

Allocations and Lettings Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy sets out the approach that Falcon Housing Association C.I.C (FHA) will take to allocate properties, including setting out the application, decision-making and appeals processes used when letting property.
- 1.2. We provide specialised supported housing (SSH) for vulnerable people with an assessed health and/or social care need. The tenancy has been provided on the understanding the tenant accepts and complies with the support package commissioned and set out in the tenant's support plan, as agreed and reviewed by the local authority commissioning team in accordance with the tenant's assessed needs. Where a tenant no longer needs this level of support or is refusing to engage with their support plan, FHA will look to terminate the tenancy.

2. Legal and Regulatory Responsibilities (not exhaustive)

- 2.1 This policy has been drafted with consideration of the requirements of:
 - Regulator of Social Housing's (RSH) Tenancy Standard - [Tenancy Standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
 - Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 - [Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

3. Aims

- 3.1.1 To ensure that FHA lets its properties in a fair, open, and transparent way, in line with our objectives and social purpose and meeting all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- 3.2 To ensure that our staff, stakeholders, partners, and tenants are aware of how we allocate our properties.

4. Commitment

- 4.1 When allocating homes to new tenants we will:
 - ✓ Have a clear application process for potential tenants.
 - ✓ Work closely with referring agencies such as the Local Authority (LA), NHS commissioners and care providers.
 - ✓ Ensure our homes are let to those whose needs are not met by the commercial housing market.
 - ✓ Be open and transparent about the criteria we use when considering applications.
 - ✓ Ensure that properties are suitable and appropriate for those they are allocated to.
 - ✓ Provide easy read documents to make the process as simple as possible for potential customers to understand and be involved in.

5. Scope

- 5.1. This policy will apply to the allocation of all our properties at both initial letting and re-lets.

- 5.2. All staff and partners are expected to comply with this policy when letting social rent property on behalf of FHA.
- 5.3. This policy outlines how we will assess all applicants for our home.

6. Approach

- 6.1. Our approach is to work closely with referring agencies such as LA and NHS commissioners, and care providers. This will help us to support the communities in which we work, and ensure properties are allocated to those with appropriate needs.

7. Referrals Process

- 7.1. We will accept referrals of potential tenants from our LA and NHS partners and care commissioners. Referrals will be made by completing our referral form, which enables us to collect relevant information about the potential tenant, including:
 - Type of accommodation required.
 - Location preferences.
 - Support needs.
- 7.2. As a SSH provider, FHA do not maintain a waiting list and are not part of a Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) with our LA partners.
- 7.3. When a property becomes void, we are notified by the care provider and work in partnership to ensure that a suitable referral is received, ensuring that the property is allocated to those with the most appropriate needs.

8. Eligibility criteria

- 8.1. To be eligible to be allocated an FHA property, potential tenants must:
 - Be 18 years old (or over 16 in exceptional circumstances, with an adult guarantor to hold the tenancy in trust for them).
 - Have a 'right to rent', under the Immigration Act (2014).
 - Require a high level of support, where the only acceptable alternative public or voluntary sector accommodation options for them is care homes and/or hospital.
 - Be able to afford the tenancy, as assessed by our financial assessment.
 - Not have a history of tenancy arrears.
 - Not have a history of anti-social behaviour outside of those connected to individual behavioural issues.
 - Not have another suitable home available to them.
- 8.2. When FHA decides that a potential tenant does not meet the eligibility criteria set out above, it will notify them and their referring agency in writing, outlining clearly the reason for the decision.

9. Prioritising applicants

- 9.1. The priority with which potential tenants are offered a tenancy will be based first on any priority determined by the LA, NHS or care provider and secondly by the suitability of the property to the potential tenants needs.

10. Refusals

- 10.1. When a potential tenant views a property, but does not wish to or cannot move in, the referring agency will notify FHA.

11. Transfers

- 11.1. There are exceptional circumstances that may warrant a tenant requiring to move from their current home to another FHA property because it is no longer suitable for their needs. However, tenants may not be considered for a management transfer if they are subject to any legal action for rent arrears or tenancy breaches.
- 11.2. A management transfer can be requested by a tenant and/or care provider on behalf of the tenant where the tenant requires a move due to a serious housing management issue, domestic violence, require further support or severe financial hardship.
- 11.3. A transfer is assessed case by case and may require further evidence of any risk through reports provided by external agencies, such as the NHS, the GP, social services, or their care provider.

12. Move On

- 12.1. When a tenant wants to leave one of our properties, they must give us 28 days-notice.
- 12.2. During that period we will speak with the tenant and care provider/appointee to discuss the move out procedure including how to return the keys and clear any rent arrears.
- 12.3. We will where appropriate carry out a joint property inspection, agree with them and/or their appointees any defects that are the responsibility of the tenant which will need to be paid for either directly or via their appointed representatives, which will be made known to us at the point of surrendering the tenancy.
- 12.4. When a tenant is interested in moving into alternative accommodation, we will provide them with clear information and signpost them to relevant advisors who may be able to support them.
- 12.5. Where FHA has had to take action to terminate a tenancy due to eviction, we will always work with the local authority to try to help secure permanent, suitable accommodation to meet that tenant's needs.

13. Appeals

- 13.1. Tenants and potential tenants who feel we have not followed our allocations and lettings policy have the right to appeal our decision. Appeals should be made in writing within 14 days of a notification of our decision and will be responded to as set out in our complaints policy.

14. Equality and diversity

- 14.1. We will let our property to the potential tenants identified by our LA and other partners based on the priority order set out above. When assessing applicants, we will not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic.

14.2. We are aware that we work with a particularly vulnerable client group and will make reasonable adjustments to our lettings process and assessment as required to enable all potential tenants the opportunity to be allocated a property.

15. Monitoring and compliance

15.1. Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the board. The Chief Executive is responsible for implementation and monitoring compliance with the policy, and ensuring it is updated in line with changes in regulation or legislation.

16. Related Policies

16.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with FHA’s:

- Complaints Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

17 Policy Review

17.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically and at least every 2 years.

Review Process			
Policy review frequency:		Responsible for review:	
This policy will be reviewed on a 2-yearly basis		This policy will be reviewed by: Property Asset Manager	
Version Control			
Version	Date approved	Next review date	Author / Title
V4	August 2024	August 2026	Zoe Hartley – Property Asset Manager