

Glossary of terms – Allocations Policy Scrutiny

Assured tenancy

This is a tenancy that gives security of tenure but at a market rent rate. Under this arrangement the (1) landlord cannot regain possession of the property except under certain statutory provisions, (2) may apply to raise the rent to current market level, within certain limitations, and (3) tenant cannot assign the tenancy to a third party without landlord's approval but (upon the tenants death) his or her spouse may continue the tenancy.

Starter Tenancy

This is a 'trial' tenancy offered by housing associations to new customers lasting for 12 months. During this time the tenant has less security, and can be evicted more easily should there be breaches of tenancy such as rent arrears and anti social behaviour.

Assured shorthold tenancy

Assured shorthold tenancies are periodic tenancies, usually of a six month period which afford tenants which do not give long-term security. They are not regulated by usual rent controls. This is the default tenancy for most dwellings in England. The landlord has the right to terminate the tenancy by using a "section 21 notice", resulting in a minimum notice period of 2 months.

Joint Tenancy

This is a tenancy shared by two or more persons of the same property. They share equal rights of the property, and are jointly responsible to abide by the tenancy conditions.

Full homeless duty

This duty is owed where the Authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group.

Intentionally homeless

The Authority can decide that an applicant is intentionally homeless following enquiries into the reasons why homelessness has occurred. This may be due to the following:

An applicant deliberately did (or didn't do) something, that caused them to leave accommodation, which they could otherwise have stayed in, and it would have been reasonable for them to stay there.

Leaving care protocol

This type of protocol is in response to the Children (leaving Care) Act 2000, which itself was designed to improve the life chances of children living in and who have left local authority care. The aim of the protocol is to offer guidance to ensure consistent arrangements and appropriate support for young people are in as they make their transition to adulthood.

Statutory overcrowding

The current definition of statutory overcrowding has been in place since 1935. It discounts children under the age of 12 months and counts those between one and ten as half a person. Unlike the bedroom standard, it also includes living rooms as acceptable places to sleep. This means that families with children must endure very high levels of overcrowding before the statutory threshold is breached.

Prevention option

This is where a customer accepts the offer of an range of 'tools' used by the Council to prevent their homelessness, and can include referral to mediation, a home visit to parents, a private sector bond, and a prevention fund payment.

Non priority homeless

A person may be deemed as homeless, but may not be eligible for assistance because they do not fall within a specified priority need group.

Suitable offer of accommodation

This is an offer of accommodation which in the opinion of the Council, fully meets the housing needs of an applicant.

Housing register

The Authority is not legally required but good practice dictates that Councils should maintain a register of applicants for social housing to ensure that those with 'reasonable preference' are afforded priority, as governed by Part 6 of The Housing Act 1996.

Local connection

A person must have a local connection to qualify for assistance under the Homelessness Act 2002 legislation. A connection is considered to be immediate family, employment or residence in an area for a set period of time.

Shared ownership

A purchase scheme allowing people to own equity share in a property, with the remaining share rented.

Homebuy

A scheme consisting of a range of low cost home ownership options funded by the government in England to help assist first time buyers and key workers access home ownership which is affordable.

Managed relocation pathway

Process to enable access to alternative social housing if current property has been deemed 'unfit' or due for demolition.

Re-let time

The length of time a property is empty, between the tenancy termination date, and the new tenancy commencement date.

Void rent loss

The amount of rent due which is lost whilst a property is empty, undergoing necessary repairs, between the tenancy termination date and the new tenancy commencement date.

Core data

Information submitted by each Housing Association to the University of St Andrews, who in turn publish performance tables for areas such as relet times, number of tenancies failing.