined in the Select Move Policy;
  - A former member of the UK armed forces or the spouse or civil partner of such a member and subject to the conditions outlined in the Select Move Policy;

- An applicant with housing related debts of below £999.99 who has made a repayment plan and has demonstrated a commitment to maintain payment under the terms of the plan. Conditions for continuing to make payments are outlined in the Select Move Policy.

14. Within the Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy, consideration will be given to home owners provided:-

- They do not have an annual gross income of £60,000 or more and do not have savings of more than £30,000;
- Their home is not worth more than £150,000;
- They are facing difficulty maintaining their current home due to physical frailty or disability;
- Their current home is unsuitable to their needs e.g. they are unable to go upstairs;
- They are socially isolated or lonely and a move to sheltered housing would significantly increase their independence and wellbeing;
- They are selling their home to move nearer to family who will provide additional support

15. CGA will consider all the circumstances of each individual application and reserves the right to refuse an otherwise qualifying application if the applicant is ineligible. An applicant may be ineligible if he/she:-

- Has themselves or is applying with anyone who has engaged in anti-social behaviour such that action has been taken, or could have been taken, against the person - such as an injunction, ASBO, demotion order or possession order;
- Has themselves or is applying with anyone who has been convicted of a serious offence that has not been spent and is likely to pose a threat or risk to any Partner, tenants, local community or staff;
- They have housing related debt of more than £1000;

- They have a housing related debt of up to £999.99 and they have not made and maintained a repayment plan;
- They have failed the habitual residence test as set out in Select Move Policy and have insufficient funds to otherwise maintain a tenancy;
- Their care and support needs are so high that sheltered housing is not suitable and they meet specific exclusions for sheltered housing as identified in Section 6;
- They, or a member of their household has previously been evicted by a Select Move Partner.

### **Specific Exclusions within Sheltered Housing**

16. As a general rule, applicants whose needs meet those which should be met in residential care will not normally be eligible for accommodation in sheltered housing.

17. Also, an applicant for housing may have other care needs which cannot be met within one of the schemes. It may be necessary to obtain medical or other professional evidence to establish this. Such an applicant will not be eligible to be housed within a scheme. Examples of when this situation might arise are as follows:

- an applicant may have a level of physical or mental frailty exceeding that which can reasonably be met by the sheltered housing provision within a CGA scheme;
- an applicant may require frequent nursing care beyond the level available from the Community Nursing Service;
- an applicant may require specialist health services that cannot be provided in a community setting;
- an applicant may have a level of physical or mental frailty that is likely to cause serious disruption or risk to other tenants. These would



include, for example, applicants who persistently wander or are physically aggressive or have significant alcohol dependency.

### **How will the Sheltered Housing Allocations Policy sit within the Select Move Policy?**

18. All applicants for sheltered housing will be required to register for accommodation via the Select Move partnership. In addition applicants will be required to:

- Complete a separate Support Needs Assessment specifically for sheltered housing;
- Complete a medical assessment
- Be asked to visit the sheltered scheme(s) of their choice, meet the Housing Support Officer, look round the scheme and discuss whether the scheme meets their needs and requirements;
- Register their interest directly at the schemes they are interested in and bid for properties as they become vacant (support will be provided where required)
- Attend a final viewing to re-assess their needs prior to the formal offer being made and to assess the suitability to their needs of the property being offered.

19. Applicants will also be invited to attend social activities and meet other residents to help them to assess whether the scheme is suitable for their needs.

20. As a result of the increased needs of many applicants for sheltered housing we will regularly keep in touch with applicants to ensure they are receiving the support they need with the bidding process. In some cases applicants may wish to purchase floating support from the Housing Support Officer prior to moving into the scheme of their choice.

21. In line with the Select Move Policy applicants will:-

- Undertake verification checks and provide any evidence that is requested;
- Be banded and provided with an effective date that the application is accepted onto Select Move;
- Notify the Sheltered Housing Team of any change in circumstances
- Be removed from the housing register if they become ineligible or no longer qualify.

### **Requesting a Review**

22. An applicant has the right to request a review of any decision made on their application if they are not satisfied with the decision made.

23. The applicant, or someone authorised to act on their behalf, must notify the Sheltered Housing Team in writing within 28 days of the date on which the applicant is notified of the decision. The notification must set out the grounds for the review.

24. The review will be carried out by a member of staff who is senior to the person who made the original decision. The review procedure will not include any member of staff who may have had any influence or involvement in the original decision. The applicant will be given the opportunity to submit any further information that he or she may want the reviewing offer to consider. The applicant will also be informed of the right to make oral representations as well as further written representations.

25. The Sheltered Housing Team will aim to complete all reviews within 28 days of receiving all the relevant information unless a longer period has been agreed with the applicant.

26. The applicant will be informed of the outcome of the review in writing. If the original decision is upheld the applicant will be informed of the reasons for the decision. If the applicant is still unhappy following the review they may follow the internal complaints procedure.