

Tenant Transfer Policy & Procedure

1.0 Policy

This policy relates only to those people who are tenants in PRHA properties. A separate policy relates to the needs of those who are licencees in temporary accommodation.

When PRHA allocates its properties it will endeavour to make sure that the property is suitable for its occupants. PRHA does realise however, that households and household circumstances change over time. It may be that a property is no longer suitable for the tenant's needs due to health reasons or other changes in circumstances.

This Policy aims:

- to enable existing tenants and occupants to transfer to our other properties, whenever possible, in order to satisfy housing need & the need to move on from supported accommodation,
- promote mobility and,
- make the best use of the housing stock.
- treat applications for housing from existing tenants in a clear and consistent manner

We aim to allocate houses in a way that:

- gives reasonable preference to those in greatest housing need,
- makes best use of available stock;
- maximises choice and helps to maintain communities.

2.0 Allocation to transfer tenants

The majority of PRHA vacancies are allocated through the common housing register of the Local Authority. Therefore the majority of transfer needs should be met by tenants applying for rehousing through their local authority common housing register.

Where a property is deemed to be hard to let and therefore made available for internal transfers the process outlined below will be followed.

We reserve the right to use any of our properties as decant accommodation for existing tenants who require emergency re-

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housing or who need to move when their homes are undergoing repair or improvement.

3.0 Eligibility for a transfer

All our tenants are eligible to apply for a transfer and to be assessed for the transfer list. However, an offer to transfer to alternative accommodation will **not** be made if:

- a) We do not have the written consent of both tenants (if a joint tenancy)
- b) Where there are arrears of rent and/or service charges unless a repayment arrangement has been in place and maintained for a period of 3 months OR the arrears are caused by delays outside the transfer applicant's control e.g. the delayed payment of Housing Benefit.
- c) We are taking legal action against the transfer applicant for a breach of the tenancy agreement (this includes action for rent arrears). This is because a transfer to alternative accommodation would have the effect of ending the legal proceedings. An exception may be made where the transfer has been requested in order to relieve the problem which led to the legal action.
- d) The condition of the current property (including any garden area) is not of an acceptable standard as defined by the tenancy agreement. The transfer applicant will be expected to bring the property up to a lettable standard and to carry out or have kept to an arrangement to pay for any rechargeable repairs. Exception may be made where the tenants circumstances e.g. ill health/disability mean that the work cannot be undertaken by the tenant.
- e) The transfer will result in the under-occupation or the overcrowding of a property. This eligibility requirement may be relaxed if the transfer need is urgent and/or both the Association and transfer applicant agree in writing that the transfer can take place.
- f) The transferring household does not need the facilities provided in a specially adapted property (such as amenity or wheelchair houses) and/or the services associated with a property (such as the warden service in sheltered housing).
- g) Specialist support services are provided as a condition of the tenancy & the incoming tenant has not been assessed as needing this support
- h) The transfer applicant has not been assessed as being able to

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manage in unsupported independent accommodation where this is the accommodation on offer

- i) The transfer applicant has knowingly given false information or if information has been deliberately withheld.

4.0 Priorities

As PRHA has a very small number of general needs properties it does not maintain a waiting list. If a hard to let flat becomes available the following process will apply:

- a) Any urgent management transfers will be considered as a first priority (e.g. people who are at risk or whose properties need urgent repairs)
- b) If there are no urgent management transfers, the Housing Team will ensure that all of PRHA's supported housing tenants (not licencees) who are actively bidding for move –on accommodation within that borough are made aware of the availability of the flat through their keyworker.
- c) An expression of interest should be made within 7 days
- d) Where no supported housing tenants require a transfer then the process can be opened up to those supported housing licencees who have been waiting longest for move-on

Cambridge Heath Road Employability Flats

Priority will be given to those who have just entered long term employment or training who are living in PRHA hostel accommodation including rooms and bedsits. An assessment of independent living skills will be undertaken as part of the letting process. As with all move on options the option of referral to floating support will also be made to prospective tenants.

5.0 Procedure

- 5.1 All potential applicants will be reviewed by a panel comprising the Housing Team. They will take into account the following priorities:
 - Where the tenant will be vacating a flat of similar or smaller size they will have priority, those occupying rooms will have second priority (this enables further through flow in supported housing schemes)
 - Length of time in supported accommodation will be the second priority

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- Other issues : such as the need to move because of harassment

The decisions of this panel meeting will be recorded and records kept of the decision making process. The unsuccessful applicants will be advised.

- 5.2 Decanted tenants may be allowed to remain in their decant property provided that the eligibility conditions of this Transfer Policy are met, another tenant on the management Transfer List does not have a higher need for the property and the property is not required as part of a decant programme.
- 5.3 All information provided in connection with a transfer application will be treated as confidential. To ensure that confidentiality is not breached, we will not discuss an application with a person claiming to be acting on behalf of a tenant unless that person is able to provide evidence of their right to act for the tenant.

6.0 Appeals

- 6.1 Details of how complaints are handled and the appeals procedure are contained within the PRHA complaints policy

7.0 Housing Act requirements

- 7.1 Current staff, former staff, Committee Members and their relatives who are tenants may apply for a transfer. However, a transfer will only be granted if it meets the requirements of this Transfer Policy, and has been approved by the Management board and then recorded in the Grant of Benefit Register. The person concerned must not have any involvement in the allocation process

8.0 Policy review

This Policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years by the Management Board to ensure the aims of the Policy are being achieved and to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation. If the Policy is amended all applicants will be informed where appropriate. In addition, PRHA's tenants will be involved in any significant review of this Policy in accordance with PRHA's Service User Participation Strategy **CS46**.

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