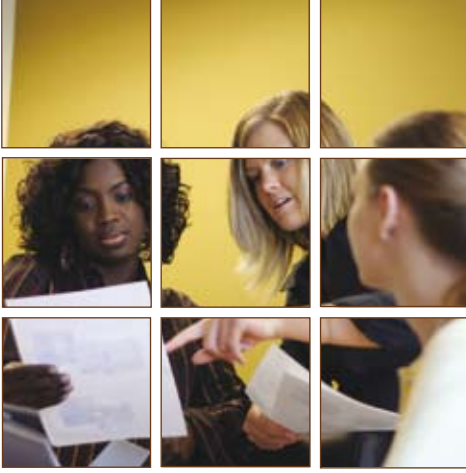


Lettings terms in plain English



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This leaflet explains in plain English some of the terms you might read or hear if you are planning to rent a property from us.

Abandoned property - an empty home that a tenant has stopped living in but hasn't told the landlord.

Adaptations - alterations made to a house to make it more suitable for a person with a disability to live there, such as a stair lift.

Affordable housing - homes that are for low-cost rent or sale, usually owned by a housing association or local council.

Allocation - getting a property ready and offering it to a new tenant.

Allocation policy - rules for deciding who needs housing most, and who will get an offer to live in a home.

Appeal - where a tenant asks for a review of a decision made by a landlord.

Assured tenancy - a type of tenancy agreement used for most of our rented homes. It offers tenants security because we cannot end the tenancy without a good reason.

Band - this is a method used by landlords to allocate homes. You get put into a band depending on your circumstances.

Bidding - this is how you say you are interested in a property when it is covered by our choice-based lettings system (see below).

Choice-based lettings - a way of renting out empty properties. It works by allowing interested people to bid for a home they like, rather than offering the home to just one person who may not want it.

Common housing register - a system where a person who wants to rent a property only has to fill in one application form. This form then goes to a number of landlords in one area. This saves the person from having to fill in an application form for other landlords.

Decant - this is when a tenant is moved from their home for a short time, to allow us to do repairs or improvements.

Defects liability period - this is a guarantee period when the company who built the home is responsible for any repairs to the new property, rather than the landlord. This usually lasts for six to 12 months.

Disturbance payment - a payment that is sometimes made by a landlord to the tenant. It covers any disturbance caused by major repair work being done to their home.

Guarantor - someone who is over 18 years old who gives assurance that the tenant will keep to the terms of the tenancy agreement.

Handbook - a document that gives you useful information about your home and the services provided by your landlord.

Home loss payment - a payment that is sometimes made if a person's home is to be demolished, or taken from them to be used for another purpose. The payment is made under the Housing and Town Planning Act 1991.

HomeSwapper - a service for housing association tenants who want to swap homes with another tenant. This is also called a 'mutual exchange'.

Household - a person or family that lives in or wants to live in a property.

Housing association - a not-for-profit landlord that provides affordable homes.

Housing needs - the difference between the housing that people are wanting in an area and the housing that is on offer. Also sometimes called just 'needs'.

Joint tenancy - a type of tenancy when two or more people sign the tenancy agreement and are both responsible for keeping to it.

Letting regulations - rules that landlords must use to draw up their allocations policies. Registered social landlords and local councils must publish these rules.

LIN number - an identification number given to you when you are bidding for a property.

Management transfer - when a landlord transfers a tenant from one of their properties to another one for special reasons. Reasons for this could be, for example, the risk of domestic violence or threats from someone in the neighbourhood. It is up to the landlord to decide whether or not to do this.

Mobility level - a way of deciding what a person's needs are when allocating a property. There are three levels:

Mobility Level 1 (DSL1) - a person needs to use a wheelchair both indoors and outdoors at all times.

Mobility Level 2 (DSL2) - a person who cannot manage steps or stairs and may use a wheelchair for part of the day.

Mobility Level 3 (DSL3) - a person who can manage a few steps or stairs on their own but may use a wheelchair for part of the day.

Mutual exchange - when a tenant swaps homes with another tenant. 'Homeswapper' is the name of the service that housing association tenants can use.

Nomination - when a local council puts someone's name forward to a housing association asking that they be offered one of their homes.

Nominee - someone who has been made an offer on a property.

Nominee offer - when someone whose name was put forward by a local council is offered one of our homes.

Priority band - the categories given when you apply for housing, depending on housing need. Band A - emergency, band B - urgent, band C - identified need, band D - low or no priority.

Priority date - a priority date is sometimes used when two people are in the same band and bidding for the same property. The person who would get priority would be the person who has been in that band the longest.

Re-let - when a landlord gets an empty property ready for letting and finds a tenant for it. Also see 'allocations'.

Refusal - when an offer on a new property is rejected.

Sign-up - a process when a new tenant signs the tenancy agreement and completes the paperwork before they move into their home.

Social housing - housing at an affordable rent, usually provided by housing associations or councils.

Suspension - where a landlord decides not to include a tenant's housing application onto their housing register.

Starter tenancy - a 'trial' tenancy, usually lasting 12 months. We give these to new tenants to make sure they can keep to their responsibilities.

Surrender or termination of property- When someone wants to give up their tenancy with their landlord.

Tenancy agreement - a legal agreement between a tenant and their landlord. It sets out each party's rights and responsibilities.

Tenure - a term describing what sort of right someone has to live in their home.

Someone's tenure can depend on a number of things, such as their tenancy agreement if they are a tenant, or the type of property they live in. Types of tenures can include tenant, sheltered resident and homeowner.

Transfer list - a list of tenants wanting to move home.

Viewing - when a tenant looks around a home to decide if they want to live there.

Void - an empty property.

Verification - when a landlord checks the information given by someone who wants to be a tenant.

Waiting list - a list of people wanting to rent a home from a particular landlord.

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