

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Version:</b>	<b>2.0</b>
Allocations Policy	<b>Date approved by Board:</b>	<b>July-2021</b>
	<b>Date of next review:</b>	<b>July-2023</b>

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out Fairplace Homes' approach to letting its properties. The aim of this policy is to ensure that Fairplace lets its properties in a fair way, in line with our objectives, and meeting all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

1.2 In letting our properties Fairplace will:

- Consider the individual circumstances and housing needs and aspirations of our customers in order to match them to the right home
- Work closely with referring agencies such as the local authority, NHS commissioners and care providers,
- Ensure our homes are let to those whose needs are not met by the commercial housing market
- Ensure that there is an appeal process and that our decisions are fair and transparent
- Offer housing options advice and, where possible, give our customers a choice in their housing options
- Support our local authority partners by contributing to their strategic housing function and supporting them with their duties to meet identified local housing needs
- Minimise the amount of time our homes are empty
- Prioritise applicants for social, affordable and supported housing who are in the greatest housing need whilst ensuring sustainability of tenancies and the best use of housing stock

## 2. Legal and Regulatory responsibilities

2.1 The Regulator for Social Housing's Tenancy Standard requires that Registered Providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of customers and potential customers. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:

- make the best use of available housing;
- are compatible with the purpose of the housing; and
- contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities
- and there should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.

2.2 Legal requirements that Fairplace will apply to allocations and lettings are outlined in:

- The Equality Act 2010
- Allocation of Housing and Homelessness Regulations 2006, further amended in 2012.
- The Localism Act 2011
- The Immigration Act 2014

- The Immigration Act 2016
- *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679*
- The Housing Act 1996

### **3. How Fairplace let homes**

#### **3.1 We let our homes by;**

- Working with our Local Authority partners who nominate residents for our hostel schemes (Newham Concession Contract)
- For our Supported Housing properties, we have specific referral arrangements with external agencies and/or specific allocations policies for those schemes in place, under which we accept referrals of potential tenants from our local authority and NHS partners and care commissioners.
- In the provision of our Specialised Supported Housing, we do not maintain a waiting list for these properties and are not part of a Choice Based Lettings Scheme with our local authority partners. We are notified by the care provider that a void has arisen and work with them to identify tenants to fill those voids.

### **4. Making the best use of homes**

#### **4.1 In order to make the best use of our homes Fairplace:**

- Have bespoke lettings criteria for each of our Supported/Specialist housing schemes, working with healthcare and local authorities
- Will aim to make use of adapted homes by giving preference to customers/ households whose health/ mobility will benefit from these
- Will address under occupied and overcrowded households, where possible, by use of a system of prioritisation

### **5. Who Fairplace houses**

#### **5.1.1 Fairplace maintains a number of restrictions on who can access its homes in line with our aims and purpose. Details of these are listed below, however local lettings policies may also introduce additional criteria.**

#### **5.2 Income levels**

##### **5.2.1 Applicants/joint applicants who are working with an income above the threshold determined by Fairplace will be ineligible to access any of Fairplace's general needs social rent properties. Applicants may still be able to access adapted properties, supported housing and other housing we may offer. The thresholds are:**

- Single applicants with a gross annual income above £50k will not be eligible.
- Joint applicants with a combined gross income above £60k will not be eligible.
- Applicants who have a free equity in excess of this amount will not be eligible.

##### **5.2.2 Fairplace also reserves the right to deem any applicant ineligible if they do not have sufficient monthly income to pay the rent, services charges and other basic living expenses associated with living in the property. This will be assessed based on the individual property and circumstance of the prospective tenant.**

### **5.3 Re-housing sex offenders**

- 5.3.1 We will work with relevant agencies to make a full assessment and carefully consider any risks before making a decision to offer a home to a sex offender. We will accept applications where a release date is set and is within a reasonable time frame.

### **5.4 Immigrations status**

- 5.4.1 We will ensure every adult over 18 has the legal right to rent our home.

### **5.5 Homeowners**

- 5.5.1 We will not consider existing homeowners for allocation of our social or affordable rented properties. Where the applicant is seeking other types of accommodation from us (supported or specialised supported housing) they may be considered.

### **5.6 Availability of appropriate support**

- 5.6.1 We will only offer a home to vulnerable customers where adequate support arrangements are in place. We will work with agencies and partner organisations to seek the required support before making the final decision.

- 5.6.2 To be eligible to be allocated a Fairplace Specialised Supported Housing (SSH) property, potential tenants typically require a high level of support, where the only acceptable alternative public or voluntary sector accommodation options for them are care homes.

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

### **5.7 Fraud**

- 5.7.1 Applicants who after investigation are found to have submitted a fraudulent housing application will not be considered eligible for Fairplace properties. See our Tenancy Policy for further details.

### **5.8 Minors (under 18-year olds)**

- 5.8.1 Anyone under 18 cannot legally hold a tenancy. We will only offer accommodation to under 18s if the tenancy is held in trust by a recognised agency and have relevant support in place.

### **5.9 Employees**

- 5.9.1 The Managing Director will authorise offers of housing to existing or former employees, their close relatives or Board Members.

## **6. Appeals**

- 6.1.1 When Fairplace decides that a potential tenant does not meet the criteria set out above, it will notify them and their referring agency in writing, outlining clearly the reason for the decision.

- 6.1.2 Customers can appeal against our decision not to offer them a home, if they feel we have not taken into account all relevant information or have made the decision unfairly. Appeals must be made within 5 working days from the date of the decision not to offer letter. Fairplace will not hold any homes empty whilst the appeal is being considered.
- 6.1.3 An independent Manager who was not involved in the original decision will review the appeal. Customers will be notified of the outcome in writing within 15 working days or within a mutually agreed timescale. If a customer is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal review, they should notify us within 5 working days from the date of the appeal response letter, the case would then be reviewed in line with our Complaints Policy.

## **7. Monitoring**

- 7.1.1 All lettings will be monitored to ensure that Fairplace is delivering an efficient and effective service, that does not discriminate against any protected groups.

## **8. Policy Review**

- 8.1.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years.