

## CROYDON CHURCHES HOUSING ASSOCIATION

### TRANSFER AND EXCHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

<b>Policy Name / No.</b>	Transfer and Exchange Policy and Procedure- HM2
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Head of Housing Services
<b>Date of Issue</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	2007

#### 1. Policy Statement

The Association will assist those of its tenants who wish to move from one ccha property to another by registering transfer application forms on our IT system. It will also assist tenants in arranging appropriate mutual exchanges with other tenants in the social housing sector.

#### 2. Eligibility for transfer

2.1 All tenants living in ccha's general needs housing stock and tenants in the sheltered housing managed by the Croydon Aashyana Project are eligible to be accepted on to and remain on the transfer list provided that they:

- a. are not in rent arrears.
- b. are not in breach of their tenancy terms
- c. are not subject to a Possession Order or Notice of Seeking Possession
- d. undertake to leave their home in good decorative and other condition at the time of transfer.

2.2 The Housing Manager has the discretion to relax or modify these conditions in individual cases if there are special circumstances, which should be taken into account.

#### 3. Prioritisation of transfers

3.1 The number of transfers that the Association can offer to its tenants will be agreed as part of the Annual Lettings Plan agreed by the Housing Services and Supported Housing Committee each year. See Lettings Policy (Policy HM1).

3.2 The priority given to individual transfer applicants will be determined by a points system to ensure that all transfer applications are treated fairly. All eligible transfer applicants will be given points depending on their circumstances and their reasons for wanting to move.

3.3 Priority will be given to emergency cases for Decant, emergency fire or flood and major works.

### **Priority Categories for Transfers**

#### **Emergency 250 Points**

**Decant:** Where a property is needed to be emptied for development purposes.

#### **Emergency Fire or Flood**

#### **Major Works**

#### **Urgent Level 1 200 Points**

##### **Racial Harassment**

Any tenant accepted as needing a priority transfer on the grounds of racial or other harassment where it is considered that a crime has been committed, that tenant may be required to produce Police and other agency evidence.

##### **Physical Violence**

Where physical violence has occurred a crime number and supporting evidence will be required from the Police and any other agencies involved.

##### **Trauma or serious social reasons**

This will be treated on a case by case basis and will require supporting evidence from relevant agencies.

##### **Urgent Medical**

Tenants needing a transfer on severe and urgent medical grounds. A request to be moved because of serious medical need if they are unable to return from hospital because of the unsuitability of their property. The present housing conditions are adversely affecting their health and a move to alternative accommodation is necessary. Supporting medical evidence from Hospital/Consultant/Doctor and other agencies will be required to support this

#### **Urgent Level 2 150 Points**

##### **Serious Risk of Violence**

Any tenant fleeing a serious risk of violence will need to approach the Local Authority for temporary accommodation until alternative accommodation can be offered.

Any tenant suffering serious risk of violence must be prepared to accept an offer of alternative basis on a like for like basis anywhere within ccha's housing stock. This will be one offer only, a refusal will only be accepted, if proof can be given that this would not be a suitable offer.

Before any transfer to alternative accommodation can take place, supporting evidence from the Police will be required along with any other agency involved.

### **Serious Risk of Harassment**

The same criteria will apply as that for suffering a serious risk of violence.

### **Succession Rights**

To facilitate a move if a person is left in occupation where no succession exists or where succession exists but property is too large.

<b>Statutory Overcrowding</b>	<b>80 points</b>
Lacking 2 plus bed spaces	<b>60 Points</b>
Lacking 1 bedroom	<b>30 Points</b>
Lacking 1 bed space	<b>20 Points</b>

Explanation:           A single bedroom = 60 square feet or over  
                                   A double bedroom = 90 square feet or over  
                                   50 square feet or under will not count as a room.

A double bedroom is considered adequate for two children of the same sex to share, except where a 10-year age gap exists. Two children of opposite sex sharing a room are entitled to a separate room and additional sex separation points when either child reaches the age of 10.

### **Under Occupation**

Each bedroom in excess	<b>20 Points</b>
Extra living room/dining room	<b>20 Points</b>
Releasing a house	<b>25 Points</b>

Extra points for releasing a house due to high demand for this type of property.

Discretionary points – up to **25 Points** will be awarded under this category of extreme urgency of need where not covered elsewhere in the transfer policy. As this involved subjective decision-making, documentary evidence should support each case, which must be authorised by the Operations Director.

### **Older Persons Points 10 Points**

To be awarded to applications where the tenant requires a move to elderly designated or sheltered accommodation.

### **Waiting Time**

**2 Points** to be added each year, up to a **maximum of 10 Points**.

### **Discretionary Management Points**

Up to **300 Points**. Recommendation must be signed by recommending HO, countersigned and supported by HM and approved by OD.

## **5. Transfer Procedure**

5.1 Any tenant wishing to transfer will be sent a standard transfer application form.

5.2 Once a transfer application form has been returned a letter will be sent by the Housing Administrator confirming the points awarded giving an estimate of the time that the applicant may expect to wait before receiving an offer of re-housing.

5.5 An applicant who feels that their application has not been fairly dealt with has the right of appeal using the Association's Complaint's Procedure.

5.6 The Housing Services Manager will make sure that the transfer list is periodically reviewed to ensure that all applicants are being considered within the appropriate priority category.

5.7 Tenants who wish to remain on the list will be asked to renew their application on a yearly basis so that the information held on the list remains up to date.

## **6. Mutual Exchanges**

6.1 Most ccha tenants have the right to exchange their home with another ccha tenant or a tenant of another registered social landlord or local authority, either within Croydon or in another area. The Association will assist tenants in achieving exchanges provided they meet the criteria to be accepted on to the Association's transfer list given in paragraph

6.2 A tenant who has found an exchange partner and wants to exchange must ask the Association for written permission. The Association must reply to such a request within six weeks of the application being made.

6.3 Permission to exchange can only be withheld on the following grounds:-

- i) There is a Court Order to evict the tenant or the tenant proposing to exchange.
- ii) A Notice of Seeking Possession has been served on the tenant or the tenant to be exchanged with, or other court proceedings for possession have been started and the grounds for seeking possession are one or more of those given in the Tenancy Agreement.
- iii) The tenant's flat is substantially larger than the proposed new tenant needs. (For the purposes of mutual exchanges, one extra bedroom will not be viewed as under-occupation).
- iv) The tenant's flat is too small or unsuitable for the needs of the tenant to be exchanged with.
- v) The tenant's flat is specially adapted for a person with physical disabilities and the proposed new tenant does not have disabilities.
- vi) The circumstances of the proposed new tenant are such that their occupation of the flat would conflict with the charitable objectives of the Association.
- vii) The tenant's flat is normally let to people with special needs, there are special facilities nearby for such people and the proposed new tenant does not need that type of special accommodation.

## **7. HOMES**

The Association is a member of the Housing Organisations Mobility and Exchange Services (Homes) which exists to facilitate tenants wishing to transfer between social housing landlords whether housing associations or Local Authorities. The Association will approach other social landlords for help for a tenant under this scheme in appropriate circumstances. Unfortunately, the number of rehousing that the Association can achieve through HOMES in any one year is strictly limited. Tenants requiring further information on this should contact their housing officer at ccha's offices.

**8.** This policy should be reviewed on a yearly basis in line with changes to legislation and best practice.

Agreed by Housing Services & Supported Housing Committee

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