



# LETTINGS POLICY 2024

## - 2027

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| <b>Lettings Policy</b> |
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| <b>Contact Officer:</b>         | Danielle Toyne – Strategic Lead for Place                                                                                    |
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| <b>Version Reviewed by:</b><br><br><b>Version Approved by:</b> | Danielle Toyne, Strategic Lead for Place<br><br>ELT -<br><br>Ops Committee –                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Policy Links:</b>                                           | Home Choice Lincs Policy<br>East Lindsey and Boston Joint Housing Register<br>Empty Homes Management Policy<br>Complaints and Compensation Policy<br>Tenancy Policy<br>Succession Policy<br>Mutual Exchange Policy<br>Equality & Diversity Policy<br>Health & Safety Policy |

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| <b>Brief Policy Summary:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p>This policy sets out the approach that will be taken by LHP, working within the local authority's choice-based lettings schemes it currently participates in, to effectively market and let our available social and affordable rented homes.</p> |

## Contents

|                                                              |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Contents.....                                                | 2  |
| Introduction .....                                           | 5  |
| Objective .....                                              | 5  |
| Equality and Diversity.....                                  | 6  |
| Scope .....                                                  | 6  |
| Allocating and Letting our Homes .....                       | 6  |
| Eligibility for Housing .....                                | 7  |
| Suitability for LHP accommodation.....                       | 8  |
| Affordability .....                                          | 9  |
| Support to sustain a tenancy .....                           | 9  |
| Housing applicants with convictions .....                    | 9  |
| Homeowners .....                                             | 10 |
| Property Type Eligibility .....                              | 10 |
| Property Suitability .....                                   | 11 |
| Household Size .....                                         | 11 |
| Adaptations .....                                            | 11 |
| Transfers Criteria.....                                      | 11 |
| Adapted properties and applicants requiring adaptations..... | 12 |
| Low demand properties.....                                   | 12 |
| Letting's standard .....                                     | 13 |
| Homes for Older people .....                                 | 13 |
| Succession.....                                              | 13 |
| Local lettings policies .....                                | 14 |
| New build homes.....                                         | 14 |
| Sensitive Lettings .....                                     | 15 |
| Management Transfers .....                                   | 15 |
| Lettings to employees and their close relatives.....         | 15 |
| Debts Owing to Other Housing Providers/Landlords .....       | 16 |
| Anti-Social Behaviour.....                                   | 17 |

|                                                           |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Criminal Behaviour .....                                  | 17 |
| Unmet Support Needs .....                                 | 17 |
| False Information .....                                   | 18 |
| Tenancy Breaches .....                                    | 18 |
| Other Reasons for Refusal .....                           | 18 |
| Appeals .....                                             | 18 |
| Allocating and Letting our Garages & Parking Spaces ..... | 19 |
| Implementation, Monitoring and Performance .....          | 19 |
| Equality Impact Assessment .....                          | 21 |

## Introduction

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1. Lincolnshire Housing Partnership aims to make best use of its housing stock and address housing need in its areas of operation. This policy sets out how we allocate our rented homes to suitable applicants, how we will market our homes and what checks, exclusions, or exceptions we may apply.
2. In addition, this policy sets out how we allocate our garages and parking spaces to ensure we maximise revenue from these facilities and ensure we minimise void rent loss.
3. The policy is aligned with the Regulatory Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing, specifically: -

### Tenancy Standard (Allocations and Mutual Exchange)

4. This policy describes how LHP:
  - Allocates and lets our homes in fair and transparent way that takes the needs of our customers, and our prospective customers, into account.
  - Provides support to customers to mutually exchange their homes.
5. Including how we:
  - Contribute to Local Authorities' strategic housing functions and assist local authorities to fulfil their duties to meet identified local housing need.
  - Allocate our homes that are adapted to meet specific needs in a way that is compatible with the purpose of social housing.
  - Address under-occupation and overcrowding in our homes, maintaining a focus on the needs of our customers.
  - Make provisions for a fair, reasonable, simple, and accessible appeals process for allocations decisions.
  - Record all of our lettings on the Continuous Record of Lettings (CORE) system.

## Objective

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6. The policy objectives are to ensure that we:
  - allocate and let our homes in a fair and transparent manner.
  - Allocate and let our homes in a way that meets the needs of the customer as well as considering the context and needs of the surrounding community in order to actively contribute to creating sustainable communities.
  - enable and support applicants understand their rights and responsibilities, as well as our responsibilities as a landlord.
  - work closely with Local Authorities in the areas we operate in order to meet local housing priorities.
  - Minimise the number of vacant homes, garages and other facilities and associated rent loss.

- Let all homes to our agreed lettings standard.
- Enable mobility between homes and areas through mutual exchange and transfer.
- Being accountable by providing clear information about our decisions and our appeals process where we have declined an applicant.
- Working actively to tackle and rectify social housing fraud.

## **Equality and Diversity**

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7. LHP recognises that its customers and colleagues come from diverse backgrounds, with varying experiences and needs. LHP is committed to promoting equality and fairness and combating discrimination. This applies to everyone, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic background, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation gender reassignment, age, marital or parental status.

## **Scope**

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8. The policy will be applied to all applicants for housing with LHP, either from the relevant housing registers through our choice-based lettings partnership agreements, or applicants from other sources, such as Kwik Key, Right Move, social media, or other sources.

## **Allocating and Letting our Homes**

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9. LHP operates across two main Local Authority areas, Northeast Lincolnshire, and Lincolnshire. We have nomination agreements with our Local Authority partners and usually advertise our properties through their Choice Based Lettings systems (CBL).
10. We use Homes Choice Lincs and East Lindsey and Boston Joint Housing Register local authority schemes, complemented by other methods, to allocate homes.
11. In addition, we have properties and work with our partners in West Lindsey and South Kesteven District Council areas to advertise or receive nominations for homes in these areas.
12. Each Local Authority policy adheres to the legal requirements of the Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and therefore meet all the statutory requirements relating to eligibility and qualification for housing. Local Authority policies are framed to provide Reasonable Preference to those with housing need, and LHP participation with the Local Authority scheme therefore ensures that those with housing need have priority access to a majority proportion of our homes.
13. Customers can apply for housing through the Local Authority scheme. The Local Authority policy will describe the types of properties eligible applicants can apply for, how eligible applicants will be prioritised, and the method of allocating homes.

14. LHP may infrequently advertise some homes outside of the local scheme; either to attract new customers from different markets, or to address an imbalance in the locality. These homes will be advertised on a first come first served basis and may be advertised in a number of ways including web-based platforms such as Rightmove.
15. The decision to allocate a home through one of these alternative methods, and the selection of the allocation's method, will be at the discretion of the Neighbourhood and Allocations Manager. Consideration will be given to any issues related to the previous tenancy, any known local issues, demand for the property and existing arrangements with the Local Authority.
16. Applicants for these properties will be assessed to check that they are eligible for housing with LHP as they have not already been verified by a Local Authority.
17. Customers can find out more about how to access a home via Find a Home page on the LHP website.

## **Eligibility for Housing**

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18. Anyone aged 16 or over and in housing need is eligible to apply for housing with LHP. Applicants aged 16 or 17 will be granted an Equitable Tenancy, which enables them to occupy a property even though they cannot legally hold a tenancy title.
19. In accordance with the Immigration Act 2014 and current Home Office guidance, LHP is legally required to carry out a Right to Rent check for every new tenancy, regardless of how the property is allocated (including Choice-Based Lettings nominations, direct lets, or internal transfers).
20. The following provisions apply:
  - No follow-up checks are required for individuals with pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme. A single check before tenancy commencement is sufficient.
  - Customers holding digital immigration status (e.g. EU Settlement Scheme, biometric residence permit, or eVisa) must provide a share code, which LHP will use to complete the verification through the government's online service: <https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent>
  - All documentation provided must meet the most recent Home Office requirements, which may include digital or physical evidence depending on immigration status.
  - Ukrainian nationals with leave under the Homes for Ukraine or Ukraine Family Scheme must provide evidence of immigration status in line with Home Office guidance. Acceptable documents include a valid visa, biometric residence permit, or share code for digital status.
21. Every household member aged 18 or over must provide either:

One document from **List A (Group 1)**; or  
Two documents from **List A (Group 2)**

22. Documents must be presented in person for verification, unless the applicant holds a digital immigration status, in which case a Home Office share code will be used to confirm their Right to Rent status online.
23. **List A – Group 1 (Single document required)**
- UK Passport / EEA National Passport / Identity Card
  - Registration Certificate for Permanent Residence of an EEA National
  - EEA Family Member Permanent Residence Card
  - Biometric Residence Permit with Unlimited Leave
  - Passport or Travel Document endorsed with Unlimited Leave
  - UK Immigration Status Document endorsed with Unlimited Leave
  - Certificate of Naturalisation or Registration as a British Citizen
24. **List A – Group 2 (Two documents required)**
- UK Birth or Adoption Certificate
  - Full or Provisional UK Driving Licence (Photo Card)
  - Letter from HM Prison Service or Criminal Record Check
  - Letter from a UK Government Department or Local Authority
  - Letter from the National Offender Management Service
  - Evidence of current or previous service in the UK Armed Forces
  - Letter from police confirming certain documents reported stolen
  - Letter from a Private Rented Sector Access Scheme
  - Letter of attestation from an employer
  - Benefits paperwork (issued within the last 3 months)
  - Letter from a UK Further or Higher Education Institute
  - Letter of attestation from a UK passport holder in an acceptable profession
25. Applicants with limited leave to remain must provide one of the following documents:
- A valid passport endorsed with a time-limited period
  - Biometric immigration document with permission to stay for a time-limited period
  - Non-EEA National Residence Card
  - UK immigration status document with a time-limited endorsement from the Home Office
  - Where an applicant holds a digital immigration status, they must provide a Home Office share code to enable LHP to carry out the Right to Rent check online at [www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent](https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent).

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## Suitability for LHP accommodation

26. To ensure that lettings are suitable and sustainable we will carry out a number of checks prior to proceeding with an offer of accommodation.

## **Affordability**

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27. All applicants will undergo a “pre-tenancy financial assessment” to confirm their ability to pay their rent and other commitments (such as Council Tax, utilities, food and other household expenditure, any debt or loan repayment commitments etc.). Where an assessment indicates that an applicant would be unable to sustain the tenancy from a financial point of view the offer of accommodation will not proceed, and they will be given advice regarding how to improve their circumstances so that they are “tenancy ready”.
28. All applicants are required to pay a minimum of one week’s rent (pro rata based on sign up day) in advance at sign-up in order to ensure that the customer is complying with the terms of the tenancy agreement for rent to be paid weekly in advance, and also to confirm and reinforce the ethos that payment of rent is the customer’s responsibility, regardless of any benefit entitlement.
29. In exceptional circumstances, the requirement for one week’s rent in advance may be waived at the discretion of the Neighbourhoods and Allocations Manager. This will be in circumstances where the requirement for 1 week’s rent will cause serious detriment to the customer and an arrangement will be made to ensure that the customer is compliant with the terms of their tenancy agreement within a reasonable timeframe.

## **Support to sustain a tenancy.**

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30. Where an individual may require care or support to be able to maintain their tenancy, we will request the appropriate care and support plans from the relevant agencies so that we can ensure we are creating a sustainable tenancy where that individual’s health and wellbeing is supported effectively. We may identify that a digital solution may be appropriate to assist an applicant in sustaining a new tenancy, for example via support from our Telecare Team.
31. There may be some circumstances where LHP accommodation may be considered unsuitable as the level of support need is considered to be too high to be adequately supported within independent living. A person-centered risk-based approach will be taken where full consideration will be given to the individual and their circumstances, in liaison with the customer and the relevant agency before any decision is made to decline housing. In some circumstances, it may be that a certain property or location is not appropriate for an individual, but dependent on availability LHP may be able to offer an alternative within our stock.

## **Housing applicants with convictions**

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32. We will ask applicants to disclose any unspent convictions as part of their application for housing with LHP. Where an applicant has declared unspent convictions, we will carry out a risk assessment. Applicants may be refused housing if there is reason to suppose that the applicant is likely to pose a risk to their household, neighbours, the wider community, or LHP colleagues. The risk assessment will also consider the type of property and suitability of the area to ensure that this does not pose a risk to the ex-offender.
33. Where a Schedule 1 (those who pose a risk to children) is disclosed or we become aware that the applicant is subject to MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) imposed on registered sexual violent and/or dangerous offenders. We will work with those agencies supporting the MAPPA to ensure that the proposed property is suitable. Applicants may be refused where the risk is deemed to be high/difficult to manage or we do not have a suitable property.

## **Homeowners**

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34. Applicants who are homeowners may apply for re-housing if they meet any of the criteria below:
- They need sheltered accommodation and age banded accommodation.
  - Their mortgage lender is repossessing their home.
  - Their relationship has broken down and as a result they need to sell their home.
  - Their current home is unsuitable due to ill health or disability.

## **Property Type Eligibility**

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35. LHP will use the same property size eligibility that is used to assess the benefit eligibility for assistance with housing costs. Using these rules, a separate bedroom is required for.
- a. A couple (aged 16 or over) who live together as partners.
  - b. A single adult
  - c. Two children under 10 who are part of the same family.
  - d. Two children of the same sex under 16 who are part of the same family.
  - e. Gender reassignment, in respect of children sharing rooms who are transitioning or identify as a sex different to that assigned at birth.
  - f. any remaining children who cannot be paired according to the rules above.
36. In order to make best use of stock LHP will always seek to maximise the occupancy of a property in accordance with the guidance above. However, there may be occasions when an allocation is made to a household who will under occupy a property, with consideration of affordability. Any such decision will be at the discretion of the Neighbourhood and Allocations Manager and is expected to be in exceptional circumstances.

## Property Suitability

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### Household Size

37. All LHP properties are given a bedroom number and a maximum number of occupants based on the size of the home. LHP will not make an offer of a tenancy where we believe that the occupants would immediately or in the near future be deemed to be overcrowded.
38. Where a property does become under-occupied or overcrowded within the lifetime of the tenancy LHP will offer support and guidance to ensure that our customers are supported to access housing that is of an appropriate size and number of bedrooms.
39. Dealing with cases of over-crowding and under-occupation helps us to make best use of our stock. Where a customer is under-occupying their home and wishes to move, we will work closely with our local authority partners to encourage a move into more suitable, smaller, accommodation. We will give advice on all the housing options for their area; this includes applying to the relevant Local Authority and/or seeking a Mutual Exchange.
40. In some circumstances, LHP may be required to take enforcement action in the case of overcrowding, however this is always deemed as a last resort. Full details can be found in The Tenancy Policy.

### Adaptations

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41. Where a property has adaptations to suit a particular physical need, preference will be given to applicants with this requirement. Applicants that require adapted accommodation may be given additional priority by the Local Authority in accordance with that Choice Based Lettings Scheme. LHP will work with Local Authorities and Occupational Health to assess the individual requirements of the applicant.

### Transfers Criteria

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42. Current LHP customers who register on either of the local authority schemes will be assessed by the administrating authority and awarded a priority band in accordance with the relevant policy. Internal Transfers will normally only be accepted where all accounts are free of debt, all terms and conditions of the tenancy have been met and a satisfactory tenancy inspection has been completed.

43. We will not accept applications for transfer from customers with Starter Tenancies until the tenancy has been converted to an Assured Tenancy other than in exceptional circumstances.
44. Where a transfer applicant is currently banded as having no or low housing need, a “like for like” move within the immediate vicinity (within a 2-mile radius) will not generally be approved. An exception may be allowed for residents of sheltered schemes who may have a wish to move from a studio to one-bedroom flats. Additionally, a transfer applicant classed as having no or low housing need would need to have been resident in their current home for 2 years before a transfer could be considered.
45. Where LHP is seeking to rehouse customers as a permanent decant LHP will work with the customer to identify a suitable alternative property to be offered directly. Customers may also be advised to register with the local authority scheme to potentially create a wider choice of properties.
46. We will continue to publicise and promote mutual exchange as an option for current customers who wish to transfer and will provide information and advice to current customers to assist them, as appropriate. Full details of how we will deal with applications for a Mutual Exchange are included in the LHP Mutual Exchange Policy.

### **Adapted properties and applicants requiring adaptations.**

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47. Properties which are either fully adapted or have a number of major adaptations will be advertised with these details and priority for these will be given to applicants who have a need for those adaptations. This will include, level access showers, ramped access, widened doorways, hoists, stairlifts etc. Where no suitable applicant has bid on the property under one of the choice-based lettings scheme we may choose to contact partner agencies to identify a suitable applicant who has a need for the adaptations, to make best use of the available stock. We will only remove adaptations where all potential options to find a suitable customer with a requirement for the adaptations have been exhausted. Adaptations will be reused and recycled if possible.
48. Where a customer has an identified need for adapted housing, we may consider offering a property without adaptations where the customer has been preapproved for a Disability Facilities Grant, and we can reasonably alter the property in question. This will be considered alongside Occupational Health.

### **Low demand properties**

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49. Where a property is considered “Low demand” LHP may use other means to advertise the property outside of the Local Authorities allocation scheme. We will define a property as Low demand to let if there have been no suitable bids

received after advertising through two CBL cycles, where no nomination has been made by the Local Authority or where similar properties in the location have failed to attract suitable bids via CBL historically.

50. We may decide to market the property using alternative mediums such as social media, to secure a suitable customer. For properties advertised this way we can relax the criteria for “bedroom need”, providing the applicant can demonstrate affordability of a home larger than their needs. Other criteria, such as age restrictions for older person’s accommodation, may also be relaxed.
51. Properties, or types of properties, that remain difficult to let and have a sustained adverse effect on the surrounding area, community and rent loss will be subject to an appraisal, as per our Asset Management Strategy. The appraisal will determine actions necessary to remedy the issue and may include improvements or alterations, environmental improvements or modifications, conversion, or disposal.

## **Letting’s standard**

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52. All of our properties will be let to our “Letting’s standard” which is periodically reviewed and amended, in consultation with customers. This sets out the minimum standard that our properties will be at when we sign up our new customers. Depending on the condition of the property we may offer a decoration allowance, which will be based on the type of property, number and size of the rooms, current condition of the property, and the demand for the property.

## **Homes for Older people**

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53. In addition to our general needs stock there are certain properties that we specifically designate for “older people” and/or people with assessed need for support. This includes sheltered schemes, which may have communal lounge, kitchen, laundry, lift, Lifeline services, etc.; grouped flats that are designated for older people as part of a localised approach to make best use of our stock; bungalows that were grouped by design to create an older person’s community and which in some cases are attached to sheltered schemes (with customers having access to and use of communal facilities which they are then service charged for).
54. Age criteria will apply to the properties described above. However, there may be circumstances when this restriction may be waived e.g., medical need or if a property is designated hard to let. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and will include considerations of community cohesion and tenancy sustainability.

## **Succession**

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55. Applications for succession to a tenancy are considered by the Neighbourhoods Team, in line with relevant legislation. Where an occupant is entitled to succeed the tenancy, but the property is unsuitable e.g., due to size or age restriction, they will be required to register on the relevant CBL scheme and will be awarded priority. They will be expected to place bids through the scheme, and this will be monitored to ensure that they are able to secure suitable alternative accommodation.

### **Local lettings policies**

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56. In order to create and maintain balanced and sustainable communities we may implement local lettings policies, in agreement with our local authority partners. The policy requires:
- An evidence base to understand the issues the policy is seeking to address. This evidence base can then be used to develop a framework of targets for performance management measures,
  - Clear criteria for the prioritisation of applicants.
  - An outline of the approach to review. Local Lettings Policies should be reviewed at least every 2 years.

### **New build homes**

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57. The key objective when allocating new build homes is to achieve balance and sustainability in the estate and the wider community. Local Lettings Policies for new build developments are common practice and will typically include:
- The objective to create a balanced, sustainable community, with a mix of residents successfully managing their tenancies.
  - To provide low income working households access to affordable housing.
58. For new build properties in the Northeast Lincolnshire Council area, we have an agreement to offer additional priority to serving or former members of the Armed Forces in order for them to access secure and affordable housing (up to a maximum of 5 lettings per year).

### **S106 Restrictions**

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59. When allocating and letting new build homes we will work with the relevant local authority to ensure that we comply with any planning agreements in place, such as s.106 agreement.

## **Sensitive Lettings**

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- 60. In order to ensure a sustainable tenancy for the applicant, or to prevent potential housing management issues that may result from an unsuitable match, we may apply a sensitive letting. This means that we may depart from our usual allocation practice and instead of allocating a property to applicants in order of their priority (based on housing need), we will consider the suitability of the applicant for the property on the basis of the information we have about them.
- 61. In order to achieve communities which are balanced, safe, and sustainable we may implement a sensitive lettings criterion on individual properties and/or areas.
- 62. For example, this could be the case where there is previous age-designated stock or where there have been issues relating to anti-social behaviour or community cohesion.
- 63. In all cases, any such use of sensitive let criteria will be advertised in the CBL advert. When in force this may result in offers of accommodation being made to the most suitable applicant on the shortlist regardless of their position.

## **Management Transfers**

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- 64. There may be exceptional circumstances where a customer needs to be moved as a matter of urgency or priority, either to maintain balanced and stable communities, to protect vulnerable customers (including cases of harassment or domestic abuse) or customers who have lost their home due to fire, flood etc. In addition, there may be instances where an urgent move is required for technical reasons, for example, major structural repairs, damp, asbestos etc.
- 65. The applicant should be placed into the appropriate priority band and would usually be expected to place bids on suitable properties as they are advertised. Where the applicant is placed in a priority band for a management transfer but is either unable or unwilling to place bids themselves, or the need for rehousing is urgent and immediate, a Direct Let or Match may be considered.
- 66. Applicants who would otherwise be offered a temporary decant for works, such as damp works, may be offered an alternative “like for like” move, a “permanent decant”, in order to reduce the overall cost for LHP.

## **Lettings to employees and their close relatives**

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- 67. Applicants for housing are asked to declare if they are related to a LHP colleague, Board or Committee member. Any letting to an existing employee or their close relatives (for example spouse, civil partner, child, brother, sister, parent, parent-

in-law, grandparent, grandchild, guardian, adoptive parent, adopted child) must be approved in advance by the **Executive Director of Customers** in order to ensure the probity of the let.

## **Excluding Applicants:**

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### **Former tenant debts**

68. Where a former tenant has applied for rehousing and has an outstanding housing related debt with LHP, the following applies:
- If the debt is less than 6 years old.
  - And the amount is below the threshold for the appropriate CBL scheme (currently £250), and they are active on the housing register, we may agree to rehouse them and write the debts in to the new tenancy agreement. The factors which will be considered include:
    - How long ago the debt was accrued, and the rent payment behaviour since the total amount of the debt.
    - The cause of the debt, e.g. whether the customer chose not to pay, was unable to pay, was experiencing domestic violence or other significant welfare concerns were present, whether the rent charged was affordable, or whether welfare reforms contributed.
    - Whether a repayment plan has been agreed or a possession order, and if the customer has complied with it.
    - Whether the customer's circumstances have changed significantly, and the amount is above the threshold for the appropriate CBL scheme (currently £250), we will not re-house until the debt is cleared or brought below the threshold and the above applies.
  - If the debt is older than 6 years old:
    - And there is no Money Judgement order, then the debt will not be considered recoverable and will not prevent re-housing.
    - And there is a Money Judgement Order, then the debt is still recoverable and the above applies regarding re-housing.

### **Debts Owing to Other Housing Providers/Landlords**

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69. All housing related debts accrued and still owing are to be considered. LHP will take into account the amount and type of the debt, the circumstances under which it accrued and the applicant's payment record.

70. All applicants must be asked to clear any debts owed to their current landlord in full. If this is not possible, they must be advised that their application cannot be considered until they demonstrate a commitment to pay regularly for a period of at least six months.
71. If we fail to get any details of previous debts from private landlords, we must take this to mean that no debts exist.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour**

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72. If there is evidence that the applicant/member of the household has acted and/or been identified as perpetrating antisocial behaviour which makes them unsuitable to be a customer in the property, they have applied for the application may be refused. This will only be in the circumstances where the nature and severity of the antisocial behaviour is a serious threat to LHP colleague, contractors, customers, or the community.
73. Consideration will be given to how long ago the incidents occurred, whether there were factors involved which related to the previous address and how the individual has conducted themselves since and whether the customers circumstances have changed significantly.

## **Criminal Behaviour**

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74. If an applicant/member of the household has been convicted of a “serious offence” that is unspent, and they may pose a threat/risk to our colleague, customers, contractors, or the community the application may be refused.
75. Examples of “serious offences” include:
- a. Public Order offences, nuisance, vandalism, breach of injunction
  - b. Dealing, supplying, or cultivating controlled drugs
  - c. Burglary, robbery, theft
  - d. Violence
  - e. Indictable offences
  - f. Offences relating to hate crimes.
76. Consideration will be given to how long ago the incidents occurred, whether there were factors involved which related to the previous address, and how the individual has conducted themselves since the conviction.

## **Unmet Support Needs**

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77. Applicants with unmet support needs, where LHP are unable to identify suitable and sufficient support through a third-party agency may be refused a tenancy. LHP will always aim to work with partner agencies to find appropriate support to enable an allocation to be made.

## **False Information**

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78. If an applicant is found to have deliberately provided false information that is relevant to a housing application, or has deliberately withheld information, which has resulted in improved chances of being offered a home the applicant may be refused an offer of accommodation.

## **Tenancy Breaches**

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79. Applicants may be refused where there is evidence that the applicant/member of the household has seriously breached a tenancy agreement or has behaved in a way that would constitute a breach of tenancy conditions, The breach will be considered if it would be reasonable for a court to grant a possession order, or if it renders the applicant unsuitable to be a LHP customer.
80. Examples include:
- a. Malicious damage to property
  - b. Unwilling to comply with any imposed conditions of tenancy.

## **Other Reasons for Refusal**

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81. An applicant may also be refused an offer of accommodation if:
- The property applied for is unsuitable to the applicants needs and by offering the property would cause overcrowding.
  - The applicant is a person from abroad prescribed as ineligible by the Secretary of State.

## **Appeals**

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82. The relevant CBL policy for each local authority area provides information on the review and appeal mechanisms available to applicants, including judicial review.
83. Where LHP rejects an application, we will provide the applicant with a written explanation for this rejection within 5 working days. Rejection reasons are detailed in section 20 'excluding applicants'.

84. If an applicant is unhappy with a decision made by LHP to refuse housing, then a complaint may be submitted, which will be investigated and responded to in line with the LHP Complaints Policy.
85. LHP will be transparent with applicants where they have been 'skipped' for a property and the reasons for this. We will notify the applicant of the skipping reason within 5 working days.

### **Allocating and Letting our Garages & Parking Spaces**

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86. LHP provides garages, garage spaces and parking provisions which are available to rent by LHP and non-LHP customers.
87. Customers can apply for garages via a variety of mechanisms (face to face, online, via telephone) and each application is placed on a waiting list, with priority provided to those who have been on the waiting list the longest (i.e. date order).
88. A garage will not be allocated where an applicant owes LHP any monies, either current or former debt. Nor will a garage be allocated if a customer has previously breached their license agreement, resulting in the termination of that agreement.
89. Charges for garages are exclusive of VAT for rental of the first garage for LHP customers. For second garages and non-LHP customers, the charge attracts VAT at the current rate, as per HMRC guidelines.
90. The details of managing garages and parking spaces are contained within the garage and parking facility rental agreement, including:
  - a. The minimal rental period
  - b. Rent in advance.
  - c. Ending the agreement and notice periods.
  - d. Eviction from an LHP residential tenancy
  - e. Possession proceedings, including rent arrears and misuse.
  - f. Annual charge reviews and notification.
91. The minimal rental period, rent in advance and notice periods can be amended by the discretion of the Neighbourhoods and Allocations manager, and by agreement of the customer, in exceptional circumstances.

### **Implementation, Monitoring and Performance**

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92. The Corporate Head of Customers is responsible for implementing and monitoring performance of this policy.
93. The Corporate Head of Customers will monitor the following:

- a. The number of properties empty and available for let. • The average relet time for empty properties
- b. The number of lets achieved.
- c. The numbers being rehoused through each scheme, by priority band.
- d. The numbers being rehoused through each scheme who are current customers (transfers)
- e. The number of refusals and reasons • No of lettings to Armed Forces applicants.
- f. The number of lettings by diversity of applicants
- g. The number of refusals by diversity of applicants
- h. The recording of all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.

94. The Performance Team will monitor satisfaction with the lettings process.

## Lettings Policy

The policy sets out the approach that LHP will take, working within the CBL schemes it currently participates in (for the North Home Choice Lincs and for the East Lindsey and Boston Joint Housing Register), to effectively market and let our homes to suitable applicants, in a fair open and transparent way.

**Completed By:**

Corporate Head of Customers

**Date:**

23 April 2024

### STAGE 1: SCREENING

This stage establishes whether a proposed initiative will have an impact from an equality perspective on any particular group of people or community – i.e., on the grounds of race, religion/faitb/belief, gender (including transgender), sexual orientation, age, disability, or whether it is “equality neutral” (i.e., have no effect either positive or negative).

**Q 1. Who will benefit from this initiative?** Is there likely to be a positive impact on specific groups/communities (whether they are the intended beneficiaries), and if so, how? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality ‘neutral’ i.e. will have no particular effect on any group? *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

The Policy potentially benefits all housing applicants.

**Q 2. Is there likely to be an adverse impact on one or more minority/underrepresented or community group as a result of this initiative?** If so, who may be affected and why: Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality ‘neutral’? *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

We do not envisage any negative impact with any of our service delivery through the implementation if this policy – however will be monitoring diversity to keep this under review.

However, we know that we have a shortfall of suitably adapted homes held within our current stock and the policy seeks to clarify our stances in terms of who we will let our properties to in order to make the best use of the limited amount of fully or partially adapted property that we hold.

**Q 3. Is there sufficient data on the target beneficiary groups/communities?** Are any of these groups under or overrepresented? Do they have access to the same resources? What are your sources of data and are there any gaps? *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

Yes, we collect data on all customers in relation to gender, age, disability, household make-up. We will analyse the data for customers who access the service and identify any differences between these groups of customers and the customer profile as a whole. We will be analysing this data and will consider any differences which are identified and take actions to improve our policy and procedures in response.

**Q 4. Outsourced services – if the initiative is partly or wholly provided by external organisations / agencies, please list any arrangements. plan to ensure that they promote equality and diversity.** *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

The policy is implemented and monitored internally.

**Q 5. Is the impact of the initiative (whether positive or negative) significant enough to warrant a full impact assessment – see guidance?** If not, will there be monitoring and review to assess the level of impact over a period of time? *Please consider all aspects of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

We do not perceive any negative impact that would warrant a full equality impact assessment – however if our monitoring identifies any significant impacts then we will revisit this decision. However, we will continue to work with our partners through our development program to bring more suitably adapted properties into our stock, and we continue to work with partners in local authority and the Occupational Therapy service to carry out adaptations to currently tenanted properties where this is the preferred option.

**Q 6. To be completed at six monthly review** Detail actions taken to assess the level of impact over a period of time, or to address any gaps in data. *Please consider all aspect of Diversity including as a minimum: Age, Disability, Gender/Transgender, Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Faith/Belief, Sexuality*

We will revisit this impact assessment in 6 months once we have reviewed the monitoring data against our customer profile – to identify if any actions required.