

ALLOCATIONS & LETTINGS POLICY

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Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) is committed to allocating and letting our social housing stock in a fair, transparent and efficient way, making the best use of our stock whilst taking into account the housing need and aspirations of our customers and potential customers. We will deliver this service in accordance with and by referring to the following:

- The Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards in particular, The Tenancy Standard.
- Homefinder Somerset (HFS) Common Lettings Policy.
- SWT Housing Service will participate in the Homefinder Somerset Partnership, the partnership operates a countywide choice based lettings scheme which is administered by the Local Authorities of Somerset.
- SWT is committed to creating balanced and sustainable communities, when making allocations we will consider if a potential customer has the ability to sustain a tenancy, and if required will ensure that relevant support agencies have been engaged from the outset of a tenancy
- SWT works in Partnership with relevant agencies following the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) protocol which supports the management of registered Offenders and those assessed as being a risk to the public.
- SWT will assist in the rehousing of Asylum Seekers and persons from abroad, in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements. We will accept referrals from the Local Authority for Asylum seekers with “limited leave to remain” as well as the NASS scheme (National Asylum Support Scheme)
- SWT are able to let properties outside of the HFS scheme, this will only be done in extreme circumstances when all alternative options have been exhausted and significant risks are present, these circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis and will require the Lettings Manager’s approval.
- To ensure fairness and transparency, where we identify an applicant has a significant relationship either with SWT or an employee of SWT, we will ensure that any proposed let is reviewed with the Housing Portfolio Holder before the allocation is confirmed.
- We will seek to allocate our housing stock in a way that ensures best use of the property, this will include where there are significant Aids and Adaptations, property size and also the local situation (ensuring adherence to Section 106 agreements. We will achieve this by effective use of adverts, using appropriate labelling and working with partners such as Housing Occupational Therapists.
- In some circumstances we may implement the use of Local Lettings Plans (LLP’s) in order to address issues or concerns in a defined area for a limited period of time, usually as part of a Housing Development Project or to manage serious Anti-social Behaviour (ASB).
- We will encourage our tenants to arrange their own home moves by mutual exchange and providing free subscription for our existing customers to a national home swap service **THIS IS UNDER REVIEW DUE TO HOMEFINDER NOT CONTINUING WITH MUTUAL EXCHANGES.**
- We will seek assist our existing customers who need to downsize to a smaller property by supporting them through the application and lettings process and by provision of a Transfer Removal Grant, once the home move is completed.
- We will review our allocations and lettings performance and consult on this policy by seeking comments from customers, stakeholders and partners, as well as reviewing against good practice and regulatory and legal requirements.
- We will not usually make an allocation to an applicant where they or a member of their household has a recent history, (defined as the last 2 years) of ASB. We will take into account, the extent of the ASB, its impact on the local community at the time, the length of time since the activity occurred, but also what the applicant or household member has done to change their behaviour and be better able to sustain a tenancy with SWT.

This policy and its associated procedures will be reviewed annually and authorised prior to release by The Director of Housing for SWT. The policy will be counter signed by the CEO of SWT.

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Name:.....

Position: Director of Housing

Date:.....

Name:.....

Position: Chief Executive Officer

Date:.....