

Appendix B Tenant Services Authority Regulatory Framework Housing Allocations

Standard

Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements. Where, in exceptional circumstances, registered providers choose not to participate in choice-based lettings schemes in areas where they own homes, they shall publish their reasons for doing so.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

Northampton Borough Council established and operated the Choice Based Lettings scheme and the Common Housing Allocations scheme on the 31st July 2008.

Standard

Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should meet the needs of their tenants, and will offer choices to them.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

Northampton Borough Council has developed the under occupation scheme and re-launched the under occupation scheme on the 1st December 2009, following the 25th November 2009, Cabinet report on this matter. From the 1st December 2009 to the 31st May 2010 Northampton Borough Council have completed 23 under occupation moves.

Northampton Borough Council have reduced statutory overcrowding on the Housing Register from 39 customers before the Choice Based Lettings scheme was introduced to 16 as at the 31st May 2010.

Standard

Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options. They shall participate in mobility schemes and mutual exchange schemes where these are available.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

Northampton Borough Council will be launching a sub-regional Choice Based Lettings scheme in partnership with Daventry District Council and this sub regional Choice Based Lettings scheme will be operation during the summer of 2010. This scheme will allow customers in Northampton to bid for and move to Daventry and allow customers in Daventry to move to Northampton.

Northampton Borough Council participates in the Seaside and Country homes mobility scheme to allow customers above the age of 50 to move to Northampton to occupy the Council's sheltered schemes. In addition to this Northampton Borough Council also participates in the Home swapper Mutual Exchange scheme that allows tenants of affordable housing landlords in Northampton to undertake mutual

exchanges. This scheme also allows customers to undertake mutual exchanges across the country within the affordable housing sector.

Northampton Borough Council also advertises Private Rented Properties in Northampton, Wellingborough, Daventry, and South Northamptonshire to allow customer's greater choice and access to the provision of high standard accommodation.

Standard

Registered providers' published policies shall include how they have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations, mobility or mutual exchange schemes.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

Appendix A is the Housing Allocations scheme for Northampton. This Housing Allocations scheme is the common housing register and common housing allocations scheme for all affordable housing in Northampton and all registered providers of affordable housing in Northampton.

Standard

Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

This area is a weakness and Northampton Borough Council's Choice Based Lettings scheme does not currently have a community language translations section or Browse aloud section as is common with the vast majority of other Choice Based Lettings schemes across the Country.

The Housing Solutions service has displayed posters within the Guildhall and through all Community organisations publicising the availability of the translations service. These posters

Standard

Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

The average letting period for all Northampton Borough Council properties was 23.99 days for the 2009/2010 financial year. This was an improvement from 29 days for the 2008/2009 financial year.

Standard

Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales in the Continuous Recording of Lettings Scheme.

Northampton Borough Council's compliance evidence

Northampton Borough Council piloted this scheme for the Communities and local Government Department and now records all lettings on this scheme.