



Lettings Procedure Guide



1	GLOSSARY	4
1.1	GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
2	INTRODUCTION	5
2.1	Scope	6
2.2	Review Mechanism	6
3	MAINTAINING THE WAITING LIST	7
3.1	Enquiries	7
3.2	Financial Assessments for Guinness Trust Properties	7
3.3	Three Streams	7
3.2.1	General Stream	7
3.2.2	Community Stream	11
3.2.3	Economic Stream	12
3.3	Evidence	13
3.4	Lettings Areas	13
3.5	Age	14
3.6	Supported Housing Residents	14
3.7	Local Connections (section 106)	14
3.8	Inputting Application Forms	14
3.9	Inputting Application Forms Manually	16
3.10	Change of applicant's circumstances	16
3.11	Renewal of Applications	17
3.12	Refusal of Applications – Pre Tenancy Checks	17
3.13	Cancellation of Applications	19
3.14	Applicant's Position on the Waiting List	20
4	RE-HOUSING PROCESS – OFFERS	21
4.1	Selecting an applicant for offer	21
4.2	Former Tenant Arrears	23
4.3	Transfer Applicants with Rechargeable Repairs	23
4.4	Applicants with Pets	23
4.5	Applicants Aged 16 to 17	24
4.6	Applicants with Disabilities	24
4.7	EU applicants - European Union Accession	26
4.8	Asylum seekers	26
4.9	Committee Members, employees, former employees or close relatives	30
4.10	LA Nominations	31
4.11	LA Noms Procedure on Existing Schemes	32
4.12	LA Noms Procedure - New Schemes	33
4.13	Transfers	33
4.14	Make and Maintain Offers	35
4.15	Home Visits / Interviews:	35
4.16	Transfer/Mutual Exchange Applicants	35
4.17	Grounds for Withholding Approval to a Mutual Exchange	37
4.18	Re-housing Sexual and Violent Offenders	37
4.19	Preparation for sign up	39
4.20	Sign Up Pack	40
4.21	The sign up Interview	41
4.22	Disclaimer for repairs to non- standard fittings	41
4.23	New Tenant Checklist	42
4.24	Internal Procedure Following Sign-up	42
4.25	Staff licences	42
5	USE OF ASSURED SHORTHOLD TENANCIES	43
5.1	Advice to applicants	43
Le 5.2	Pre Tenancy Checks	43
5.3	Offer Letter	43

5.4	Sign-up	44
5.5	Housing Officer monitoring	44
5.6	Termination of the Starter Tenancy	45
5.7	Conversion to a standard Periodic Assured Tenancy	45
5.8	Continuing the Starter Tenancy	45
6	VOIDS PROCEDURE	47
6.1	Notice to Terminate Received from the Tenant	47
6.2	Death of a Tenant	47
6.3	Abandonment	47
6.4	Surrender	48
6.5	Formal Surrender	48
6.6	Informal Surrender	48
6.7	Eviction	48
6.8	Terminate a Tenancy	48
6.9	'Turning Round' Voids	49
6.10	Furniture & Personal Belongings left in a void property	53
6.11	Void Monitoring	53
7	DEALING WITH READILY AVAILABLE HOMES	56
7.1	Identifying the Problem	56
7.2	Physical Improvements	57
7.3	Disposal or Demolition	57
7.4	Incentives	57
7.5	Marketing	58
7.6	Local Lettings Policy (LLP's)	58
7.7	Procedure	60
7.8	Summary of key stages of implementing a LLP	61
7.9	Monitoring the Impact of the Strategy	61
7.10	Fast Tracking	61
8	NEW SCHEMES	63
8.1	The target turnaround time for new properties is NIL days.	63
8.2	Procedure for New Schemes	63
8.3	Procedure for Existing Sats/Purchase and Repair	64
9	GARAGE PROCEDURES	65
10	TENANCY CHANGES	66
9.1	Joint to Single Notes	66
9.2	Name Change By Deedpoll	67
9.3	Single to Joint By Marriage Notes	68
9.4	Name Change By Marriage	69
9.5	Single to Joint Notes	70
9.6	Succession How To Do Notes	71
9.7	Death of a Joint Tenant	72
11	APPENDICES	73
11.1	Policy – Request for exemption from Schedule 1 of the Housing Act 1996: Housing of Employees and their relatives	73
10.2	Policy - Notes on Notice to Quit	75
10.3	Policy – Grounds for Withholding Consent to Assignment By Way of Exchange	76
10.4	Policy – Allocations Policy Statement	78
10.5	Policy – Lettability Standard Statement	80
10.6	Policy - Eligibility: Model questions	81

10.7	Request for Exemption From Schedule One of the Housing Act 1996	83
10.8	Notice To Quit	84
10.9	Deed of Assignment to Tenancy Agreement	85
10.10	Tenancy Termination Pro-forma	86
10.11	New Starter Pro-forma	87
10.12	New Scheme/Property Pro-Forma	89
10.13	Memorandum	90
10.14	Mutual Exchange	91
10.15	NCHA Request for Changing Property Status to Unlettable	92
10.16	Agreement for Tenancy of Lock Up Garage	93
10.17	Nominations Agreement	94
10.18	Disclaimer for Repairs to Non Standard Fittings	97
10.19	Starter Tenancy Checklist	98
10.20	Tenancy Termination Checklist	99
10.21	Tenancy Termination Checklist	101
10.22	Change of Details Pro-forma	102
10.23	Deed of Assignment to Tenancy Agreement: Endorsement From Joint to Single Tenancy	103
10.24	Mutual Exchange Deed of Assignment	104
10.25	Mutual Exchange Pro-forma	105
10.26	Endorsement for transfer of tenancy on succession	106
10.27	New Tenancy – HWC Information	107
10.28	Previous information confirmed by Agency, reference or resident prior to becoming a resident	109
11	LIST OF LETTERS	110
11.1	All points reg	110
11.2	All offer – offer letter single	112
11.3	All offer multi	113
11.4	All refusal	114
11.5	All term surrender	115
11.6	All term general	117
11.7	All term Next of Kin	119
11.8	All offer transfer	120
11.9	Transfer/mutual exchange	121
11.10	Transfer – post meeting letter about home repairs	122
11.11	Transfer - approved	124
11.12	Change to Tenancy Agreement – arrears	126
11.13	Succession to Tenancy	127
11.14	Change to Tenancy Agreement - completed	128
11.15	Name Change - Single to Joint Tenancy	129
11.16	Offer Letter – ASST procedure	130

1 GLOSSARY

1.1 GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHMS(ops)	Assistant Director of Housing Management (Operations)
AM	Area Manager
ASHM	Assistant Supported Housing Manager
ASST	Assured Short-hold Starter Tenancy
CSO	Customer Service Officer
DCS	Director of Corporate Services
DHMS	Director of Housing Management Services
DTLR	Department of Transport Local Government and Regions
FT	Former Tenant
HA	Housing Association
HB	Housing Benefit
HC	Housing Corporation
HOMES	Housing Mobility and Exchange Service
HSST	Housing Support Services Team
LA	Local Authority
LLP	Local Lettings Policy
LSE	Leasehold for the Elderly
MO	Maintenance Officer
NTL	Neighbourhood Team Leader
NTQ	Notice to Quit
NSO	Neighbourhood Support Officer
NSP	Notice Seeking Possession
NTO	Neighbourhood Team Officer
PTC	Pre-Tenancy Checks
RM	Regional Manager
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
RTB	Right to Buy
SHM	Supported Housing Manager
SO	Shared Ownership
SOE	Shared Ownership for the Elderly
VPS	Voluntary Purchase Scheme
WBA	Welfare Benefits Advisor

2 INTRODUCTION

In line with Guinness Northern Counties' vision, our success will be measured by low voids and low turn over. This Lettings Procedure sets out our policy on the lettings of our homes.

The aim of the policy is to develop a more inclusive long-term approach to build communities where people choose to live.

The 3 stream approach will give access to a wider range of customers seeking a home. This should allow us to build and sustain communities whilst at the same time meeting a range of housing needs and aspirations. The 3-stream approach went live on 17th October 2005.

NCHA is committed to the principles of Equal Opportunities and in all aspects of the delivery of its services seeks to put these principles into practice.

The performance targets for letting our homes are: -

Selection of Tenants and Allocation of Properties		Target	Standard
		%	
1	All applications to be loaded within 10 working days	100	
2	To advise applicants of the outcome of applications within 4 working days of loading the data onto the system.	100	
3	To notify local letting applicants of the status of their applications within 28 days of receipt, based on the information processed.	100	
4	All applicants to be re-registered on 6 month anniversary of registration.	100	
5	Lettings to Local Authority nominations (except where variations are mutually agreed)	50	
6	Lettings to MOVEUK nominations	4	
7	To set, monitor and achieve equal opportunity targets for each Local Authority area of operation.	100	
8	Level of customer satisfaction with the selection and allocations service, at a level of confidence to be agreed with Head Office:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying for housing, the process • management and information whilst on the Waiting List • allocation and property of choice 	90	
Void Property Management Services		Target	Standard
		%	
1	All void properties that are to be re-let must meet the lettability standard.	100	
2	Electric checks done on or before the first day of the new tenancy Gas cap off needs to be carried out asap on termination and should be re-commissioned by tenant when they move in.	100	
3	From receipt of notice/NTQ, 28 working days to inspect, specify and complete major works.	100	

4	Target turnaround time of 0 days for new properties	100
5	Available to let (including minor repairs) turnaround target of 21 days.	100
6	Abandoned properties to be inspected by the end of the next working day after abandonment discovered/reported.	100
7	Target turnaround for properties with no repairs - 0 days.	100
8	Inspected properties within 5 working days of the tenant having provided notice to quit.	90
9	Minor works to be carried out within 10 working days of occupation of new tenant.	95
10	Contain void properties within target numbers specified.	100
11	Level of customer satisfaction with the void property management service, at a level of confidence to be agreed with Head Office:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with repairs • with time scales • with property condition 	90

2.1 Scope

The guide is applicable to all staff with a responsibility for letting and managing rented stock.

The time scales referred to in the various sections represent the expected minimum standards of performance.

2.2 Review Mechanism

The Lettings Procedure Guide will be reviewed regularly by DHMS as required to reflect changes in Legislation or Association policies and procedures. When reviews take place, each office will receive revised or new sections. These will have the revised date and should replace existing sections of the guide as appropriate.

3 MAINTAINING THE WAITING LIST

3.1 Enquiries

Background

Enquiries about accommodation can be by post, telephone or in person at the Regional or Area Office. All enquiries must be dealt with in line with Guinness Northern Counties' 'Customer Charter' and the principles it contains.

- Where the Region has void or low demand properties the customer should be asked if they would be interested in these properties/schemes, enquiries and applications for these properties should be processed quickly.
- Some schemes are only able to accept nominations. These can be found on the scheme details list on NCNet.

If the Region does not have suitable properties, the customer should be provided with a list of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of other LA's and HA's in the area.

- If the Region does have suitable properties, an application pack consisting of General Information, Application Form, Applicants Charter, Guide to the Points System and Property guide, plus pre-tenancy check reference details and Local Lettings Policy details where applicable should be given to the applicant.

It is essential that the first point of contact with our customer is positive to them in meeting their needs and to our business objectives. Ensure this is taken into consideration at all times!

3.2 Financial Assessments for Guinness Trust Properties

Guinness Trust properties can only be offered to those on low incomes and we therefore carry out an assessment of the applicants' financial circumstances prior to them being accepted on to the waiting list.

The financial assessment is part of the application form and it is the responsibility of local office staff to check this section when the application form is sent to them by HSST after being scanned. If the applicant is not eligible then they must be notified of this and asked if they want to consider other areas that are not subject to a financial assessment. If they do not want other areas then the application must be cancelled.

3.3 Three Streams

Each application will be assessed against the three streams criteria, which
Lettings Procedure Guide V4 January 2009

is detailed below:

3.2.1 General Stream

(60% of all re-lets) Points assessment

The general stream uses a points criteria. This stream will have applicants who need to move because the place where they live now is not suitable for them. It will include applicants who are classified as homeless, Local Authority nominations and transfers.

The points criteria is detailed below.

Statutorily Homeless: 1000 Points

These points are only awarded where the LA has accepted the applicant as being statutorily homeless and in priority need. The applicant must provide confirmation in writing from the LA that they have been designated as statutorily homeless.

Other Homeless: 500 Points

These points will be awarded where the applicant(s):-•

are of no fixed abode.

In such cases, the applicant(s) should be advised that NCHA does not have emergency accommodation in most areas to offer them and that they should present themselves to the LA. These applicants should be asked to supply a “care of” correspondence address. However in some instances the Association may be able to offer emergency accommodation, e.g. the Foyer.

Applicants will often tick this box on the application form when they are lodging with family and friends, in which case they should be awarded the points for lacking security of tenure. If unsure, the NSO should ensure clarification of this point.

- are threatened with homelessness within 28 days, and have supporting written evidence, e.g. Notice To Quit, an eviction note from their landlord or a Building Society Order which specifies an eviction date.
- are being forced to leave temporary accommodation, for example, a hostel, in the next 28 days and have supporting written evidence from the hostel manager.
- are leaving HM Prison, hospital or the armed forces, and have to leave their present accommodation within 28 days, and have supporting written evidence from the prison authorities, Hospital Manager or Superior Officer

An applicant will also be considered to be homeless if they have accommodation but:-• occupation could lead to them suffering violence (this is most usually people fleeing from domestic violence), threats of violence, or racial or sexual harassment, supporting written evidence from a doctor or the police should be provided.

- cannot secure entry to that accommodation.
- are a family who normally live together, but are now living in separate homes because they have nowhere to live together.
- they are about to lose their home with their job in 6 months and have supporting documentary evidence.
-
- they have been asked to leave by family/friends within 6 months.
-
- It will be necessary for the person(s) who has the legal claim to the property to verify the situation in writing.

To become entitled to the full points, the applicant(s) must provide full supporting documentary evidence.

Applicants awarded the points for statutory or other homeless can acquire points from other categories but should not receive points for lacking security of tenure.

Lacking Security of Tenure: 75 Points

These points will be awarded where the applicant(s) is:-•

an assured short-hold tenant or licensee

- living in housing provided with their job
- living in temporary accommodation
- lodging with family or friends
- living in hospital or HM Prison

To become entitled to the full points, the applicant should provide full written supporting evidence.

Disrepair: 40 Points

These points will be awarded if the applicant's present home is in poor physical condition, and is severely affected by any of the following:-• damp

- leaking roof and/or walls
- dangerous electrical wiring
- rotten window frames, doors and/or other timbers
- subsidence

If the house is privately rented the applicant should be advised to seek advice from

the local Citizen's Advice Bureau/Housing Aid Centre. Advice can be sought about the availability of grants which may be available to have the repairs carried out, or action that can be taken to request their landlord to undertake repairs.

Lacking or Sharing Facilities with Other Households: 45 Points

These points will be awarded if the applicant's present home does not have any of the following basic facilities, or the applicant has to share facilities with other households. This could include sharing facilities with immediate members of the applicant's family.

- hot water supply
- electricity supply
- lack of heating
- fixed bath or shower
- kitchen (or cooking facilities or meals provision)
- internal WC

Overcrowding: 40 Points

Applicants will be awarded these points for each additional bedroom required, a bedroom is necessary for: -.

- a single adult over 16 years of age
- children over the age of 10 years who would otherwise have to share with a child of the opposite sex.
- adults who need separate bedrooms for medical reasons.

Pregnancy: 40 Points

These points will be awarded immediately when an applicant has produced a certificate of confinement and will require an additional bedroom when the baby is born.

Under Occupation:10/50 Points

Under occupation occurs when an applicant's home is too large for their needs.

Applicants with bedroom/s additional to their needs will receive these points.

Points can be increased to 50 per bedroom if this will free up a family sized house for a person on the waiting list at the discretion of the AM/RM/NTL.

People living in flats: 15 Points

These points will be awarded where applicants are:-

- households with one or more children under 10 years of age living in accommodation above ground floor level.

- applicants over 55 who are living in accommodation above ground floor level without the use of a lift.

Health/Medical Reasons

These points will be awarded where an applicant (or a member of their household who will live with them) suffers from a serious permanent medical condition, illness or disability. We will assess them initially from the application form from the answers they give to the following questions:-Do you or anyone moving in with you have any difficulty using the facilities in your current home due to a medical condition, illness or disability? - no supporting documentation required **75 points awarded**.

Is your current housing situation affecting the health of you or anyone moving in with you? - no supporting documentation required **45 points awarded**.

The answer given should then be checked at telephone / office interview stage.

Wish to get married or live together: 45 Points

3.2.2 Community Stream

(20% of all re-lets) Date order assessment

The community stream aims to assist applicants who want or need to live in a particular community. These applicants may already be adequately housed but are wanting to move because they can help or benefit their chosen community. This stream will be dealt with in date order. Date order means the date that they first applied, rather than applied to community stream specifically. The applicant will need to provide evidence of their community link.

In determining if someone should be re-housed from the community stream they must have one of the following links:

Give or receive support - this could be day to day care to an older or infirm person or a child.

Access to medical support - this could be to be closer to professional medical support.

Family connections - where the applicant wishes to live closer to their family.

Voluntary or paid work - where the applicant wishes to be closer to their work.

Member of a community group - where the applicant wishes to be closer to a community group of which they are an active member.

Checking the evidence

In order to accept the person on to the community list they must provide the following evidence:-

LINK	EVIDENCE
You look after or receive care from someone in the area you have applied for	A letter from the person and a utility bill from the person showing their address
You need to attend a local clinic or get local medical care	A letter from whoever provides your care
You have family connections in the area you have applied for	A letter from the person and a utility bill from the person showing their address
You are working in the area (either voluntary or paid)	A recent letter from work (dated within the last 3 months) on headed paper stating you are working in the area. Pay slips are not accepted.
You are a member of a community group	A recent letter from the community group (dated within the last 3 months) on headed paper stating you are a member
Your child or dependent attends school in that area	A recent letter from the school (dated within the last 3 months) on headed paper stating they are pupils in the area

3.2.3 Economic Stream

(20% of all re-lets) Date Order assessment

The economic stream is for applicants who can afford to pay rent without help from housing benefit. They may be working, have a pension or have savings. This stream is dealt with in date order.

In determining if someone should be re-housed from the economic stream they must provide evidence that they can pay their rent without having to apply for housing benefit.

If you wish to vary the percentages of re-lets offered to different streams then you must have in place a Local Lettings Policy that has been agreed by Regional Committee.

Checking the evidence

As a guide based on our present average rent (calculated for 1 & 2 beds @ £60) the threshold is £665 net for single people per month.

For couples the threshold is £828 net per month. Where only one set of wage slips have been supplied these must be above the threshold to qualify for the economic stream.

For families, based on our present average rent for a 3 bed property (calculated @ £73) the threshold is £1,000 net.

If a person has £16,000 in savings then they will qualify for the economic stream as they will not be entitled to Housing Benefit.

AM's have discretion to consider applicants below these thresholds if the rent they will be charged is below the average rent*. This decision must also take into account their rent being no more than 25% of their income (this is based on NAT Fed guidelines)

*The average rent used in this calculation is £60

Where a person is selling their house we cannot put them on the economic list until they have their money. They are still eligible through general list.

3.3 Evidence

Any evidence that is collected for the economic, community or general stream (500 points and over) must be photocopied and remain on the application file.

Change of circumstance evidence should also remain on the application file.

Where people are not prepared to send in the evidence, they can call at the local office where it can be photocopied and verified at that point. Good photocopies are acceptable.

3.4 Lettings Areas

In order to aid the short-listing process in the system, properties/schemes have been grouped by geographical area into Lettings Areas. This also helps applicants who are likely to know an area but may not be aware of our schemes within that area.

There is no limit on the number of areas an applicant can select.

When new schemes start on site, the NSO must ensure that the details are included in the appropriate area or a new area should be created if appropriate.

The RM/AM/NTL should notify Policy and Systems who are responsible for updating the Area List.

3.5 Age

On certain schemes an age restriction will apply, for example on Cat 1 schemes where an applicant must be over 55. Where an applicant is disabled we will consider under age applicants.

On other schemes we may have a minimum or maximum age for management reasons and to make the best use of our stock.

3.6 Supported Housing Residents

Residents of the Guinness Northern Counties supported housing projects will automatically be entered on to General stream waiting list where they will be allocated an extra 500 points to ensure they are able to move on from a short stay supported housing project as quickly as possible. If they are eligible they can also be entered on to the Community and Economic stream waiting lists. Guinness Northern Counties is committed to supporting the work of short stay supported housing projects in this way to ensure these schemes are able to achieve their objectives and provide a service to residents as efficiently and effectively as possible.

3.7 Local Connections (section 106)

In certain circumstances particularly in a rural area there is a condition as part of the planning permission which states that priority must be given to applicants who have a local connection with the village or local community. This condition is in force for the life of the buildings.

Each NSO should be aware of which schemes in their area this requirement is in place in. In such cases applicants should be informed when they first make contact with Guinness Northern Counties of the local connection requirement.

3.8 Inputting Application Forms

All application forms should be sent to the scanner. The scanner will not accept any photocopied forms.

The following forms can not be scanned; photocopied forms; applications from existing tenants wishing to be considered for Transfers, Mutual Exchanges or LA Nominations.

If any of the application forms are incomplete or missing info, the NSO should return the application form with the standard covering letter within 3 days of receipt, or telephone the applicant if possible to obtain the information.

HSST will complete the following checks:-

1. Main Applicant Details

Surname, Forename, Title, Sex, Date of Birth, Address are required.

2. Current Circumstances

Please tick if you have been accepted by your local council as being legally homeless

If this box has been ticked, a copy of the letter from the council stating that our

applicant has been declared legally homeless is needed.

I have no permanent home (e.g. no fixed abode, "sleeping rough")

No evidence required.

I am a victim of violence or threats of violence or I am suffering racial or sexual harassment

A letter from a supporting agency is needed to clarify that this person has been a victim of violence & threats. These letters are accepted from a GP, social worker, police, counsellor etc.

My family has to live apart

No evidence required.

I have a Notice to Quit or Eviction Order from my landlord

A copy of this from their current landlord is required.

My Building Society is going to repossess my home

A copy of the letter is required from the building society or the court stating that they are in arrears and their home is going to be repossessed.

I have to leave my temporary accommodation (e.g. hostel, bed & breakfast)

A letter from the hostel/bed & breakfast is required stating that they are currently residing there and that they will have to leave on a certain date.

I have to leave armed forces accommodation, prison or hospital

A letter is required from the relevant body, stating the applicants leave by/release date.

I live in a home that comes with my job

A letter is required from the applicant's employer stating that they live in a home that comes with their job.

I am lodging with family or friends

A letter is required from the person they are staying with stating the date that they must leave their property.

I rent my home on an "assured shorthold" tenancy or License

A copy of the applicant's agreement is needed.

My relationship with my partner has broken down and we are still living in the same house

No evidence required.

I want to be closer to my family or carer

No evidence required.

I am taking up work in a different part of the country

No evidence required.

I want to get married to or live with my partner

No evidence required.

3. People Moving with You

If any person is moving in with the main applicant ensure that the full row is completed.

Surname - Initial - Date of Birth - Sex - Relationship to you –

If any of the additional person's dates of birth have been left blank send back to the region.

7. Area Preference

At least one of the boxes must be completed with a 4-digit area code. If not send back to the region.

3.9 Inputting Application Forms Manually

If the application form is not being sent for scanning (the only circumstances for this should be LA noms or anything that needs specifically fast tracking) , in the circumstances highlighted above, it should be input manually within 10 working days of receipt, ensuring the form has been fully completed. All fully completed application forms received must be input onto the system.

3.10 Change of applicant's circumstances

Applicants, who have changed their address since the date of their application, should be sent a new application form with the covering letter.

Any other changes should be put in writing by the applicant and any supporting documents should be attached to the original application.

It is important that applicant's details on I-world are up to date, therefore any changes of circumstances should be updated within five working days of receipt by the NSO.

Once the system has been updated the applicant should be sent the standard letter which advises them of their new points score.

3.11 Renewal of Applications

Renewal of applications (including transfer applications) should take place on a monthly basis to ensure that all applicants are renewed by Housing Support Services Team on the 6 months' anniversary of registration.

By renewing applicants, the size of the waiting list is controlled as applicants who are no longer interested in NCHA accommodation will fail to renew their applications and their applications can be cancelled from the list.

Lettings Procedure Guide V4 January 2009

All renewal forms received are to be input onto the system within 10 working days of receipt.

3.12 Refusal of Applications – Pre Tenancy Checks

The Association operates an open waiting list, which means that anyone can apply for accommodation.

Pre Tenancy Checks will be requested from all applicants at the initial application stage but further ones may be requested during the application and offer process.

Pre tenancy checks allow us to:-

- Investigate the conduct of applicants who have held tenancies with other landlords.

- Assess the potential of an applicant who has not previously held a tenancy to do so successfully.
- Get confirmation that owner occupiers, whose property has been repossessed, was due to circumstances outside their control
- Apply them to NCHA applicants and LA nominations.

If the applicant has not previously held a tenancy or owned their own property, 2 referees will be asked to give references, one of which should be a person whom the applicant has known for a period of 2 years and must not be related. The other should be the applicants current or former employer, social worker, probation officer, support worker, teacher, doctor, Police Officer or representative of a voluntary agency the applicant is involved with.

If the applicant has recently been, or currently is a tenant of another Landlord, they will be required as one on their references.

If the applicant owns or has owned a property one of the references will be required from their mortgage lender.

Police checks, in respect of an applicants criminal record relating to antisocial behaviour, including drugs related offences, can be sought in accordance with approved protocols Guinness Northern Counties has in place with some Police Authorities. This can not be a blanket procedure. For any schemes that you wish collect police checks you must seek Regional Committee approval and this should be on the basis of wishing to address serious issues of sustainability mainly relating to crime levels.

In the case of pre tenancy checks and Police references, the applicant must consent to these being requested.

Applicants will be refused access to the list because they: -

- Do not meet the requirements for the financial assessment for the area (however they will be considered for schemes that are not subject to a financial assessment).
- have failed to obtain suitable references.
- have failed to provide information requested by Guinness Northern Counties to support their application.
- have been legally evicted by NCHA or a former landlord as a result of a breach of tenancy conditions.
- are an Owner Occupier whose property has been or is being possessed by the mortgage lender and:
 - have lost their property as a result of their failure to take the necessary steps to avoid possession.
 - have lost their property when their financial circumstances were such that possession could have been avoided, this should be confirmed by the Welfare Benefits Advisor.
- have been subject to an injunction or court order during the previous 2 years preventing them or a member of their household causing noise nuisance or harassment to their neighbours.
- have been subject to a Notice of Intent to Seek Possession in the previous 2 years on grounds other than rent arrears.
- are subject to a court order for rent arrears.
- are in rent arrears and have failed to make regular payments to reduce the arrears during the previous 13 week period and/or the debt has not been substantially reduced.
- have former tenant rent arrears and have failed to make regular payments to reduce the arrears during the previous 13-week period and the debt has not been substantially reduced.
- has abandoned a property or has accepted an offer of accommodation but has never moved in, in the previous 2 years.
- have pets and are applying for schemes, which are unsuitable for pets.
- they are unable to meet the conditions of tenancy without additional support, which either we cannot provide or we have failed to encourage another responsible body to provide.

In the following circumstances an application can only be refused if the evidence is of a quality that could be used to instigate Court Proceedings:-

- their landlord has received complaints during the previous 2 years from 2 or more

neighbours that the applicant or a member of their household has caused noise nuisance.

- their landlord has received complaints from 1 or more neighbours in the previous 2 years that the applicant or a member of their household has caused harassment in line with Guinness Northern Counties' definition.
- the applicant or a member of their family has been violent or has threatened violence towards a neighbour or a member of the landlords' staff.
- have a drug, alcohol or substance abuse problem that has manifested itself in anti social or illegal behaviour in the previous 2 years.
- have caused damage to their property and where rechargeable repair costs are outstanding.

The evidence must come from a reputable source and refusal cannot be based on hearsay evidence.

For Applicants who have been evicted by a former landlord or have been violent or threatened violence to a neighbour or member of the landlord's staff, the Regional Housing Manager will consider the risk of re-housing and make a decision on this basis.

If the applicant meets any of the above criteria the NSO should refer any such cases to the AM/RM/NTL who will decide whether the application should be refused.

If the applicant is refused, they should be informed in writing of the decision within 10 working days of receipt, explaining the reason for the refusal and giving details of NCHA's Complaints Procedure.

If the applicant fails to complain or complains and the decision to refuse is upheld the application status should be changed to cancelled.

3.13 Cancellation of Applications

There are several reasons why we may cancel applications: -

- failure to disclose a previous eviction from a NCHA property
- gave false information on their application form.
- failure to reply to a renewal letter within 28 days
- failure to respond to an offer within 3 working days
- failure to respond to correspondence regarding their application
- have been re-housed by another landlord

- already have an application registered on the system (the original application will not be cancelled).
- Meets the criteria for refusal under pre-tenancy checks.

Applicants can be reinstated at the discretion of the RM if the applicant appeals against the decision to cancel within 6 months of the cancellation date. Where the appeal is successful the applicant must complete a new application form and the details checked against the existing information.

Appeal against cancellation will be dealt with via the Complaints Procedure.

The hard copy of any cancelled application should be kept for 6 months and should then be disposed of via our confidential waste contractors.

3.14 Applicant's Position on the Waiting List

When notifying an applicant of their positions on the waiting list, always advise that positions may change as new applications are registered.

These are the standard responses to this question

We offer our properties on both a points and a date order system, and we are able to tell you that today you are in within the top (10 / 20 / 50) positions. This means that we anticipate that you could be waiting a (short / medium / long) time before we might be able to offer you a property. **Your position may go up or down.**

Would you like to consider adding on any extra area choices or we can send you information on other housing providers in the area?

If the application is not showing a position on a waiting list check that people have chosen properties in areas where we do have a big enough size property to meet their needs. On the system carry out the following checks:

- how many bedrooms they require and if their application is correct
- suggest they change their areas if we don't have the appropriate size properties
- suggest other HAs who may be able to help

4 RE-HOUSING PROCESS – OFFERS

It is vital that the NSO is aware of all void properties in their Region/Area to ensure offers are made at the appropriate time and to minimise rent loss due to voids.

The AM/RHM/NTL should monitor this on a weekly basis.

4.1 Selecting an applicant for offer

Each letting will be made according to the quota system.

From the “select suitable applicants” screen you should generate a preferred offer/stream list, this will advise you which streams the previous allocations went to.

From the report you can determine which stream the offer should be made from. You should make an offer from that stream unless there are no applicants on the selected stream list. If this is the case you should default to the general list.

When making an offer to the economic or community lists you can make provisional offers but at the time of the formal offer you must check that the applicant is still eligible for the community / economic list. Particularly that the community link is for the area that you will be re-housing the applicant and for the economic link that they are still able to pay their rent without the need of housing benefit.

If applicants have been moved from the old Guinness Trust waiting list to the Guinness Northern Counties general list then the following must be checked because the way in which some points were awarded could not be mapped on the housing system:

- Whether the shortlisted applicants had social circumstances points on the GT list – in this case a further assessment must be carried out in accordance with GNC policy
- Whether the applicant at the top of the list has the same or similar points to others on the list – in this case a check must be carried out to ensure an offer is made to the person who has been on the list the longest as GT policy was to award up to 3 additional points for length of time on waiting list.

If there are applicants on the general stream shortlist with a higher points score than the applicant who was made the offer the NSO should indicate on the shortlist the reasons why offers were not made to these applicants.

If there are applicants on the community and economic list who have been on the shortlist longer than the applicant who was made the offer, the NSO should indicate on the shortlist the reasons why offers were not made to these applicants

The shortlist is to be placed in the successful applicant’s house file after being signed by the area manager or team leader and may be required for audit purposes. This should show the correct bypass reasons where the person on the top of the list has not been offered the properties. This should be placed with the new tenancy pro-forma that has been signed by the AM or NTL.

List of bypass reasons from the I-world housing system.

Code	Description
ADAP	Require an adapted property
AGE	Person not of an appropriate age for scheme
FLLV	Not the right floor level
HOME	Requires a home visit
LAP	Local allocations policy in place
LODD	Low demand using fast tracking
NOKID	No children allowed on the scheme
NOTR	Not ready to move
OFFC	Current offer on another property
PETS	Scheme does not allow pets
PREF	Previously refused this scheme
REFD	Default refusal value

REFS	Not received adequate references
RTAR	Person in rent arrears on current property
WROT	Wrong property type / size

On the system for every offer you must record the bypass reason for the applicants who were not offered to.

The NSO should consider the length of the notice period received, the current position with regard to LA Noms i.e. is the Region/Office above/below the 50% target for nominations, the position on MOVEUK Nominations target of 4% of lettings; transfers; 10%.

When making offers to LA Nominations or MOVEUK applications it may be necessary to offer the property to an applicant who does not have the highest points total on the general stream shortlist that has been run.

Offers of larger properties can be made to smaller households in exceptional circumstances. E.g. offering a 2-bedroom property to a single person or couple where demand is low for the property, they have access to children from a previous relationship, or there is a LLP in place whose aim is to reduce child density on a scheme. In order to do this through the select suitable applicants screen you must use the over-ride screen and unselect the BEDS value – for further information see the allocations training guide.

Refer to the appendices for the bypass reasons

For audit purposes each section of the New Tenancy Proforma (previously New Starter Proforma) should be filled in and the form be signed in the correct place by an Area Manager or Neighbourhood Team Leader.

Where there is no response to the offer please record this and please record a refusal of offer reason where possible on to the I-world housing system.

Circumstances where consideration needs to be given before making an offer:-

Applicants with Arrears

The arrears could be either with the current landlord, mortgage company or former tenant arrears.

Refusal of Applications.

Exceptions to the above are when; -

- the applicant is being subjected to violence or threats of violence at the property where they live.

the applicant is experiencing harassment based on race, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

- the applicant wants to transfer to a property with a lower rent which will enable them to clear their current arrears, the WBA should assist in such cases to confirm that the arrears are as a result of genuine hardship and not an

unwillingness to pay.

In all such cases, the approval of the AM/RM/NTL must be obtained prior to an offer being made; a repayment agreement for the 'former tenant' debt must be agreed at sign up of the new tenancy (if not already agreed).

4.2 Former Tenant Arrears

The NSO/HO should establish, with the help of the HO, if applicants who have held previous tenancies with the Association left a clear rent account on the termination of the tenancy.

An offer of accommodation should not be made until the arrears have been reduced by 50% since the date the tenancy was terminated and the remaining debit is subject to an agreed payment plan which has been maintained for a minimum period of 13 consecutive weeks.

4.3 Transfer Applicants with Rechargeable Repairs

Rechargeable repairs are to be made good to the satisfaction of the HO/MO or the cost of the repair met in full before a transfer offer is made.

Exceptions to the above will apply if the property to be offered is difficult to let and there are no other applicants on the waiting list. The approval of the AM/RM/NTL must be obtained prior to an offer being made in the circumstances.

4.4 Applicants with Pets

Tenants are allowed to keep pets subject to written approval from the Association.

Dogs and cats will only be allowed where properties have a separate entrance which leads directly to an outside area, i.e. not an entrance which opens onto a communal staircase/landing etc.

Applicants who can produce medical evidence in support of their need to keep a guide dog, mobility dog or hearing dog will be allowed to do so, regardless of the property type.

If, at the time the offer is made or at the sign-up stage, the NSO is made aware that the applicant has a pet and the property offered is not suitable, the applicant should be asked to find an alternative home for the pet.

If the applicant is unwilling or unable to do this, the AM or NTL will decide if the offer is to be withdrawn.

4.5 Applicants Aged 16 to 17

Applicants aged 16 to 17 can be accepted onto the waiting list.

There is no legal prohibition against granting a tenancy to a person under 18. Such a letting is one of the rare forms of contractual agreement with a minor, which is legally enforceable.

If the applicant is working and is able to afford the weekly rent then an offer of accommodation can be made.

Prior to making any offer of accommodation to an applicant aged 16 to 17 who is unemployed, the NSO should request documentary evidence that the applicant will be in receipt of Income Support.

If confirmation of Income Support cannot be provided, no offer should be made and the applicant should be referred to the WBA in an attempt to resolve the Income Support Claim.

If Income Support is not to be paid, the applicant should be advised by the NSO that no offer of accommodation will be made until the applicant's financial situation is such that a tenancy could be maintained.

Applicants aged 16-17 who are offered a property should be granted an Assured Short-hold Tenancy for a minimum term of 6 months or until the applicant's 18th birthday, at which time an Assured Tenancy should be granted. The NSO should diarise these dates.

The NSO should be aware of any Foyer projects which provide housing and personal development opportunities for applicants aged 16 to 25, with the applicant's permission the NSO may refer the case to the Foyer Team for their consideration.

4.6 Applicants with Disabilities

NCHA provides housing specifically built for physically disabled people as well as adapting existing properties to allow people to remain in their homes.

The NSO should maintain an up-to-date list of all such properties.

It is vitally important that such accommodation continues to be used for the benefit of the disabled and NSOs must maintain contact with LAs, Social Services and organisations for the disabled to obtain referrals/nominations for this type of housing, such accommodation should also be widely publicised amongst such groups.

In certain cases, disabled persons applying for Guinness Northern Counties' accommodation may be supported in their application by the Social Services Department or a voluntary sector agency, to provide personal care for that person and the property may be subject of a formal Management Agreement. In all such cases, the RM/AM and ASHM will be involved and NSO must seek their advice.

If there is no suitably-constructed property available, consideration should be given to physically adapting a property to meet their needs. The NSO should notify the RM/AM/ if this is an option.

4.7 EU applicants - European Union Accession

On the 1st May 2004 ten countries joined the EU. They are: Poland ,Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Malta

Residents from the first eight countries, i.e. Poland ,Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Czech Republic, have the right to seek employment in the UK. Those who do not work or support themselves **are not** able to access benefits or social housing. We must be satisfied that any applicant from these eight countries has the ability to pay rent and service charge and will not rely upon housing benefit.

If you do get anyone applying from the eight countries then ensure they will not have recourse to public funds.

Fill in the additional question sheet and attach to the CORE form and send to John Ray, Chair of Access to Housing Group.

4.8 Asylum seekers

The 1996 Housing Act as amended by Homelessness Act 2002 and Allocation of Housing (England) Regulations 2002, places an obligation on NC to ascertain if eligible for accommodation, or if excluded.

Those excluded are:

- ! Persons from abroad who are subject to immigration control, with exceptions as prescribed by the Home Secretary.
- ! Others from abroad who are not subject to immigration control have to be habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (CTA) – that is:
 - The UK, the Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Republic of Ireland.

Those persons who you can offer to are:

- ! Existing tenants
- ! British Nationals – those habitually resident in the CTA
- ! EEA Nationals – A National of any of the countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) and is habitually resident in the CTA
- ! Person subject to immigration control who have been granted:-

! refugee status

! exceptional leave to remain granted before 1st April 2003 provided there is no condition that they should not be a charge on public funds. This category of person has been abolished from 1st April 2003

! indefinite leave to remain – provided that they are habitually resident in the CTA

! persons who are nationals of ECSMA or ESC and are habitually resident in the CTA

! persons who have been granted humanitarian protection leave to remain (provided there is no condition that they should not be a charge on public funds)

! persons who have been granted discretionary leave to remain (provided that there is no condition that they should not be charge on public funds)

The Habitual Residence Test

! Most times will not have to apply the test since applicant not from abroad

! Plus if resident in the CTA for last 2 years continuously, you do not have to apply the test

! If you do have to apply the test then:-- it's about degree of permanence of the person's residence.

- Ask - why has applicant come to the UK?
- have they employment?
 - are they joining family or friends?
 - future plans?
 - length of residence in another country?

If you require further advice please contact Home Office Immigration and Nationality Directorate – Fax 020 8633 0014. Person subject to immigration control who is NOT eligible:

! Person registered with Home Office as an **ASYLUM SEEKER**.

! Visitor to the country who has **LIMITED LEAVE TO REMAIN**.

! Person who has valid **LEAVE TO REMAIN** in the UK, but that they should have **no recourse to public funds**.

! Person, who has valid leave to remain in UK, but is not habitually resident in the CTA.

! A sponsored person in the country less than 5 years.

! A person who is national of a non-EEA or ECSMA or ESC.

! A person in the **UK ILLEGALLY**, or who has overstayed his/her leave to remain.

ASYLUM SEEKERS

! Generally will not have a passport

! Will be lodged with Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)

Possibly either: -

FORM IS96 - issued by Home Office to say person has been granted temporary admission to the UK.

GEN 32 - issued by Home Office to state date for attending Asylum Screening Unit for interview.

New form to be issued to those granted humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. (This has not yet been put in place and given a reference number).

ILLEGAL ENTRANTS

! A person who entered the country by evading immigration controls.

! A person who has been deported but who has re-entered the UK whilst deportation order still in force.

! A person who obtained entry clearance using fraud or deceit.

! If you consider a person is an illegal immigrant contact the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

OVERSTAYERS

! Establishing if a person has overstayed their leave to remain is not straightforward.

! Contact the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

Persons subject to Immigration Control who ARE eligible

REFUGEE STATUS

! A person granted refugee status has been recognised as a refugee in accordance with the United Nations Convention, and granted asylum in the UK.

! A person granted refugee status will have been issued with a letter by the Home Office, (either GEN22 or GEN23) validated by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate with a date stamp.

EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE TO REMAIN IN THE UK (GRANTED BEFORE 1ST APRIL 2003)

- ! Exceptional leave to enter and remain in the UK may be granted to asylum seekers who are refused asylum (NOT given refugee status). It will be granted for exceptional or compassionate reasons to grant LTR.
- ! ELR will be normally granted for 12 months only, with opportunity to seek extension for a further 3 years.
- ! You can make an offer to person(s) with ELR, unless subject to a condition requiring the person(s) to make no recourse to public funds.
- ! Those granted ELR, will have a letter from the Home Office – (GEN19), validated by IND with a date stamp.
- ! This category of person has been abolished from 1st April 2003.

INDEFINITE LEAVE TO REMAIN IN THE UK

- ! Persons who have permission to remain in the UK for an indefinite period are required as having settled status.
- ! This will be endorsed in their passport, with a date stamp issued by IND.

If in doubt contact the Immigration and Nationality Directorate - Fax 020 8633 0014.

HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION

- ! Will be granted to people who have international protection needs.
- ! You can make an offer to these persons (except those required to maintain and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds).
- ! Will normally be given leave for a period of up to three years.
- ! Those granted humanitarian protection will have a letter from the Home Office, validated by IND with a date stamp.

DISCRETIONARY LEAVE

- ! Will be granted on exceptional basis where, for example, there are strong compassionate reasons.
- ! You can make an offer to these persons (except those required to maintain and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds).
- ! Will normally be given leave for a period of up to three years.
- ! Those granted discretionary leave will have a letter from the Home Office, validated

by IND with a date stamp.

ELIGIBILITY: MODEL QUESTIONS – see appendix 10.6.

4.9 Committee Members, employees, former employees or close relatives

Where an NSO is made aware that an application for re-housing is from anyone who is an employee, former employee, Committee Member or a relative of any of these groups (this may be from the application form or by any other means), this application form and any supporting paperwork must be passed directly to RM.

Schedule 1 of Housing Act 1996 says that HAs can only grant tenancies to Committee Members, employees, former employees or their relatives in specific circumstances. Such relatives can be defined as spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother or sister. This restriction remains for a period of 12 months after the Committee Member has ceased to serve on the Committee or 12 months from the termination of employment in the case of a former employee.

This restriction covers all of the Association's Committees.

In the case of Tenant Representatives on Committees, this restriction does not apply to them as they were a tenant before being elected to serve on a Committee. However, the restriction does apply to transfer requests by a Resident Member and to applications received from a close relative (effective from as soon as they become a Committee Member).

In all cases, the RM will consider the facts of each case taking into account: -

- Alternative options available outside the Association - the RM should see evidence that other alternative providers such as the LA, other HAs and private landlords have been exhausted before referring to ADHMS (Ops).
- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Length of Service
- Circumstances under which employment is ending/ended.
- Financial circumstances.

If it is felt that re-housing is the appropriate option then the AM/RM/NTL should produce a report for the ADHMS (Ops) using Appendix 6. This must specify the applicant's point score, how this compares to other applications on the waiting list for the scheme/property and also the points score of applicants recently housed on the scheme.

In making a decision the RM/AM/ will require supporting documentation e.g. medical reports, detail of other options that the 'applicant' has considered.

ADHMS (Ops) further considers the case taking the factors set out above into consideration. If ADHMS (Ops) is satisfied that re-housing by NCHA is the appropriate action, then the report is passed to DCS to raise at the next Board of Management Meeting. DCS will inform ADHMS (Ops) and RM of decision.

In any case involving a Committee Member, employee, former employee or close relative, acceptance onto the waiting list and subsequent allocation of accommodation can only be undertaken after a decision has been reached by the Board of Management.

4.10 LA Nominations

NCHA has agreements with all our Local Authority partners to allocate a proportion of our vacant properties and properties on new schemes to applicants from the LA's Housing Register.

The percentage of nominations on re-lets is generally 50%. However, on new schemes, NCHA may negotiate a nomination rate, which could be as high as 100% of first lettings. See Section 7 - New Schemes.

The NSO needs to be aware of the nomination rates on all the schemes in the Region. Nomination agreements can be found in the 'development file' relating to the construction of the scheme.

We monitor our performance on the % of lettings made to LA Nominations.

When calculating the percentage of allocations which were made to LA Noms, it is important to exclude from the total number of lettings those properties that the LA can not nominate to, for e.g. cluster flats.

Where the LA have failed to make a successful nomination, these can be included in the total number of lettings as a failed nom (we can only include such lettings with the written agreement of the LA).

The NSO/AM/RM/NTL should work closely with the LAs to achieve an efficient and effective nomination process. In your dealings with the LA state that if nominations are not received within 3 working days the property will be offered to our own applicants.

Guinness Northern Counties is keen to set up Service Level Agreements with individual LAs. The RM/AM should attempt to set these up with all LA partners and should ensure that staff are aware of the existence of SLAs including the time-scales and processes involved. A copy of a model Service Level Agreement is attached to this guide (See Appendix 10.17).

The following procedure is to be adopted if a Service Level Agreement has not been agreed with the Local Authority. Key events in this procedure need to be updated on the void path.

It is important that throughout the nominations process, the NSO keeps

copies/records of all the correspondence.

4.11 LA Noms Procedure on Existing Schemes

Where Service Level Agreements exist staff must follow the specific processes included in the agreement. Where no agreement is in place staff should use the following procedures: -

KEY EVENTS	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Nominations requested using standard letter by fax with hard copy in post on the same day	Within 2 days of receipt of the notice	NSO Update Void Path
LA provides up to 4 nominees listed in priority order	Within 3 working days of the request	LA Update Void Path
Ensure applicant completes an application form	Within 1 day of receipt of nominations	NSO
Input applications onto I-world	Within 2 days of receipt	NSO
Make an offer	Within 1 day	NSO
LA fails to send nominations, Contact LA and advise that will be offering to our own applicants	On 6th working day after nominations requested	NSO
Notify unsuccessful nominee by letter	Within 5 days of nomination	NSO
Notify LA that all nominations have been unsuccessful. Let the property to our own applicants	Within 5 working days	

Some LAs provide nominations on a pool system i.e. not specific to a particular vacancy. When a pool system is in operation, the RM/AM/NTL should negotiate the procedure for prioritising offers to nominees and for notifying the LA of unsuccessful nominations.

4.12 LA Noms Procedure - New Schemes

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Check for any 'special' Nomination arrangements i.e. % and period any special agreement lasts e.g. 75% for 5 years.	3 months before expected hand over	NSO/AM
Request nominations from LA, give details of property types, number of units, expected hand over date	3 months before expected hand over	NSO

4.13 Transfers

All of our tenants are entitled to apply for a transfer and we will endeavour to assist our existing residents to transfer to another NC property.

Transfer applicants can be placed on the transfer, economic and community streams. Overall we aim to make up to 10% of all our lettings to transfer applicants.

Community and Economic Stream

If transfer request is processed via the community or economic stream the same criteria as all other applicants apply and are dealt with in date order.

We will not be able to offer a property to a transfer applicant where

An s106 agreement is in place and the applicant does not meet the criteria set out in the s106

Where an arrangement is in place with the Local Authority that certain properties are let on a 100% nomination basis

Are in rent arrears and have failed to make regular payments to reduce the arrears over the last 13 weeks

The applicant or member of their family has been violent or has threatened violence to a neighbour or member of the Association staff

Has caused damage to their existing property and rechargeable repair costs are outstanding

Have pets and are applying for schemes where pets are not allowed

We have received complaints from 1 or more neighbours in the previous 24 months that the applicant or member of their household has caused harassment in line with the NCHA definition

Have a drug , alcohol or substance abuse problem that has manifested itself in anti-social or illegal behaviour in the previous 24 months

The evidence for these reasons for refusal must be from a reputable source and cannot be based upon hearsay evidence.

% Lettings to Transfers

There are no maximum limits in terms of offers made to existing customers who wish to transfer. We seek to give 10% of all lettings to transfer applicants and these could be from the general, economic or community lists. Offers should only be made if the tenant has conducted their tenancy satisfactorily and there are no rent payment issues.

If the applicant is not offered a property for one of the above reasons they need to be

notified in writing see appendix.

If an application is refused the applicant will be prevented from applying for a period of 6 months from the date of the decision to refuse.

Transfer applicants are not required to give 4 weeks notice; the tenancy should be terminated from the Sunday following return of keys.

If the tenant has a secure tenancy and is to be considered for a transfer to a scheme, which was built after 15 January 1989, details of the case should be notified to Housing Support Services. A new 'Registered rent' will have to be applied for but a provisional 'letting rent' must be agreed in advance of sign up for the new tenancy.

When secure tenants are transferred to new schemes the appropriate assured rent should be charged until the Senior Rents and Services Officer at HSST team can register a secure rent with the Rent Officer. The NSO must advise HSST of the intention to offer so the rent registration process can begin as early as possible.

The AM/RM/NTL should amend details on iWorld within 2 working days of receipt of the proformas.

You do not need to follow the Tenancy Termination procedure for tenants who are transferring.

4.14 Make and Maintain Offers

You can make as many reasonable offers of accommodation as you like to an applicant.

A reasonable offer is an offer of accommodation, which is suitable for the client's needs and is in the Lettings Area chosen by the applicant.

In the event of two or more applicants having an equal number of points, the applicant who has been on the list longest should be made the offer. Where this has occurred because an applicant has had a change of circumstance, the applicant who has been in this degree of housing need for the longest period should be made an offer.

In the event of two or more applicants having the same date of application for the community or economic stream the applicant who has the highest points should be made the offer.

Offers to sheltered housing

Before making an offer to a sheltered housing property, the support needs of the potential resident should be assessed using the independent living plans proforma to confirm we can provide the appropriate level of support they require.

4.15 Home Visits / Interviews:

All applicants who are going to be made an offer should be interviewed either at their
Lettings Procedure Guide V4 January 2009

home or in the office.

You should use the visit/ interview form in the appendix.

In undertaking home visits staff should refer to the “working safely” booklet and the home visiting/lone working procedure guide

In carrying out the interview you should ask for evidence of the applicants ID. If valid this should be confirmed on the visit/interview form.

If an applicant has not got an NI number then we probably shouldn't be housing them (or accepting them onto the list). If unsure check with J Ray.

The intention of carrying out the interview/visit is to verify the accuracy of the information given on the application form, and to provide information to the applicant about NCHA.

4.16 Transfer/Mutual Exchange Applicants

NCHA Tenants can apply to exchange tenancies with another tenant of Guinness Northern Counties, a tenant of another HA or a tenant of the Local Authority. If exchange is between 2 NCHA tenants.

Request received from tenants to exchange check that property will not be under-occupied/overcrowded.

If account is clear, send application forms to all parties with mutual exchange written on both forms.

On receipt of completed forms received in the office, issue home visit report forms to housing officer for both parties.

At visit the housing officer should advise applicants of timescales involved, obligations of taking over the tenancy, e.g. rent arrears, services on schemes, repairs to property which are required prior to exchange proceeding and their rights associated with assured/secure tenancies.

These should be visited/completed and returned to lettings within 5 working days of request.

If there are likely to be any arrears at exchange date the incoming tenant should sign an arrears repayment agreement accepting responsibility.

Once exchange has been approved by our area manager then approach the LA/HA for approval and a provisional exchange date.

Prior to any exchange or transfer being approved, a joint inspection of the property will need to be completed by the Maintenance Officer and Housing Officer

An appointment should be made for this visit at a time suitable for the applicant

At the visit, as well as explaining the transfer/exchange procedure, a de-lap form will need to be completed. This will include any external arrears.

Following the inspection the HO should give a verbal report to the applicant of what will need to be put right before a transfer or exchange can be approved.

Carry out a visual gas and electric check on both properties.

This should be confirmed in writing stating:

What has been found at the inspection, repairs required, clearing garden, cutting grass etc.

What needs to be put right

If any work is to be done by NCHA and recharged that this will have to be paid for before the transfer/exchange can be approved

The standard letters you should use are attached at appendix 11.8, 11.9, 11.10,.

Deed of assignment for mutual exchange – see appendix 10.24.

If exchange is between NC and LA/other HA tenant

The only difference to the above is we only do the visual gas and electric check on our property.

Two copies of the Mutual Exchange Assignment are required for our address only.

At the exchange our tenant hands over their copy of our Tenancy Agreement to the new incoming tenant.

The new tenant attaches their copy of the assignment to the front of their copy of our Tenancy Agreement for their records.

The remaining copy will be attached to the original agreement held in the housefile.

Complete one mutual exchange pro-forma in respect of our property which the LA/HA tenant is coming into.

We assume that both applicant forms need to be loaded on the system even though only one tenant is being rehoused.

4.17 Grounds for Withholding Approval to a Mutual Exchange

- The tenant or the proposed incoming tenant is subject to a court possession order or a suspended possession order

- The accommodation is substantially larger than is reasonably required by the proposed incoming tenant.
- That the accommodation is not reasonably suitable for the needs of the incoming tenant
- The property is in a rural area or is subject to a S106 agreement and the proposed tenant does not fit the criteria set out in the S106 agreement.

4.18 Re-housing Sexual and Violent Offenders

The Housing Corporation allows Housing Associations to exclude certain applicants but does not allow a blanket ban, and events prompting the exclusion should have occurred within 2 years of the person's application.

The criminal justice act imposes a duty for RSLs to co-operate with the local Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

The MAPPA are arrangements to assess and manage the risks posed by sexual and violent offenders in the community.

The duty is imposed on

- Social Services
- NHS
- Job Centres
- Youth Offending Teams
- Local Authorities
- Registered Social Landlords

The duty to co-operate includes

Giving advice about they type of accommodation it can offer
 Sharing information about offenders referred or accommodated
 Taking part in case conferences

Under the Sex Offenders Act 1997 the offences included are rape, possessing indecent photographs of children, indecent assault where the sentence is of 30 months or less, intercourse or indecency between men and encouraging prostitution where the victim is aged under 18. Guinness Northern Counties considers that we should re-house Schedule 1 Offenders where we have accommodation which will reduce the risk of re-offending by assisting agencies to supervise and support the applicant, subject to the consideration of the impact the letting may have on the local community and our existing residents.

Within each region, the RM should make contact with the MAPPA in order to agree on an information sharing protocol, and to identify a named person or persons (this will usually be the AM/ RM/NTL) within the region to be contacted should the probation service be seeking accommodation for a Sexual or Violent Offender.

It is the Probation Services role to carry out a risk assessment of the applicant and to share
 Lettings Procedure Guide V4 January 2009

this information with the Regions designated officer/s.

The role assessment must address answers to the following questions:-•

the likelihood of further offending

- the possible severity of any offence
- who are the likely victims of any further offence
- other victim location issues , e.g. previous victim living close to a proposed address
- what measures can be put in place to reduce risk
- support to be provided once the offender is re-housed

The RM and ADHMS (Ops) will then make a decision on whether the applicant is to be refused.

If the applicant is to be refused the probation service and the applicant should be notified of the reasons for the refusal and given the right to appeal.

If the applicant is to be re-housed the RM and ADHMS (Ops) will decide which staff if any need to be made aware of the applicant's background (this decision will be based on the risk assessment carried out by the probation service).

Where this information is shared with staff this should remain confidential within the Association and should not be notified to any outside agencies or members of the public. If it is found that staff have breached this confidentiality this will be considered a disciplinary matter.

You must flag vulnerability - please see the vulnerability procedure guide as to which flags you should use for which clients.

4.19 Preparation for sign up

The NSO should make the following preparations before the sign up takes place and before any keys are given out: -

- verify all the essential repairs due to be carried out before tenancy commencement has been carried out, and that gas certification & electricity checks are complete.
- ensure the property meets the lettable standard.
- notify the prospective tenant(s) giving the date and time of the sign up.
- notify all other relevant staff who may be involved i.e. HO/WBA/SS of date/time of sign up (preferably notice to be given in person but may be email or telephone if personal contact is not possible).

- obtain approval from AM/RM/NTL for decoration allowance or other incentives to be offered to the new tenant.

Select the appropriate tenancy type - Assured Non-Shorthold, Secure, Assured Short-hold, Student agreement or licence: -

Assured Non-Shorthold	The majority of new tenancies will be assured, the exception will be when a secure tenant is being transferred in which case a new secure tenancy should be created and Housing Support Services must be notified prior to the offer being made in order to agree a 'letting rent' (a new Registered rent will have to be applied for).
Secure	No new secure tenancies will be created with the exception of existing secure tenants who transfer to another NCHA property.
Assured Shorthold	These should be used for temporary tenancies, e.g. HAMA and for tenancies for 16 and 17 year olds. Also to be used where an agreed local letting policy is in place.
Student	Where the Association has entered into a partnership arrangement with a University, College, etc. A specific Tenancy Agreement may have been adopted to cover fixed term tenancies.
Licences	These are only used in specific situations such as Foyers and for Scheme Staff.

Prepare all paper work for the tenancy sign up. In the case of a single tenant the tenancy agreement should be prepared in their name only. In all other cases, where there is more than one adult, the tenancy agreement should be in joint names. This applies to same sex couples.

4.20 Sign Up Pack

The current information that we issue to residents is as follows:

GNC Home Guide

Tenancy Agreement

Current Scheme Agreement

GNC Key Players Brochure

The Housing Corporations Assured Tenants Charter

GNC Anti-Social behaviour and Community Safety Leaflet

GNC Racial Harrassment and Hate Crimes Leaflet

GNC Household Contents Insurance Leaflet

CORE form

Starter Tenancies Information Sheet

Service/Careline User Record

Payment Methods Information

Housing Benefit Application Form

Step by Step Gas Recommissioning

Step by Step Electricity

Handy Repairs and Maintenance Numbers

Void Re-let Standard Leaflet

GNC Direct Debit Form

Local Information

Gas Certificate

GNC Sign-up Check List

When the scheme agreements have been produced they will also need to be included.

4.21 The sign up Interview

In the interview go through the checklist with the new tenant, explain what the documents are and ensure they have understood. Hand over the information and ensure that you place particular emphasis on:

- the tenancy agreement – especially the requirement to pay rent and ‘good neighbour’ clauses and, as this is a legally binding document, it’s signed by all parties
- residents home guide – rent payment methods including HB

- emergency repairs and how to contact the local office
- filling in the emergency contact sheet fully
- noting the number of keys issued
- explaining clearly what the tenant must do to get their gas and electricity turned on.

4.22 Disclaimer for repairs to non- standard fittings

The disclaimer for repairs to non-standard fittings should be included in the sign up documentation where the property has fittings which Guinness Northern Counties would not normally provide e.g. ovens, hobs, cookers, fridges, garden sheds, fitted wardrobes, carpets, curtains, burglar alarms etc.

Obviously it is essential that the HO/MO advises the NSO of any property that has these fittings and that these are recorded in the iWorld Property Diary following hand over, properties that are likely to have non-standard fittings include: -

- HMP properties (Housing Market Package)
- Existing satisfactory properties (bought on the open market).
- Off the shelf schemes (designed and built by a developer who then offers them to the Association)

The NSO must complete the 'disclaimer form' (Appendix 10.18) which the new tenant must sign at the 'sign up'. A copy of the form must be retained in the tenancy file. Refer to the Maintenance Procedure guide for further information. The NSO must also ensure that for all future allocations to the property the new tenant signs the disclaimer form.

4.23 New Tenant Checklist

All new tenants, including transfers and exchanges, should have a Tenant Checklist completed as part of the sign up procedure.

All sections of the Checklist should be completed within 28 days of the commencement of tenancy.

A CORE form must be completed for all lettings.

All sections of the Log must be completed and all questions should be answered.

The points score of the successful applicant should be recorded on the Log. The completed Logs should be sent to Quality Team within 5 days.

4.24 Internal Procedure Following Sign-up

For each letting the NSO must complete a new tenancy proforma **Appendix 10.11** and forward this to the AM/NTL to update the computer record.

The NSO must indicate if the person offered the tenancy was the applicant with the highest point value or if not the reasons why another applicant has been offered the property.

The NSO and AM should sign the form to indicate that they have taken the correct action. The completed form should then be placed on the house file of the new tenant along with any print out of offers/waiting list if required.

4.25 Staff licences

If an offer of accommodation is being made to a member of staff as part of their employment contract the NSO should liase with Human Resources to arrange for the licence to be signed.

5 USE OF ASSURED SHORTHOLD TENANCIES

Starter Tenancies are used in specially designated areas as part of a strategy to promote sustainable communities. Starter Tenancies are actually Assured Shorthold tenancies - if everything goes well with the tenancy we hope to offer the tenant a Periodic Assured tenancy after 12 months.

Note: Starter Tenancies can only be used as part of a Local Lettings Policy, which has been approved by Regional Committee.

Assured Shorthold tenancies are dated for a 6 month period during which the tenancy is monitored to ensure that nuisance and other problems are resolved.

If significant nuisance or other breaches of the tenancy agreement have occurred during the 6 month period, other than rent arrears, the tenancy can be ended and the occupants speedily removed. If there are no significant nuisance problems or similar breaches then a standard assured periodic tenancy will be granted.

Exceptions

Assured Shorthold tenancies cannot be created in the following circumstances:

- Applicants who are already NCHA Assured or Secure tenants
- New tenancies arising from a succession of a Assured or Secure tenancy
- When the tenancy was formerly secure (e.g. stock transfer)

5.1 Advice to applicants

People applying for a tenancy in areas where starter tenancies apply **must** be told that a starter tenancy will be granted. In particular, they must be informed that as a starter tenancy, they will not have the right to transfer, exchange, or access to the mobility scheme while the starter tenancy is in place. Give out the advice leaflet 'a guide to starter tenancies.'

Exceptional requests, e.g. racial harassment should be directed to the RM for consideration.

5.2 Pre Tenancy Checks

Pre-tenancy checks must be undertaken to satisfy the criteria for making a formal offer.

5.3 Offer Letter

The offer letter must make it clear that a starter tenancy will be awarded if the offer is accepted. The starter tenancy information leaflet needs to be attached to this. Send standard 'Starter' offer letter - Appendix 11.15

5.4 Sign-up

At the sign-up confirm that the tenancy is a starter tenancy and explain the procedure that will be followed to monitor the tenancy.

Ensure that the 'Starter Tenancy' box is ticked on Q2 of the CORE form. Use sign-up checklist see section 4.19

Forward the Starter Tenancy pro-forma to the NTL. The NTL confirms the tenancy and rent account on Oracle and forwards the document to the Housing Officer. Send Pro Forma to NT Leader.

5.5 Housing Officer monitoring

First visit

The HO plans to visit each new tenant within 4 weeks of signing for the tenancy.

Details of the outcome of the first visit must be recorded on the house file and a record made on the monitoring spreadsheet. HO use standard visit form.

Any issues/ problems get dealt with by HO.

If the tenancy is in breach the HO records this with NTL.

Second/Third/Fourth visit

The HO will decide if to visit the tenant again if the tenant is in breach.

Details of the outcome of all visits must be recorded on the house file and a record made on the monitoring spreadsheet. All tenancy breaches to be recorded and actioned by the HO who will record this with NTL. HO use standard visit form.

HO hold monthly review meetings with NTL & AM for advice.

Note: Serious anti social behaviour can be fast tracked. We can apply for a Court Order for Possession within the first six months with evidence of a Breach of Tenancy. If we want to end the tenancy on or after six months, the earliest we can serve the eight week notice is notice is at four months.

10 months visit

The HO MUST visit every tenant on a starter tenancy at 10 months irrespective of how many previous visits there have been.

HO use standard visit form.

HO discuss at monthly review meeting with NTL

The review is undertaken during the Housing Officer's monthly meeting with their NTL. The Housing Officer must prepare for this by bringing the tenancy file with them. At the end of the review, a decision is made on what course of action will be taken. The Housing Officer then notifies the tenant in writing of the outcome of the review. This will be either to terminate the tenancy or to convert it to a Periodic Assured or leave for a further review in six months' time.

5.6 Termination of the Starter Tenancy

This will be the course of action taken when there are clear grounds that the household's behaviour has had a serious detrimental effect on persons or property in the neighbourhood e.g. violence and criminal activity; racial and other harassment including verbal and physical abuse and threats, damage to property or personnel possessions; noise and other nuisance including drunkenness, rubbish dumping, trespass and car repairs; damage including graffiti; pets not kept under control including pets allowed to foul public areas or bark persistently.

The Housing Officer must have written to the tenant warning them about our intention to end the tenancy giving reasons why.

The HO will serve a Notice To Quit that will expire not before the six months anniversary of the tenancy. Alternatively, Court action may be in process at this stage in a most serious case.

An application to Court for possession is made using the Accelerated procedure and a report prepared for Regional Committee. This report must include details of any defence made by the tenant.

5.7 Conversion to a standard Periodic Assured Tenancy

This will be the course of action taken when the tenancy has been conducted in a satisfactory manner and there is no valid NOISP served on the tenancy.

The Housing Officer writes to the tenant and offers for them to sign a new tenancy agreement. The standard Assured Periodic Agreement is signed, backdated to the start date of the Starter Tenancy.

5.8 Continuing the Starter Tenancy

This will be the course of action taken when the behaviour of the tenant is still being monitored or an incident has occurred after the tenancy review that is still being investigated, or any other breach of tenancy e.g. NOISP served or rent arrears need more time to be resolved. In these circumstances, the Housing Officer writes to the tenant and informs them that the starter tenancy will remain in force for another fixed period e.g. 6 months. This allows the tenant time to resolve any matter that is preventing the tenancy from being converted to a standard Assured Periodic Tenancy

6 VOIDS PROCEDURE

How a Tenancy can come to an end

6.1 Notice to Terminate Received from the Tenant

Maximum use of the notice period should be made to enable repairs to be carried out and the property pre-allocated before it becomes void.

The NSO should update the Amend Tenancy screen in iWorld when notice received or NTQ service and then to provide the NTL/AM/RM with a tenancy termination pro forma (See Appendix 2) within 1 day of the termination date.

When four weeks' notice to terminate is received from either an assured, secure or assured short-hold tenant (which must be in writing), termination should take place 28 days from the Monday following receipt. The NSO should acknowledge receipt of the notice using the standard letter within 1 day of receipt, and record receipt in I-world.

6.2 Death of a Tenant

Termination can take place up to 28 days from the death of the tenant or the date Housing Benefit ceases whichever is the later (note, eligibility for HB ceases from the date of death).

The notice to terminate should be acknowledged by letter.

6.3 Abandonment

Refer to the procedure guide for "Squatters, Illegal Occupiers and Abandonment" for full procedure notes. The following is a brief summary of the action that should be taken by the HO:-

- record the date the abandonment was first suspected or reported in the Tenancy Diary and advise the NSO and MO.

- visit all suspected abandonments by the end of the next working day
- serve a NTQ in person on the property within 1 day of the confirmation of the abandonment and record the date of service in I-world.
- on expiry of the NTQ, the HO should seek confirmation from the NTL/AM whether to refer the case to Rent Services and Debt Recovery Team for commencement of possession proceedings or to change the locks without recourse to legal proceedings.

- the tenancy should be terminated on the date advised by the NTL/AM or awarded by the Court if legal proceedings taken.
- MO/HO should ensure the property is secure on the date possession is obtained or an earlier date if instructed to do so by NTL/AM.

6.4 Surrender

A tenancy can be terminated by a formal or informal surrender.

6.5 Formal Surrender

This is an agreement between NCHA and the tenant to end a tenancy with less than four weeks' notice to terminate being given in writing.

All such cases should be referred to the NTL/AM/NSO to confirm the termination date with the tenant by letter and the tenant should be advised to put their notice in writing.

6.6 Informal Surrender

This usually occurs when the tenant posts the property keys to the Office or hands them to a member of scheme staff. The date of return of the keys must be recorded in the Tenancy Diary by the HO or NSO.

In such cases, the termination will take place 28 days after the keys are received if this was on a Monday. If received after Monday, the 28 day period will commence from the following Monday.

The NSO should confirm the termination date with the tenant using the standard letter which should be sent to the tenant's forwarding address (if available) or to alternative addresses obtained from the file e.g. relatives, work etc. Copies must be retained for the file.

6.7 Eviction

The termination date for an eviction will be the Sunday after the eviction has taken place.

Eviction dates are known in advance so the NSO should be short-listing and the HO arranging for necessary repairs to minimise the void period. Gas capping and electric checks should also be organised in advance.

6.8 Terminate a Tenancy

A tenancy should not be terminated until the appropriate notice period has elapsed.

The NSO should inform the Estate Manager / Scheme Manager within 1 day of the notice being received to arrange for a dilapidation inspection to take place.

Tenants wishing to terminate must be advised to confirm the details in writing and to include their forwarding address, the notice to take effect from the first Monday after receipt.

The HO to obtain a forwarding address for the tenant and to agree a repayment agreement if the arrears will not be paid by the termination date must use the notice period, full procedures are contained in the Former Tenant Arrears Procedure Guide.

On receipt of notice to terminate from the tenant or actual termination of the tenancy, the NSO should confirm the void details within 1 day.

If properties become unlettable, the void status of the property should be changed to the appropriate clarification. See the "Off Debit Procedure" for clarification.

6.9 'Turning Round' Voids

Procedure

Tenant Gives 4 Weeks Notice/Tenant Deceased/Informal Surrender

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Acknowledge Notice	Within 1 day of receipt	NSO Update Void Path
Confirm date of Dilaps Inspection by Letter	Within 1 day	NSO/HO
Inspect whilst tenanted to confirm property will be available to let when vacated	Within 3 days of receipt	HO/MO Update Void Path
Order minor works	Within 1 day of inspection	MO
Release keys to contractor	Within 1 day of orders being issued	MO
Change the void status of a property in need of substantial repairs prior to re-letting.	Within 4 days of property inspection	NSO/AM/RM P & S
Specify major works, programme and invite quotes (specify 14 days to reply)	Within 5 days of inspection	MO Update Void Path
Offer (no repairs/minor repairs only)	Within 3 days	NSO Update Void Path
Viewing and acceptance/refusal of offer Viewing cannot take place until the gas cap off has been completed.	Within 3 days of offer	HO/NSO
Re-offer if necessary	Within 1 day of viewing	NSO
Order major works	Within 1 day of receiving quotes	MO
Terminate tenancy	4 weeks after notice received within 1 day	AM/NTL
Provisional Offer (major repairs)	Same day works ordered	NSO
Sign-up (no repairs/minor repairs only)	Within 4 week Notice	NSO
Gas and Electricity test certificates should be placed on the property file.	Within 4 week Notice Period	MO Update Void Path
Final inspection (no repairs/minor repairs only) Confirm available to let	Upon receipt of keys and by 10.00 a.m. on date of new tenancy	HO/Scheme Staff
Advise P & S to return property void status to VOID	Within 1 day of works complete	NSO
Complete minor repairs	Within 1 day of tenancy commencement	MO Update Void Path
Complete major repairs and inspect Confirm available to let	Within 1 day of MO inspection	MO
Firm up tenancy commencement date for provisional offer (major repairs)	Within 1 day of MO inspection	NSO
Sign up and release keys	On next available Monday	NSO Update Void Path

Formal Surrender

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Acknowledge notice/ terminate	Within 1 day or as appropriate	AM/NTL/NSO Update Void Path
Carry out Dilaps Inspection Letter and confirm to NSO if property is available to let	Within 5 days of "Notice"	HO Update Void Path
Secure property if necessary	At time of inspection	HO/MO
Order minor repairs	Within 1 day of inspection	MO
Release keys to contractor	Within 1 day of orders being issued.	MO Update Void Path
Specify major works, programme and invite quotes	Within 5 days of inspection	MO Update Void Path
Offer (no repairs or minor works only)	Within 1 day of inspection	NSO Update Void Path
Arrange accompanied viewing	Within 2 days of Offer	HO/Scheme Staff
Re-offer (if necessary)	Within 1 day of viewing	NSO
Confirm minor works completed Confirm available to let	Within 3 days of Order	MO Update Void Path
Order major works	Within 1 day of receiving quotes	MO Update Void Path
Provisional Offer (Major Repairs needed). Arrange gas and electricity checks on date the keys are handed in or returned by contractor.	Within 1 day	MO Update Void Path
Final Dilaps inspection (only if tenanted at first inspection).	Upon receipt of keys.	HO/SS Update Void Path
Confirm property available to let.		
Sign up and release keys (no repairs or minor works only)	On next available Monday	NSO Update Void Path
Complete major repairs and inspect Confirm available to let.	Within 1 day	MO Update Void Path
Firm up tenancy date for Provisional Offer (major repairs)	Within 1 day of MO inspection	NSO Update Void Path
Sign up and release keys	By 12.00 noon on next available day.	NSO Update Void Path

Property Abandonment

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Serve Notice to Quit	Within 1 day of property being found empty	HO Update Void Path
Serve 24 hour notice of need to inspect	When found empty	HO
Carry out dilaps inspection Confirm available to let	By end of the next working day after discovery/report of abandonment received.	HO Update Void Path
Take inventory of FT possessions (if any)	At inspection	HO/Scheme Staff
Secure property	At inspection	MO
Serve 48 hours' notice of access for repairs	At inspection	HO
Order minor repairs including gas cap off and electricity checks	Within 1 day of inspection	MO Update Void Path
Release keys to contractor	Within 1 day of orders being updated	MO Update Void Path
Specify major works, programme and invite quotes	Within 5 days of inspection	MO
Offer (no repairs/minor works only)	By 2nd week of NTQ	NSO Update Void Path
Serve 24 hours' notice for access to view	Upon making offer	NSO
Arrange accompanied viewing	Within 2 days of offer	HO/Scheme Staff
Re-offer if necessary	Within 1 day of viewing	NSO Update Void Path
Order Major Works	Within 1 day of receiving quotes	MO Update Void Path
Provisional Offer (major works)	Same day as works ordered	NSO Update Void Path
Apply for Court Order for possession (if advised to do so by RM)	On expiry of NTQ	HO
Terminate	On date possession granted	AM/SHO/NSO
Sign up (no repairs/minor repairs only)	When possession granted	NSO Update Void Path
Release keys to new tenant	By 12 noon on Monday following termination of tenancy	NSO/Scheme Staff
Check minor repairs completed	Within 10 days of tenancy commencement	MO
Complete major repairs and inspect	Within 30 days of order	MO
firm up tenancy date for provisional offer (major repairs)	Within 1 day or MO inspection	NSO
Sign up and release keys	By 12 noon on next available Monday	NSO Update Void Path

There is a target of NIL void weeks when: -

- 4 weeks' notice has been received from the tenant
- the tenant has died
- the tenant has informally surrendered the tenancy

There are a number of key events, which must take place in order to turn round a void in as short a time as possible.

The key events are determined by the amount of notice the tenant has given.

The efficient inspection, ordering and completion of repairs are an important part of this process.

Major repairs are those which render the property uninhabitable or which could not be carried out without significant discomfort and inconvenience to a sitting tenant, e.g. Chemical DPC injection, complete re-wiring, rebuilding a gable wall etc. Where the SMM/MO considers the property 'unfit for letting' due to the need for the repairs they must advise the NSO within 1 day of this fact and the amount of time it will take to complete the required repairs. The NSO must then follow the "Off Debit" Procedure.

Through local knowledge, staff will be aware of certain properties within the Region that are likely to need major repairs before being available for re-letting, e.g. earlier rehabs. The MO rather than the HO should inspect these. RM should agree with the SMM which properties in the Region fall into this category.

The target for inspecting, specifying, tendering and ordering major works is 28 days from receipt of the notice.

Minor repairs are the routine day-to-day repairs we regularly carry out whilst the property is tenanted.

Wherever possible, minor repairs should be completed during the Notice Period, but may with the incoming tenants' consent be carried out within the first fortnight of the new tenancy (this would for example include small items picked up at the final inspection).

Dates for Dilapidation Inspections should be arranged over the telephone or confirmed by Scheme Staff if possible. In other instances the time and date of the proposed inspection should be specified in the letter acknowledging the notice which should also include a name for the tenant to contact if the proposed appointment is inconvenient.

Accompanied viewing is recommended, making use of Scheme Staff where possible.

Keys should be split wherever possible to allow repair works and viewing to take place at the same time. If just one key is returned, then the cost of cutting a duplicate or carrying out a lock change is money well spent in speeding up the re-letting/repairs process.

6.10 Furniture & Personal Belongings left in a void property

Lettings Procedure Guide V4 January 2009

If personal belongings or furniture are left by the previous tenant an inventory and photographs of these items should be taken, and placed in the house file.

The AM should be made aware of the items left and depending upon condition and amount of items left and the circumstance that the void arose, determine if they should be disposed of or stored.

As a guide if the property was abandoned and the articles have a value of less than £200 they should be disposed of.

If the outgoing tenant left a forwarding address or telephone number they should be contacted immediately and informed that the items will be disposed of within 7 days if no arrangements are made to collect them.

If there are items of high value (above £200 in total) they should be stored and efforts made to contact the outgoing resident.

The items should be stored for a reasonable period up to a maximum of 3 months at which point they will be disposed of.

The AM should seek advice from the RM on any individual if the situation or interpretation of the above procedure is unclear.

6.11 Void Monitoring

Specific members of staff need to take responsibility for 'turning round' void properties, i.e.: -The NSO is responsible for confirming the void and creating the void path. When a termination is recorded on the system a PROV status is auto generated. The NSO changes this to CONF status when they are sure property is void. Once the dilap is done, NSO changes status to either ATLA, ATLB, ATLC, or ATLD.

If property is unlettable the NSO needs to complete a pro forma to systems team, who will log one of the unlettable codes listed. NSO's should not log the Unlettable Status Codes. The void path should be updated on the housing system using the new codes. The codes are as follows:

Code	Description
ATLA	ATL – First Let (available to let)
ATLB	ATL – Re-let no repairs
ATLC	ATL – Re-let after minor repairs
ATLD	ATL – difficult to let / Low Demand
CANC	Void cancelled
CLSD	Property closed
CONF	Confirmed
ILOC	Void illegally occupied

LET	Property Let
PROV	Provisional
SQAT	Void squatted
UNE1	Unlettable – awaiting major repairs
UNE2	Unlettable – awaiting conversion
UNE3	Unlettable - Reinvestment strategy – awaiting works
UNF	Unlettable – undergoing works
UNG	Unlettable – rented stock awaiting sale
UNH	Unlettable - non-rented stock awaiting sale
UNI	Unlettable – unlicensed occupation
UNJ1	Unlettable – hard to let / no demand
UNJ2	Unlettable – held for decant show flat
UNJ3	Unlettable – housekeeping e.g. awaiting closure
UNJ4	Unlettable – Reinvestment strategy – awaiting decision
UNJ5	Unlettable – Reinvestment strategy – awaiting demolition
UNJ6	Unlettable - Seasonal
UNLE	Unlettable Void status

The HO is responsible for ensuring themselves or scheme staff carries out an inspection.

The MO is responsible for ensuring repairs and gas cap off and electric checks are carried out. No letting should take place unless gas and electric certificates have been received by the NSO.

AM/RM/NTL have a monitoring role in ensuring the above takes place, should hold weekly meetings with HO/MO/NSO to discuss void performance, and ensure void loss is kept to the minimum. The AM/RM/NTL must ensure that all properties unavailable for letting have the correct void status and that this is amended when the property becomes available again.

It is the responsibility of everyone who works for NCHA to ensure that void loss is minimised and rental income is maximised.

Everyone should work together as a team to ensure that this aim is achieved. The void control pack should be used and fully completed to ensure void loss is minimised and an appropriate void audit trail is maintained.

7 DEALING WITH READILY AVAILABLE HOMES

Strategic Approach

A strategic approach is needed to effectively tackle the issue of low demand, which means property readily available to let. A range of issues to be considered and options available to resolve them are set out below, this is not an exhaustive list.

All staff involved in the letting process have a valid contribution to make in terms of creating innovative approaches to the issue of low demand. Overall responsibility rests with the RM in terms of formulating and updating of the Regional Plan.

If the property is not to be re-let, then it should be dealt with under the 'Off debit Procedure'.

7.1 Identifying the Problem

It is important that staff are constantly vigilant in understanding the local housing market factors which can affect demand or sustainability. Some of the indicators are: -

- Increasing arrears levels
- Increased cost of responsive repairs due to tenant damage.
- High turnover rate
- Reducing waiting list for the scheme or area.
- 'High' refusal rate of offers made.
- Level of transfer requests.

This will assist regional teams in putting in place strategies for dealing with low demand and sustainability. This could include, but is not limited to liaison with: -

- Other Registered Social Landlords in the area
- Local Authority
- Private Landlords
- Local Residents
- Community Groups
- Police

- Other Agencies

Agree a strategy for the area with the partners and agree a system of reporting between partners that enables effective monitoring of the strategy.

7.2 Physical Improvements

A number of issues can affect sustainability, many of which are not related to the physical built environment. In liaison with Investment & Regeneration, LA partner and tenants (Scheme Planning), consider conversion/refurbishment to accommodate alternative client groups or simply to make the property more acceptable to applicants e.g. convert shared accommodation to self-contained.

Improve security measures: -

- High specification doors, windows, locks
- Burglar alarms
- Security Lighting
- Re-design vulnerable external areas in line with 'Secure by Design' principles.
- Develop a multi-agency approach to area regeneration.
- Protect void properties by installing mobile alarms.
- Consider alternative methods of securing void properties e.g. metal screens for doors and windows (it may be cheaper in the long term to purchase rather than rent!)
- Upgrade older properties to improve popularity by concentrating on heating, security, insulation, amenities etc.

7.3 Disposal or Demolition

- Consider disposal or demolition in liaison with Investment & Regeneration when it is not cost effective to carry out improvements or when improvements are unlikely to increase demand.
- RM to prepare a report for ADHMS (Ops) where it is considered this is the only option left for the property/scheme.

7.4 Incentives

Consider the following

Generous decoration allowances, vouchers or decorating materials.

- Re-decorate whilst void if in poor condition.
- Meet the cost of removal, telephone re-connection, mail re- diversion and gas re-connection.
- Provision of a furniture package via an increase in the weekly rent or advice to applicants of low cost furniture providers in the area.
- Cash bonus to existing tenants who refer an applicant who becomes a tenant and stays for a minimum of 6 months.
- Cash bonus to tenants who stay for a minimum of 12 months on high turnover schemes.
- Set rents below the agreed-banded rents in consultation with HSS and with the approval of directors.

7.5 Marketing

- Advertise to let people know accommodation is available for letting, target the advert at specific client groups or localities.
- Monitor responses to advertising and amend accordingly.
- Advertise jointly with other agencies.
- Include articles regarding the availability of properties in the Tenants' Newsletter, News 'n' Views.
- Translate information into ethnic minority languages and Braille.
- Arrange scheme 'open days' or show flats, involve tenant representatives to help 'sell' the scheme to prospective tenants.
- Leaflet drop an area to increase awareness/demand.
- Produce estate agent style property brochures for display on reception areas.
- Consider lettings agencies to promote vacant properties.

7.6 Local Lettings Policy (LLP's)

Housing Corporation performance standards allow for provision to be made for LLPs to be introduced to 'prevent or reverse an area of decline'. LLPs are basically variations to the mainstream Lettings Policy and are a means of tailoring the lettings on specific schemes in order to protect, regenerate and sustain communities. The key to LLPs is flexibility in the way they are applied to a scheme/area taking into consideration local factors and circumstances.

LLPs are not intended as a blanket policy that will totally exclude certain groups.

To comply with the framework agreed by the Board of NCHA and Housing Corporation guidance, the LLP must: -

- state a specific range of options the Association is prepared to consider implementing
- define who determines the type of policy to be introduced
- demonstrate that the policy is consistent with the overall aims and objectives of the NCHA Lettings Policy
- define the process for the approval of the policy
- ensure there are no adverse legal or regulatory implications to the policy
- define a mechanism for the review of local policies
- be in place for a maximum of 3 years

An LLP can contain

- A variation on the 60/20/20 percentage splits for the general/economic and community lists.
- Designated parts of a scheme for a particular household type, e.g. elderly or households with no children. This would apply to selected areas of an estate/scheme in full consultation with local residents and the Local Authority.
- Age banding – introduce a specific age requirement e.g. under 25's over 40's etc. Again the intention would be to apply this to parts of a scheme or block of flats in consultation with residents.
- Relaxing eligibility criteria, for example 2/3 bed houses on a scheme being offered to couples or groups of single people. This would maximise the number of eligible applicants and also respond to resident's requirements, such as access to children. (Refer to the allocations system guide on the over-ride capability in voids)
- Using Assured Short-hold Starter Tenancies, for a period of 12 months, after which a decision will be made on the conduct of the tenancy and whether the tenant will be granted an Assured tenancy.
- Giving preference to family/relatives to move onto a scheme linked to local circumstances on the scheme.
- Re-house family/relatives strategically close, rather than to next available property.
- Allocating a % of properties to applicants in employment or working in the area.

- Collecting police checks - For any schemes that you wish collect police checks you must seek Regional Committee approval and this should be on the basis of wishing to address serious issues of sustainability mainly relating to crime levels.

7.7 Procedure

The following criteria are to be considered by the Regional Team and local residents when proposing the LLP and deciding on its components: -

- void data - % of voids on scheme and average per year
- turnover - % of terminations over the year, broken down into accommodation types
- demographic profile - % of children and age banding (e.g. 0-4 etc)
- number of single person households – no's under 25, 25-35 etc
- stock profile – number and % of houses/flats
- % of tenants receiving Housing Benefit
- employment and % economically active
- re-housing information - % and number of applicants, transfers etc
- existence of Pre-Tenancy Checks in area
- impact of ability to re-house any excluded persons in rest of regions stock
- current waiting lists
- complaints and incidences of Anti-Social Behaviour

Careful consideration must be given as to whether current waiting lists have scope for demand to meet the new criteria – are there sufficient numbers of applicants to facilitate the building of a balanced community? Promotion of an area through marketing would therefore come in at this point.

The LLP will therefore need to clearly specify: -

- issues and problems which need to be addressed, as part of wider objectives in the area of which the LLP is one element
- how the proposed scheme will address these
- set clear objectives and performance measures
- set a timetable for implementation, duration, monitoring and review arrangements

Approvals

The introduction of a LLP must be formally agreed by Regional Committee before it is implemented, and the agreement of the LA sought.

7.8 Summary of key stages of implementing a LLP

- Performance Indicators and Management Information determines the need to take action on a scheme.
- Devise community regeneration strategy
- Devise LLP as part of this
- Determine the specific elements of the LLP
- Get approval for LLP from Regional Committee and Local Authority (use standard letter at appendix 15)
- Implement Policy and inform Housing Corporation
- Monitor and review (report to Regional Committee)

7.9 Monitoring the Impact of the Strategy

- Establish key indicators that monitor the impact of the strategy.
- Carry out follow-up resident satisfaction survey on the anniversary of implementation of the strategy to assess resident perception of the strategy's success.

7.10 Fast Tracking

Subject to Regional Committee approval, a fast track approach can be undertaken for readily available homes.

This approach includes actively marketing vacant property and carrying out a detailed interview in the office within 7 days of an enquiry from an interested person. The detailed interview form is available on the system. This is a detailed form of the pre-tenancy check form.

This includes additional requests for proof of income and the applicant's financial circumstances and ability to pay the rent.

We will, where possible, check the details of the references supplied by the applicant over the phone.

An accompanied viewing will be carried out and a provisional offer made, prior to an application form being scanned, if the checks at the interview prove satisfactory. Board gave approval in December 2001 for a date order approach to be taken for applicants requesting readily available properties and we are working towards this. Further details will be given to staff.

8 NEW SCHEMES

8.1 *The target turnaround time for new properties is NIL days.*

Information should be obtained by the AM/RM/HO from Development & Regeneration Services with regard to expected hand-over dates, the addresses and property types of each unit, nomination arrangements and whether hand-overs are to be phased. It is essential that this information be obtained at least 3 months before hand-over to allow for allocation of properties immediately after hand-over.

If hand-overs are to be phased, the NSO needs to know the dates each phase will be handed over and which units will be included in each phase.

As part of their negotiation with the LA, Development Services will have agreed the percentage of first and subsequent allocations which are to be made available for LA Nominations, this information should be given to the NSO 3 months before hand-over.

Block sign ups should be arranged on viewing day wherever possible. The NSO should try to pre-allocate in advance of hand-over where circumstances allow, it may be possible to arrange the early hand-over of a 'show home' on some schemes.

For mid-week hand-overs, aim to sign up people before the weekend, when the tenancy is to commence on the following Monday. This allows the tenant time to move in and greatly assists with security. Advise the new tenant to put up curtains and set up timed lights if they are unable to move in straight away.

8.2 *Procedure for New Schemes*

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Request Lettings Area be amended or new letting area be created by P&S	Within 2 weeks of commencement of building work	NSO
In liaison with AM/RM/NTL and HSS, set Rent and Service Charge to cover the cost of gardening, window cleaning, scheme staff, communal facilities (including landlords electricity supply to external lights)	3 months before scheme hand-over	AM/RM/NTL
Obtain scheme code from P&S	3 months before scheme hand-over	AM/RM/ NTL
Complete New Scheme/Property Pro-forma and send to P&S (Appendix 4).	1 month before scheme hand-over	AM/RM/ NTL
Request P&S incorporate new scheme into existing HO patch Admin Units	1 month before scheme hand-over	AM/RM/ NTL
Send application forms to direct applicants	As enquiries are received	NSO

Request LA Nominations	3 Months before hand-over of scheme	NSO
Make provisional offers to LA Nominations, direct and transfer applicants	1 to 2 months before scheme hand-over	NSO
Identify a reserve list of applicants in the event of refusal of offers	1 to 2 months before scheme hand-over	NSO
Confirm hand-over dates with D&R. Hand-overs should not take place on a Monday or Friday.	2 weeks before expected scheme hand-over	NSO
Confirm tenancy dates	Immediately Contract Team confirm hand-over dates and minimum 7 days in advance of tenancy commencement.	NSO
Arrange for viewing by applicants on days of hand-over or following day.	1 week before	NSO
Carry out accompanied viewing with the applicant and WBA, sign up and release keys.	On day of hand-over or following day	NSO
If offer refused, re-offer, arrange viewing, sign up, release keys.	By Monday following hand-over	NSO

8.3 Procedure for Existing Sats/Purchase and Repair

KEY EVENT	TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY
Confirm areas to be targeted by D&R	March each year.	AM/RM/NTL
Property details passed to AM/RM/SMM	Within 7 working days.	D& RS
Property visited for external inspection	Within 7 working days	MM/MO
D&R notified if property is acceptable or not.	Within 2 working days of inspection.	AM/RM/NTL
If property is accepted, obtain scheme code from P & S	Within 2 working days of acceptance	AM/RM/NTL
Complete new scheme/property pro-forma (Appendix 4) and send to P&S	Within 2 working days of acceptance	AM/RM/NTL
Request LA Nominations	Within 2 working days of acceptance.	NSO
Major works required consultants prepare schedule of works and place orders.	On day contracts are exchanged.	DS
D&R notify AM/RM/NTL of exchange of contracts and completion date.	Within 2 working days of exchange of contracts	DS
AM/RM/NTL notified of completion date	Within 1 working day of completion	DS

AM/RM/NTL notified of start on site date and anticipated practical completion	Within 2 working days of start on site	DS
Firm up tenancy commencement date	Within 2 working days	NSO
On completion of the works, property handed over.	Within 1 day of works being completed	DS
If only minor works are required, the property will be handed into management	Within 1 working day of completion	DS
Arrange for viewing by applicant	1 week before hand-over	NSO
Carry out accompanied viewing	On day of hand-over	NSO/HO
Sign up and release keys	On day of hand-over or within 1 working day	NSO/HO
If offer refused, re-offer, arrange viewing, sign up and release keys	By Monday following hand-over	NSO

9 GARAGE PROCEDURES

Garages are not allocated via the points system for residential properties, they should be allocated using the following priority system: -

- 1st Priority: GNC Tenants
- 2nd Priority: Non-GNC Tenants
- 3rd Priority: GNC Tenants who already rent a garage on the site.
- 4th Priority: Non-GNC Tenants who already rent a garage on the site.

Procedure

Applicants wishing to apply for a garage should be advised to put their application in writing which will then be recorded by the LO on a card-index system, as allocations are not made on a points system garage tenancies must be set up through First Housing Estates.

The LO should confirm with the applicant using the standard letter that they have been registered on the list for a garage on the chosen scheme in writing within 10 working days of the application being made, where void garages exist an offer should be made within 3 days.

When a garage becomes vacant, the LO should make an offer to the applicant in the highest priority group who has been on the list for the longest period of time using the standard letter enclosing a copy of the tenancy agreement (Appendix 11.16) for signing and return. Upon receipt of the signed agreement the tenant should be sent a giro payment card and the keys can be released.

Any tenant/resident in arrears of rent/service charge should not be offered a garage until their account is up to date, where the applicant is top of the list the LO should advise them that an offer will be made if their arrears are cleared within 7 days.

Applicants in receipt of HB should be advised that they will have to pay the garage rent themselves, garage rent is **not** eligible for HB.

Any rates payable on the garage are the tenant's responsibility.

<u>KEY EVENTS</u>	<u>TARGETS</u>	<u>RESPONSIBILITY</u>
Acknowledge notice	Within 1 working day	LO
Terminate tenancy (only 1 weeks notice required)	Within 1 working day	LO
Confirm date of dilaps inspection	Within 3 working days	LO/HO/SS
Order minor works	Within 3 days	MO
Offer (after checking for arrears)	Before notice expires	LO

on existing tenancy).		
Re-offer if refused	Within 1 day	LO
Send offer letter enclosing the Garage tenancy agreement (Appendix 11.16)	Within Notice Period	LO
When agreement returned send giro book and release keys to new tenant	By 12.00 p.m. on date tenancy commences	LO

Terminating a garage

When terminating a garage it is necessary to check if the garage has been linked to a residential property (garage tenancies should be entirely separate to residential tenancies but may have been linked at some point in the past).

If both tenancies have been linked then the garage will automatically cease when the property is terminated.

Should the garage tenancy wish to be continued then a new agreement and rent giro number will need to be issued as the details will have been deleted.

Garage Void Path

The LO will continue to select applicants from the existing manual waiting lists and not First Housing.

When an offer has been made the LO will need to update the system manually. Enter details in the comments column i.e. date of offer and to whom, and the outcome of an offer i.e. accept, ref., withdrawn.

The event date will need to be entered when the minor works are completed. This automatically generates the target date for the keys to be returned from the contractor (within 1 working day of completion).

10 TENANCY CHANGES

10.1 *Joint to Single Notes*

Joint to Single can only be done by a Deed of Assignment – Appendix 10.9.

Two copies have to be drawn up and must be signed by both tenants.

Fill in a Change of Details Proforma see appendix 10.22

The tenants can either come into the Office or the Housing Officer can call to the property.

If the relationship has completely broken down then the tenants can come into the Office and sign the Assignment separately.

If the outgoing tenant cannot be traced please seek advice from either the Area Manager or John Ray – Regional Manager at Sheffield.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

In the case of a relationship breakdown you should:

- Not take sides but offer practical advice on options to both partners.
- Not attempt to arbitrate as this is a specialised agency role.
- Encourage both partners to obtain independent legal advice
- Do not advise either partner to relinquish their interest in the tenancy – this is the job of a legal adviser.
- Recognise the need for both parties needs for accommodation, eg. that both parents may require accommodation of a size suitable for the children to be with either party.

10.2 Name Change By Deedpoll

You need a copy of the legal deedpoll document or a letter from the tenant informing us a their change of name

Attach this to a Change of Details form along with the original tenancy agreement and give to Area Manager to be updated on Iworld.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

10.3 Single to Joint By Marriage Notes

THIS CAN ONLY BE DONE BY TERMINATING THE EXISTING TENANCY AND CREATING A NEW TENANCY.

A Copy of the Marriage Certificate is required.

Terminate the single tenancy on the system and fill in a Termination Proforma from the day before the new tenancy is to commence.

Draw up 2 new agreements in the new names and fill in a New Starter Proforma

Also complete a Change of Details Proforma.

You will need to create a made up application form on the system for both tenants, then make and confirm the offer.

Both parties will then need to come into the office and sign the agreements.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

10.4 Name Change By Marriage

TO BE DONE ONLY IF THE TENANCY IS ALREADY IN JOINT NAMES BUT UNDER HER MAIDEN NAME

You only need a copy of the marriage certificate

Attach this to a Change of Details form along with the original tenancy agreement and give to Area Manager to be updated on Iworld.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

10.5 Single to Joint Notes

THIS CAN ONLY BE DONE BY TERMINATING THE EXISTING TENANCY AND CREATING A NEW TENANCY.

Terminate the single tenancy on the system and fill in a Termination Proforma from the day before the new tenancy is to commence.

Draw up 2 new agreements in both names and fill in a New Starter Proforma

Also complete a Change of Details Proforma.

You will need to create a made up application form on the system for both tenants, then make and confirm the offer.

Both parties will then need to come into the office and sign the agreements.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

10.6 Succession How To Do Notes

Only **ONE** statutory succession for both Assured and Secure tenancies is possible by way of Deed of Assignment (see attached)

If the Successor is a spouse or civil partner there is no qualifying period, all others including common law partners must have lived with the tenant for 12 months as their only or principle home and it must continue to be so.

Proforma must be attached to the original tenancy agreement.

10.7 Death of a Joint Tenant

CHECK IF THE TENANCY IS AN ASSURED OR SECURE

IF ASSURED:

You need a copy of the Death Certificate

Attach this to a Change of Details form along with the original tenancy agreement and give to Area Manager to be updated on Iworld.

IF SECURE:

A new Secure Agreement will need to be drawn up in the Sole Tenants name. You will need to get a secure rent either off the system or from Mike Mitchell and remember to terminate the joint tenancy.

If the account is in arrears or an NSP has been served then the assignment cannot be completed.

11 APPENDICES

11.1 Policy – Request for exemption from Schedule 1 of the Housing Act 1996: Housing of Employees and their relatives

FIRST EXEMPTION

PROCEDURE GUIDE FOR STAFF

Purpose

1. The purpose of this Procedure Guide is to assist Staff with regard to requests for exemption from Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Housing Act 1996. This guide relates only to re-housing applications, not to employment applications.
2. Schedule 1 to the Housing Act 1996 revised and replaced previous legislation on payments and benefits for registered social landlords which was formerly covered by Sections 14 and 15 of the Housing Act 1988.

Background

3. Directors have expressed concerns about the number of requests for re-housing applications from close relatives and friends of employees. Staff need to be reminded of the statutory provisions on employees which mean they must not put themselves in a position where a duty to the RSL (Registered Social Landlord) and their personal interests conflict, or might conflict, and they must not benefit in any way from their connection with NCHA.
4. Under the legislation a benefit includes the grant of a tenancy or licence; the grant of a lease, such as a shared ownership lease or under the leasehold scheme for the elderly; and the sale of a property, at any value.

Issues

5. There are nine classes of exemption to Schedule 1, the third exemption relates to “the housing of employees and their relatives”. This exemption allows RSLs to provide accommodation (tenancies/leases) to its employees, former employees, and close relatives of employees, but states that if RSLs wish to make use of this exemption they need to do so with caution to avoid the risk of being seen to be unfair.
6. The principles of the restrictions under this exemption are that the person in question should receive exactly the same consideration as any other applicant. This means that they cannot be given priority because of any link with the RSL.

7. In the case of Scheme Staff, the Association will endeavour to re-house Staff who are appointed to a residential position and where they live in a house or flat specifically designed for the position of Warden/Caretaker/Estate Officer, under the following conditions:-

- i) the employee retires from the position in accordance with NCHA's retirement policy
- ii) the employee retires early on the grounds of ill health
- iii) in all other cases of termination of employment i.e. to take up alternative employment, dismissal, personal reasons, Guinness Northern Counties will not assist the employee to find alternative accommodation

8. Cases where the Association would be willing to assist, are submitted to the Board for approval like any other Schedule 1 request but, the Terms and Conditions of Employment are highlighted to Members.

Procedure

9. With the exception of scheme Staff who fall within points 7(i) and (ii) above, and despite there being provisions in place for exemptions, the policy at Guinness Northern Counties is to avoid, wherever possible, the granting of tenancies/leases to employees and their relatives unless there are exceptional and compelling reasons why a person should be included on the re-housing list. The presumption in the first instance should always be that a tenancy would not be granted to anyone who has a link with the Association.

10. Regional Housing Managers should only consider requests when they are satisfied that there are exceptional and compelling reasons why an application should be considered. They must also be satisfied that every effort has been made to secure a tenancy through other landlords (e.g. local authorities and HAs) before the approach is made to Guinness Northern Counties, and evidence of this must be given in support of the request.

11. Exceptional and compelling reasons for re-housing requests may include the following:-a) death of a spouse/partner of an employee

b) relationship breakdown

c) harassment However, each case will be considered on the facts appertaining at the time.

12. If the RM is satisfied that consideration should be given to the request, he/she should complete a request pro-forma (example at Appendix 2) then forward it to the Assistant Director of Housing Management Services (Operations) for consideration. If he/she is in agreement that all potential housing providers have been exhausted and the Association is the only remaining option, the request should be forwarded to the Director of Corporate Services for consideration.

13. If approved, the request, in the form of a report, will be submitted to the next scheduled Board meeting for consideration.

11.2 Policy - Notes on Notice to Quit

Please read these notes carefully before preparing the Notice.

The Notice given must be at least 2 months from the date of service and the date must :-

- a) Be the last day of a period of tenancy; and
- b) Be no earlier than the earliest day upon which the period of tenancy could have been terminated by Notice to Quit from the landlord.

Under a statutory periodic tenancy, the periods of tenancy are the rental periods. If doubt exists about the correct dates that apply add:

“Where this notice is served after the expiry of the fixed term of the tenancy, the date after which possession is required is the end of the period of your tenancy which will expire next after 2 months from the date of service of this notice to you, if this date is later than the date specified above”.

11.3 Policy – Grounds for Withholding Consent to Assignment By Way of Exchange

Ground 1

The tenant or the proposed assignee is obliged to give up possession of the dwelling house of which he is the secure tenant in pursuance of an order of the court, or will be so obliged at a date specified in such an order.

Ground 2

Proceedings have been begun for possession of the dwelling house of which the tenant or the proposed assignee is the secure tenant on one or more grounds 1 to 6 in Part 1 of Schedule 2 (grounds on which possession may be ordered despite absence of suitable alternative), or there has been served on the tenant or the proposed assignee, a notice under Section 83 (notice of proceedings for possession) which specifies one or more of those grounds and is still in force.

Ground 3

The accommodation afforded by the dwelling house is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required by the proposed assignee.

Ground 4

The extent of the accommodation afforded by the dwelling house is not reasonably suited to the needs of the proposed assignee and his family.

Ground 5

The dwelling House;
forms part of or is within the curtilage of a building which, or so much of it as is held by the landlord, is held mainly for purposes other than housing purposes and consists mainly of accommodation other than housing accommodation or is situated in cemetery and;
was let to the tenant or a predecessor in title of his in consequence of the tenant or predecessor being in the employment of; the landlord, a Local Authority, a new town corporation, the Development Board for Rural Wales, an Urban Development Corporation, or the Governors of an aided school.

Ground 6

The landlord is a charity and the proposed assignee's occupation of the house would conflict with the objects of the charity.

Ground 7

The dwelling house has features which are substantially different from those of ordinary dwelling houses and which are designed to make it suitable for occupation by a physically disabled person who requires accommodation of the kind provided by

the dwelling house and if the assignment were made there would no longer be such a person residing in the dwelling house.

Ground 8

The Landlord is a Housing Association or Housing Trust which lets dwellings only for occupation (alone or with others) by persons whose circumstances (other than merely financial) make it especially difficult for them to satisfy their need for housing and if the assignment were made there would no longer be such a person residing in the dwelling.

Ground 9

The dwelling house is one of a group of dwellings which it is the practice of the Landlord to let for occupation by persons with special needs and a social service or special facility is provided in close proximity to the group of dwellings in order to assist persons with those special needs and if the assignment were made there would no longer be a person with those special needs residing there.

11.4 Policy – Allocations Policy Statement

Purpose

This Allocations Policy Statement provides a framework in which we allocate our homes. The Policy is backed up by clear procedures, which are constantly under review to make sure they help us to achieve our objectives. These are to provide homes fairly and effectively to meet housing need in the areas we operate in and to create sustainable communities where people want to live.

Policy Aims:

- ✓ We will allocate our homes fairly in a way that meets our legal obligations.
- ✓ We will allocate our homes in a way that minimises the amount of time they are left empty.
- ✓ We will make sure our homes are allocated in a safe and clean condition in accordance with our relet charter.
- ✓ We will provide all residents with access to a range of support and advice services at the beginning of their tenancy.
- ✓ We will work constructively with our local authority partners to make sure the allocation of homes helps them to fulfil their duties towards people who are homeless, and people who need homes after moving from Supported Housing.
- ✓ We will meet our targets for offering homes nominated to us by the local authorities we work with.
- ✓ We will try to give our customers the kind of homes they would like.
- ✓ We will work towards the development of sustainable communities where the people who live there are happy with their homes and neighbourhoods.
- ✓ We try to help all those who wish to transfer from their home or do a mutual exchange.
- ✓ Anyone who is aged 16 or over can apply to us for a home.
- ✓ We will provide advice and help to any applicant who we are unable to accept on to the waiting list because we wouldn't be able to offer them a home within a reasonable time.
- ✓ We will provide an appeals process to anyone we are unable to accept onto the waiting list, or who is unhappy with our allocations service.

- ✓ We reserve the right to carry out checks with previous landlords on all applicants before we offer a home.

Who do we rehouse?

- ✓ Our three stream process makes sure that people in the greatest housing need are given the highest priority in the allocation of our homes, while at the same time helping towards creating sustainable communities.
- ✓ Some of our homes can only be offered to people on low incomes due to charitable status restrictions. Applications for these homes are subject to an assessment of the applicants' financial circumstances.
- ✓ We give reasonable priority to transfer and mutual exchange requests from our own residents and those from other Social Landlords.
- ✓ We reserve the right to offer homes on a "first come first served" basis where neither we nor the local authority have a waiting list. If we need to do this, we will always try to offer a home that meets the applicant's needs.
- ✓ We will accurately record all our lettings activity through the national CORE recording system for housing association allocations.
- ✓ We will actively take part in any national mobility scheme.

Review of the policy

- ✓ We will review all our allocation procedures every year to make sure that we still comply with any changes in the law.
- ✓ We will use this review to highlight any changes to our procedures that we need to make. This will help us to carry on meeting the housing needs in the areas where we work and to make sure that our customers are happy with the allocations service we provide.
- ✓ Where we have identified a community in decline we will allocate our homes in line with selection criteria that are not part of our normal three stream system. Before we do this we will consult with our existing residents and local authority partners.

11.5 Policy – Lettability Standard Statement

PURPOSE

The Association wants to ensure that all homes that we let are safe, warm, and in reasonable condition.

In order to ensure that we do this, all homes that we let should meet the minimum standard we have set, which is set out below.

THE LETTABILITY STANDARD SHALL BE

That all gas and electric appliances that have been checked by a competent technician and certificates stating that they are safe to use have been issued and recorded in the Association's records.

That all sanitary appliances are clean, in good condition, and in working order.

That all external doors and windows are in good condition, wind and water tight, and fit for purpose.

That all external elements of the building, e.g. walls and roofs, are wind and watertight and do not allow the ingress of water or damp.

That all external doors are fitted with a five lever mortice lock or rim latch and that all ground floor opening windows are lockable.

That all internal joinery fittings such as doors and staircases should be in good condition and fit for purpose.

That the kitchen should provide as a minimum

A sink with a supply of hot and cold running water.

At least one metre wall hanging cupboard space.

At least two metres of work surface and cupboard space beneath.

At least two double socket outlets

Cupboard fronts that are in good condition, handles that are secure, etc., and are in general fit for purpose.

All work surfaces in good condition with no deep cuts or abrasions.

That all floors are in good and sound condition.

That all decoration is in reasonable condition and at a bare minimum all walls and ceilings should be free from marks and stains.

That all debris is removed from inside & outside the home.

11.6 Policy - Eligibility: Model questions

Q1. Are you a citizen of the United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain or Sweden?

(i.e. a country within the European Economic Area (EEA) – for confirmation of current EEA membership check annex 9 or <http://secretariat.efta.int/>) If YES – Go to 11 If NO – Go to 3

Q2. Have you been granted refugee status in the UK?

If YES – Applicant is eligible If
NO – Go to 4

Q3. Do you have indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK with no condition or limitation?

If YES – Go to 5 If
NO – Go to 11

Q4. Were you given leave on an undertaking that a sponsor would be responsible for your accommodation needs?

If YES – Go to 6 If
NO – Go to 11

Q5. Do both the following statements apply in your case:

- you have been resident in the UK for less than 5 years since the date of your entry to the UK, or the date of the undertaking, whichever is the later, and
- the person (or at least one of the persons) who gave the undertaking is still alive?

If YES – Applicant is not eligible If
NO – Go to 11

Q6. Have you been granted exceptional leave to enter or remain the UK before 1st April 2003 OR been granted humanitarian protection OR been granted discretionary leave to remain?

If YES – Go to 8 If
NO – Go to 9

Q7. Is your leave or protection subject to a condition that you are required to maintain and accommodate yourself (and any dependants)?

If YES – Applicant is not eligible If
NO – Applicant is eligible

Q8. Are you a citizen of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland or Slovakia?

(i.e. a non-EEA country that has ratified either the European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance (ECSMA) and/or the European Social Charter (ESC) – for current ratification status of countries check annex 9 or <http://www.humanrights.coe.int/>)

If YES – Go to 10
If NO – Applicant is not eligible

Q9. Do you have leave to enter or remain in the UK?

If YES – Go to 12

If NO – Applicant is not eligible*

- Persons subject to immigration control are not lawfully present in the UK if they do not have leave to enter or remain. Asylum seekers are generally granted ‘temporary admission’ and do not have leave to enter or remain.

Q10. Are you any of the following:

- a ‘worker’ (for the purposes of Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1612/68 or (EEC) No. 1251/70)**
- a person with a right to reside in the UK (pursuant to Council Directive No. 68/360/EEC or No. 73/148/EEC)**
- a person who left Montserrat after 1 November 1995 because of the effect of volcanic eruption there?

** see annex 11 (habitual residence and exceptions)

If YES – Applicant is eligible If

NO – Go to 12

Q11. Have you been resident in the UK (or the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or the Republic of Ireland) continuously for the last 2 years?

If YES – Go to 13 If

NO – Go to 14

Q12. (Question for the housing authority:) Is the housing authority satisfied that the applicant is habitually resident in the Common Travel Area (CTA)? *(A housing authority might not be satisfied, for example, if there were circumstances that suggested the applicant was not habitually resident e.g. applicant has strong interests elsewhere, for example, family, property, business, etc.)* If YES – Applicant is eligible If NO – Go to 14

Q13. Determine whether applicant is habitually resident in the CTA (See annex 11). Applicant is eligible if habitually resident – and not eligible if not habitually resident.

GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES

11.7 Request for Exemption From Schedule One of the Housing Act 1996

Request for Re-housing..... Name
of Manager Making request:.....

Office:..... Name of

Applicant:..... Status of

Applicant..... If "Employee":..... Applicant's

Current Address:.....

Does Request Relate to Retirement?..... If "Yes" Applicant's Age:.....

Reason for Request:.....

Provide brief additional information:.....

.....

Brief details of other housing providers approached, and outcome(s):.....

.....

.....

If specific "Scheme" requested by applicant please advise:

Applicant's Points Score:.....

Points Scores of Last 2 Lettings on Scheme:

Applicant's Points Score Comparison with top 5 on List:

.....

Signed:..... Date:

Department Manager / RM

11.8 Notice To Quit

**Housing Act 1998
Section 21**

Notice requiring possession under section 21 (4)

TO:.....

OF:.....

FROM: Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Ltd

OF: Bower House, 1 stable Street, Hollinwood, Oldham, OL9 7LH

I hereby give you notice that after the.....(being the last day of a period of your tenancy) I require possession of the dwelling house known as..... by virtue of section 21 of the Housing Act 1988.

Dated the day of2001

Signed:.....Date:.....

We acknowledge receipt of the above Notice.

Signed:.....Date:.....
(Tenant)

11.9 Deed of Assignment to Tenancy Agreement

It is hereby agreed that from the (date).....

Parties to the Tenancy Agreement dated the.....

shall be Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited of the first part

and solely of the second part,

of Property Address

Signed on behalf of Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Ltd:

Witness:

Signed by the said:

Witness:

Signed by the said:

Witness:

Dated the Day of 200....

GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES

11.10 Tenancy Termination Pro-forma

	APPLICANT	APPLICANT
SURNAME		
FORENAME		
PROP REF NOS		
TENANT REF NOS		

NOTICE RECEIVED DATE	
TENANCY TERMINATION DATE	
TERMINATION REASON	
FORWARDING ADDRESS	
COMPLETED BY	DATE
LOADED BY	DATE
CHECKED BY	DATE

ABS	Absconded	PRIS	Gone to prison
ADAP	Need an adapted property	PROP	Unhappy with property condition
BENE	Problems with benefits	PUR	Purchased own property
CARE	Moved into residential /nursing home	REL	Gone to live with relatives
DEA	Death	RHS	Re-housed
DEM	Demolished property	RSHP	Relationship breakdown
DISA	Dissatisfied with NCHA	RSO	Right to buy – sale on
DOM	Domestic violence	RTB	Right to buy
EMP	Termination of employment	SAL	Sale
EVI	Evicted	SCHL	Need to be nearer school
FAMI	Need to be nearer family & friends	SMLP	Need smaller property
FEP	Final equity purchase for shared ownership	SPTA	Need more support other
FIXED	End of fixed term tenancy	SPTC	Need more support with childcare
FOR	Forfeiture of lease	SPTTE	Need more support - age
HARO	Harassment – other	STT	Starter tenancy termination
HARR	Harassment - racial	SUR	Surrender of lease
LEA	Lease Assignment	TFR	Transfer
LGEP	Need larger property	TRA	Transgression of lease
MAT	Management agreement	UNF	Unfit for habitation
NEIG	Didn't like neighbourhood	URL	Unaffordable rent level
NTQ	Notice to quit expired	UNKNOWN	Termination reason unknown
PART	Moving in with partner	WORK	Need to be nearer work

GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES

11.11 New Starter Pro-forma

Tenancy Type					
Applicant			Joint Applicant		
Surname		Title	Surname		Title
Forename			Forename		
Date of Birth			Date of Birth		
Reason for Rehousing					
Property Address					
Property Ref.					
Ten. Start Date			Net Rent	£	
Tenure Type			Service charge	£	
Tenancy Type			S.P. charge	£	
Source			Other	£	
Application No.			Total	£	
Contact Tel.No.			Ineligible Amount	£	
HB Ref.No.			Make up payment of rent to be paid	£	
Name of Health /Social Worker					
Pets	Yes !	No !	DISABLED	Yes !	No !
Additional Information					
IWorld Updated By				Date	
Tenancy Ref. No.				Rent Account No.	
Income Details					
Salary	£		Benefits	£	
Payment of Rent Details					
Housing Benefit ! Direct Debit ! Standing Order ! Swipe Card ! Cheque/Cash ! Telephone banking !					
Comments					
Property					
Condition					
Amount of Dec Vouchers	£				

GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES

11.12 New Scheme/Property Pro-Forma

SCHEME NAME		SCHEME CODE	
ADDRESS			
POST CODE		STREET INDEX	
PROP REF NOS		TENURE	
PATCH		LETTINGS AREA	
NO OF BEDS		ACCO TYPE	
OCCUPANCY		LA CODE	
PROP TYPE		BUILDER	
PROP SUB TYPE		% OWNERSHIP	
ACQUIRED DATE		CONSTRUCTION DATE	
PROP SOURCE		RENT PERIOD	M OR W
CONSTRUCTION TYPE			

IF NEW LETTINGS AREA REQUIRED PLEASE GIVE DETAILS HERE:

COMPLETED BY		DATE	
LOADED BY		DATE	
Model office use			
RENT AUN	ACT	RCB	REP
COMMITTEE	PATCH	RDB	RVB
SCHEME			

Send to P&S, copy to HSS and Lettings Officer for information

11.13 Memorandum

TO: Assistant Supported Housing Manager

FROM: Lettings

CC.....

REF: Supported Housing

EXTN.....

DATE.....

Supported Housing referral.....

Special housing requirements:.....

.....

.....

Please advise the Supported Housing Team of an offer before liaison with

.....

.....

Please refer to Supported Housing Procedure Guide Section 3.

To arrange viewing please liase with

If not dealt with by..... please return to the Supported Housing Team.

Reference number:..... Points:.....

Date	Comments	Signature

11.14 Mutual Exchange

This DEED OF ASSIGNMENT

is made on the <<date>>

and is effective from <<date>>

BETWEEN <<name(s)>> (former tenant)
AND <<name(s)>> (the new tenant)

In respect of an <<ASSURED/SECURE>> TENANCY of <<NCHA property address>>

WHEREBY

The former tenant assigns to the new tenant all their estate and interest in the tenancy from the date of this Deed of Assignment, the new tenant agreeing by this Deed to perform and abide by all the Tenant's obligations, Covenants and Regulations, set out in the Tenancy Agreement previously held by the former tenant and dated

<<e.g. 6 June 1994 (taken by mutual exchange by Mr M Smith on 16.9.96)>>

This Assignment is made with the consent of Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited and is signed by their authorised Officer.

Signed by the former tenant(s)

In the presence of:

Name:

Address:

Occupation:

Signed by the new tenant(s)

In the presence of:

Name:

Address:

Occupation:

Signed for and on behalf of N.C.H.A. by:

(print name)

In the presence of:

Name:

Address:

Occupation:

11.15 NCHA Request for Changing Property Status to Unlettable

From: Nicola Carruthers

Regional Office: Manchester & Salford

Notes to help you complete this form:

1, 2 & 3 - Please tell us the address and scheme code of the property for which the void status is to be altered

4. Briefly explain WHY the property should come off debit

5 .Unlettable Categories are:-

E1 - Awaiting major repairs

E2 - Awaiting Conversion

E3 - Re-investment Strategy – awaiting works

F - Undergoing works

G - Rented stock awaiting sale

H - Non rented stock awaiting sale

I - Unlicensed occupation

J1 – Hard to let/no demand

J2 – Held for decant/ or show flat

J3 – House Keeping (hama handback, demolished, rented property sold – FTA)

J4 – Reinvestment strategy – awaiting decision

J5 – Reinvestment strategy – awaiting demolition

J6 – Seasonal unlettable

6 & 7 Please tell us the dates when the property should come off debit and (if known) when it should go back on.

8. What is the current rent.

9. Indicate date when re-investment / conversion was approved by Committee / Director.

10. This form must be authorised and must not be used retrospectively

1. Address of property to be taken off debit:

2. Property reference:

3. Scheme code:

4. Reason for changing status of property/ taking off debit:

5. Reason code:

6. Date to come off debit:

7. Date to go back on debit:

8. Current assured rent:

9. ADHM Status Review (always 6 mths from unlet date)

10. Re-investment / conversion approval date:

11. Authorised by (RM/AM/SHO) :
Nicola Carruthers

12. Status altered by:

13. Date:



GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES HOUSING ASSOCIATION

11.16 Agreement for Tenancy of Lock Up Garage

AT <<SCHEME>>

The garage shall be held by me of NCHA on a weekly tenancy from Monday to Monday.

NCHA reserves the right to add to the rates charged at the commencement of the tenancy, any increase made therein from time to time without the service of notice whatsoever.

I will not assign or sublet or part with possession of the garage allocated to me or any part thereof or make any structural alterations or improvements thereto.

The garage allocated to me shall be used for the sole purpose of garaging my own motor vehicle.

NCHA reserves the right to enter the garage allocated to me at all reasonable times in order to view the condition thereof and I will make good all defects therein within seven days after notice shall be given to me by NCHA.

I will not keep in the garage allocated to me any petrol or other inflammable spirit other than that contained in the tank of the vehicle garaged therein.

I will keep that garage allocated to me in a neat and tidy condition to the satisfaction of the Chief Housing Officer for the time being to NCHA.

I agree to pay the weekly rent in advance and accept that failure to do so will result in the tenancy being terminated by NCHA without prior notice being given.

have read the Conditions of Tenancy hereby agree to comply with these conditions and to take the lock up garage No<<NO.>> on a weekly tenancy at a weekly rent of £<<amount>> (exclusive of rates).

From the <<date>>

Signature Witness (not a relative)

Date of Signature

IMPORTANT: THE KEYS FOR THIS GARAGE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THIS AGREEMENT HAS BEEN RECEIVED IN THE REGIONAL/AREA OFFICE.

11.17 Nominations Agreement

(this is an example but with the rapidly changing situation for choice based lettings you can speak to John Ray for advice)

between XXXXXX City Council and

1. All written information will be faxed between NCHA and the Council to ensure the minimum amount of time delay.
2. The Housing Association Officer will telephone the Re-housing Services Section (tel xxx xxxx) giving details of the nomination request. The Housing Association Officer will also record the request details on the request for nomination Form A (to be agreed between parties) copies of which will be exchanged between both parties.
3. The Housing Department Officer will, wherever possible, identify applicants willing to consider Housing association property in accordance with XXXXXX City Council's Re-housing Policy. These applicants will be listed in the same points order as they appear on the Council's housing register. The Housing Department Officer will indicate on the Form B (to be agreed between parties) attached whether or not the nomination has been made from the Housing register.
4. The Housing Department Officer will complete the nomination notification form (see 'B' attached) and give details where possible for 4 nominated applicants in points order. Additional information may be provided at the discretion of the Director of Housing. The nomination form will be faxed and a hard copy sent to the Association within 5 working days of receipt of the telephone request.
5. In the case of a homeless or a potentially homeless applicant being referred for temporary accommodation, it is appropriate to nominate only 1 applicant. This may also apply to new schemes where the Council wishes to put forward a primary need applicant.
6. If the Housing Association does not receive the nominations within 5 working days of the initial telephone request, they will immediately inform the Senior Re-housing Officer (tel xxxxxxxx) who will either provide the nominations within 2 further days or agree that NCHA use its own re-housing list to identify an applicant, in which case this will be treated as a failed nomination and will count as if an actual nomination has taken place.

Where the referral is to be a homeless applicant these time scales may not apply, as it may not be reasonable to nominate until the keys for the property become available. In these circumstances, NCHA will allocate directly from its own waiting list if the Council cannot provide a nomination within 2 days of being notified that the keys are available.
7. If the Re-housing Services Section cannot respond satisfactorily within the above time scales then NCHA will use its own re-housing list to identify an applicant,

and the property will be recorded as a failed nomination. Where this situation arises, this will be clearly identified on the returned nomination notification form.

8. The Housing Association will process the nominations in accordance with their lettings policy. Homeless referral cases will be dealt with as quickly as possible, but within 2 days of receipt of notification.

9. The Housing Association Officer will fax or telephone the Re-housing Services Section giving the results of the nominations actioned, and confirm in writing on the returned nomination notification form the results within 10 working days of the nomination being made by the Housing Department Officer.

10. On homeless referrals, the Association will notify the Homeless Section (xxx xxxx) immediately an applicant refuses a property, preferably while the applicant is still with the Housing Association Officer. They will then refer the property back to the Re-housing Services Section using the normal nomination procedure.

11. If none of the nominations are acceptable within the terms of published Letting Policies, or all nominees refuse the property, the Housing Association Officer will telephone the Re-housing Services Section and request additional nominations.

12. The time scales and requirements applying to requests for further nominations will be the same as those applying to "first time" requests. As with "first time" requests, wherever possible, a minimum of 4 further nominations will be made. If these nominations are unsuccessful, or the Council fails to nominate, NCHA may withdraw the property for allocation to its own list. The property will be recorded as a failed nomination.

13. NCHA will, in any one year, pass for nomination the agreed percentage of net vacancies (Net Vacancies excludes vacants allocated to the following: transfers, exchanges, TIS, re-housing and MOVEUK, HAMA and properties to which the Housing Department has indicated it cannot nominate to e.g., cluster flats). However, where alternative quotas or contracts have been formally agreed between NCHA and the Council, these will take place precedence over the general target.

14. If NCHA at any time during the letting process wishes to exchange one vacant property for another the Re-housing Services Section should be notified by fax or telephone.

15. The Housing Department Officer will be kept informed of any delays regarding the availability of a property; for example, delay due to extensive repairs, alterations or revised termination dates.

Summary letting returns will be reported to the Senior Housing Officer on lettings quarterly within 10 days of the quarter end (March, June, September, December) on the letting returns Form C (to be agreed between parties) or using the individual Local Authority's monitoring returns forms. Liaison meetings will be held between the Council and NCHA to review any problem areas as necessary and at least annually.

17. NCHA will advise the Re-housing Services Section of all new developments coming into management at least 1 month before hand-over. For schemes of 20 properties or more, the Housing Department Officer will endeavour to supply half the Council's nominations 2 months before hand-over. The remainder to be staggered as properties become available so as not to preclude homeless or primary needs applicants. Where there are less than 20 homes on the new development the Housing Department Officer will endeavour to provide nominations 1 month before hand-over, or earlier if possible.

18. Both the Association and the Council will maintain and review such records as are necessary to ensure that there are no criteria related to the re-housing and nominations process, which directly or indirectly discriminate against any applicants on the grounds of race, sex, sexuality, mental health, physical disability, learning disability, religion or because they have HIV or Aids.

19. The Council and the Association will at all times work in ways, which are mutually advantageous. For example, the Association may work directly with a Housing Area Team, provided this is agreed with the Senior Re-housing Officer. Also the Council will provide details of support arrangements for nominees where known.

This procedure has been agreed between:

.....(Signature)

For.....

and(Signature)

For XXXXXX City Council(Date)

11.18 Disclaimer for Repairs to Non Standard Fittings

WE,

of

.....

having this day entered into a Tenancy Agreement with Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited ("the Association")

of

.....

("the property") HEREBY COVENANT with the Association to be responsible for the maintenance repair and renewal of the following fixtures currently at the property:

Signed:

Signed:

Dated:

11.19 Starter Tenancy Checklist

Name(s):.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

.....

Tenancy Start Date:.....

- 1. Is property within starter tenancy area? _____
- 2. Starter tenancy leaflet issues? _____
- 3. Terms of tenancy explained? _____
- 4. Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement issued? _____
- 5. Assured Shorthold Tenants Charter (HC) issued? _____
- 6. Monitoring procedure explained? _____
- 7. Action at end of starter period explained? _____
- 8. Complaints and Appeals procedure issued? _____

Lettings Officer:.....

Date:.....

11.20 Tenancy Termination Checklist

Action

Notice Received from the Customer

- Confirm receipt by sending termination letter to the customer, enclose a rent statement (enter the date the notice was received in the notepad).
- Complete dilap sheet.
- Arrange Housing Officer visit during the notice period.
- Check house-file for contact details, next of kin, employer address and log in contact details. Whilst doing so thin out contents in readiness for archiving.
- Update the void path, request nominations if appropriate, review waiting list, make provisional offers.
- Complete Tenancy Termination Pro-forma.
- Enter Expected End date against tenancy

Home Visit

- Confirm termination date.
- Confirm rent account balance and amount due by termination date.
- Agree a repayment agreement if arrears on account.
- Establish forwarding address/ contact details.
- Complete dilap sheet/Void Sheet
- Confirm property will be available to let when vacated/ repairs required before re-let.

Keys Handed in/ Notice period ends

- Keys received from customer/ locks changed.
- Termination form given to Area Manager.
- Tenancy terminated.

Refer case to HSST-Resolve benefit issues

- Log FTHS arrears code as pending. Record date keys returned, disrepair issues, reason for termination.
- In the notepad give information on the account balance e.g. potential overpayment of HB, genuine arrears/credit, liaison with HB dept ongoing etc and give recommendation for FT action on debt/ credit e.g. pursue debt, write- off, refund credit. If balance over £2500 complete FT referral report.
- Notify HB/Supporting People Team of tenancy termination.
- Support customer in claim for over-lapping HB if appropriate.
- Resolve any benefit issues/ challenge overpayment of HB if appropriate- notify HSST of outcome.

Turn-round void/ re-let

- Confirm Void path
- Complete void inspection.
- Order repairs/ Gas/electric checks /cap off gas supply, secure the

property if necessary.

- Keys to contractor.
- Complete minor works / Complete Major works
- Keys returned from Contractor
- Final inspection- recommendation on decoration allowance.
- Hand-back to NSO
- Change void status as necessary
- Confirm offer
- Arrange viewing
- Acceptance/refusal/re-offer
- Arrange sign-up

11.21 Tenancy Termination Checklist

Tenancy Details

	Surname	Forename
Tenant		
Joint Tenant		
Property Ref	Account No	

Pre Termination Action

Action	0/ Comments
Date Notice received	
Date Confirmation letter sent	
Home visit completed	
HB/SP Dept notified	
Overlapping HB claim made	
Date keys received	

Former Tenant Referral

Action	0/ Comments
Forwarding address obtained and entered on system	
Account balance resolved	
FTHS Code logged at pending	

Termination

Action	0/ Comments
Termination Date	
Termination reason	
Date terminated on system	

11.22 Change of Details Pro-forma

CHANGE OF DETAILS PRO-FORMA Death of Partner / Marriage / Name Change by Deedpoll / Joint to Single				
	APPLICANT (PREVIOUS DETAILS)		APPLICANT (NEW DETAILS)	
SURNAME		TITLE		TITLE
FORENAME				
PROPERTY REF NO.				
TENANT REF NO.				
WITH EFFECT FROM				

COMPLETED BY		DATE	
LOADED BY		DATE	
CHECKED BY		DATE	

**11.23 Deed of Assignment to Tenancy Agreement: Endorsement
From Joint to Single Tenancy**



DEED OF ASSIGNMENT TO TENANCY AGREEMENT

ENDORSEMENT FROM JOINT TO SINGLE TENANCY It is

hereby agreed that from the (date) **24th October 2005** Parties to the
Tenancy Agreement dated the **29th March 1993**

Shall be Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited of the first
part and **Mr Paul Buckley** solely of the second part, of

Property Address

23 Scowcroft Lane, Shaw, Oldham.

Signed on behalf of Guinness Northern Counties Housing
Association Ltd: Witness:

Signed by the said:

Witness:

Signed by the said:

Witness:

Dated the **19th October 2005**

11.24 Mutual Exchange Deed of Assignment

This DEED OF ASSIGNMENT
Is made on the **2nd September 2005**
And is effective from **5th September 2005**

BETWEEN Ms Winifred Cawley

AND Mr Peter & Mrs Susan Dawson

In respect of an Assured Tenancy of

31 Wastwater Street, St Stephens View, Oldham, OL1 3JH

WHEREBY

The former tenant assigns to the new tenant all their estate and interest in the tenancy from the date of this Deed of Assignment, **the new tenant** agreeing by this Deed to perform and abide by all the Tenant's obligations, Covenants and Regulations, set out in the Tenancy Agreement previously held by the **former tenant** and dated

11th September 1995

This Assignment is made with the consent of **Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited** and is signed by their authorised officer.

Signed by the **Former Tenant** (s)

In the presence of:
Name: Address :
Occupation:

Signed by the **new tenant** (s)

In the presence of:
Name: Address:
Occupation:

Signed for and on behalf of **NCHA**

By.....(print name)

In the presence of:
Name: Address:
Occupation:

11.25 Mutual Exchange Pro-forma

	APPLICANT (PREVIOUS DETAILS)		APPLICANT (NEW DETAILS)	
SURNAME		TITLE		TITLE
FORENAME				
PROPERTY REF NO.				
TENANT A/C NO.				
DATE MX FORM LOADED				
APPLICATION NO.				
WITH EFFECT FROM				

COMPLETED BY		DATE	
LOADED BY		DATE	
CHECKED BY		DATE	

11.26 Endorsement for transfer of tenancy on succession It is

agreed that from the **27th June 2005** The parties to the written agreement

date **20th June 1978** In respect of:-Address

**22 Pendle Drive
Brandyhouse Brow
Blackburn BB3 3DS**

Shall be Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association Limited of the first part and **Mrs Doris Fenton** of the second part.

**IT IS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER
SUCCESSION TO THIS AGREEMENT.**

In witness thereof, the parties have signed this on **27th June 2005**

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF GUINNESS NORTHERN COUNTIES HOUSING
ASSOCIATION LIMITED

.....

WITNESS

.....

SIGNED BY THE SAID

.....

WITNESS

.....

NB: THE WITNESS SHOULD NOT BE A RELATION

11.27 New Tenancy – HWC Information

The purpose of this form is to enable new residents to provide us with any relevant information relating to themselves and/or members of their household that will help us to deliver services that are sensitive to their needs.

HWC Person alert	Description	Tick if applies	Relevant Information that applies to you or a member of your Household
CONTACT	Contact details of people/agency that provide support		
NOPERMIS	Resident does not want any personal information given to a third party		
LANG	English as a second language-ESL		
CULTURE	Cultural customs and values		
ENVIRO	Environmental issues		
COMMUNIC	Verbal/written communication issues		
DISAB1	A Person living with a Physical Disability		
DISAB2	A Person living with a Mental Disability		
DISAB3	A Person living with Learning Difficulties		
FRELD	Older person		
DEPEND	Substance dependency		
TENSUP	Tenancy: support required		
FLOATSUP	Receiving, floating support/care services		
SH PROJECT	Supported Housing only		This is a Directly Managed or Agency Managed Supported Housing resident.

I confirm that this information is correct and I understand I can contact the Association to update this information at any time. I understand that the Association will otherwise contact me every 12 months to check the information is still accurate.

Signed:.....
Date:..... Information
Loaded:

Signed:.....
Date:.....

11.28 Previous information confirmed by Agency, reference or resident prior to becoming a resident

This purpose of this form is to protect the best interests of Association staff to carry out their jobs safely and to ensure that residents whose behaviour is in question are treated fairly and consistently.

HWC Person alert	Description	Tick if applies	Relevant Information that applies to you or a member of your Household
WARN1	Verbally aggressive		
WARN2	Threats of violence		
WARN3	Sexually inappropriate behaviour		
WARN4	Allegations have been made (unresolved)		

I confirm that this information is correct. I understand that this information will be kept under review by the Association and that I will be advised accordingly.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Information Loaded:

Signed:.....

Date:.....

12 LIST OF LETTERS

12.1 All points reg

<%TODAYS_DATE%>

<%CORRESPONDENCE_NAME%>

<%APP_ADDL1%>

<%APP_ADDL2%>

<%APP_ADDL3%>

<%APP_ADDL_PCODE%>

Dear <%CORRESPONDENCE_NAME%>

**Re: Application for Accommodation:
Reference Number: <%APP_REFNO%>
Re-Registration Date: <%REREG_DATE%>**

Thank you for applying to Guinness Northern Counties for a home. Your application reference is stated above. Please quote this when making contact with us.

Your Points

Your application has been given <%TOTAL_POINTS%> points. This is because one of the places you want to live is allocated via our points system which was explained in the application pack. Below we tell you how your points total have been calculated. The back of this letter gives guidance on the maximum number of points you can get.

Points Breakdown:	<%CAT_DESCRIPTION%>	<%POINTS %>
		<hr/>
	Total Number of Points:	<%TOTAL_P OINTS%>

The points you have been given are based on the information you gave in your application form. If you feel this amount is not correct <%CONTACT_TEXT%> and we will be happy to discuss this. If any of the information you have given us changes please let us know so that we can update your application form.

For details on what happens to your application next please read the information printed on the back of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Lettings Officer
<%AUN_UNIT_NAME2%>

**Maximum Points you can be awarded
Points**

Statutory Homeless	1000
Other Homeless	500
Overcrowding	40
Pregnancy	40
Disrepair	40
People living in flats	15
To be near family or carer	10
Under occupation	10-50
To get married or live together	15
To be nearer work	10

Points

Points

Lacking security of tenure

75

- ◆ Notice to quit
- ◆ Repossessing home
- ◆ Temporary accommodation
- ◆ Armed forces
- ◆ Prison
- ◆ Hospital
- ◆ Homes with jobs
- ◆ Lodging with families and friends
- ◆ Share accommodation with ex partner
- ◆ Rent home on an assured shorthold tenancy

Health / Medical condition

- ◆ Location 15
- ◆ Accommodation 45
- ◆ Can't use basic facilities 75

Lacking or sharing facilities with other households 15-40

If you believe that you should have received more points than those detailed on the front of this letter please contact us.

Financial Assessment

If you have applied for areas that are subject to a financial assessment, we will check the financial information you have given us to ensure that you are eligible for those areas. If you are not eligible we will write to you to let you know.

Offering you a home

If you are eligible for the areas you have selected, you won't hear anything from us until we are ready to offer you a property. If we can not offer you a property in the next 6 months you will get a letter from us asking if you want to stay on our waiting list. If you do not reply to this letter we will cancel your application. If you still wish to stay on the list for one of our properties you must confirm this by replying to the letter that we send to you.

Moving In

When we have a suitable property available we will contact you to make you a provisional offer, but before the offer of a home can be confirmed you must have provided us with references. If there are any false statements in these references our provisional offer of a home will be withdrawn.

12.2 All offer – offer letter single

[[[

<%TODAY%>

<%TITLE_INIT_NAME%>

<%APP_ADDL1%>

<%APP_ADDL2%>

<%APP_ADDL3%>

<%APP_ADDL4%>

<%APP_ADDL_PCODE%>

Dear <%TITLE_NAME%>

Offer Ref: <%OOF_REFNO%>

Property: <%PRO_ADR_ONELINE%>

I am pleased to provisionally offer the tenancy for the above vacancy and I would be grateful if you could contact this office to make arrangements to view.

Property Type: <%PROPERTY_TYPE%>

Nos of Bedrooms: <%NUMBER_OF_BEDROOMS%>

Floor Level: <%P_FLOOR_LEVEL%>

Rent: £ <%P_RENT_VALUE%>

Tenancy Type: <%TENANCY_TYPE%>

When attending the viewing could you also bring the following four items with you;

Proof of identity e.g. passport, driver's licence or birth certificate

National Insurance number

Details of current income

Proof of current residency e.g. Rent book or council tax bill

Please note that if you do not produce this information this offer may not be confirmed.

If I do not hear from you within two days of receipt of this letter, I will assume that you no longer require re-housing and cancel your application.

Yours sincerely

<%SIGNATURE%>

<%SIGNATURE_NAME%>

<%JOB_TITLE%>

Direct Dial: <%DDT_NOS%>]]]

12.4 All refusal

[[[

<%TODAY%>
<%APP_CORR_NAME%>
<%APP_ADDL1%>
<%APP_ADDL2%>
<%APP_ADDL3%>
<%APP_ADDL4%>
<%APP_ADDL_PCODE%>

Dear <%APP_CORR_NAME%>

RE: Housing application

Further to your application and approval to carry out pre-tenancy investigations, I must regretfully inform you that your application has been refused.

The reasons for refusal are as follows.

<%FRV_NAME%>

Should you wish to appeal against this decision please write to the Regional Manager at the address found at the top of this letter within 10 working days.

Yours sincerely

<%SIGNATURE%>

<%SIGNATURE_NAME%>
<%JOB_TITLE%>
Direct Dial: <%DDT_NOS%>

<%SGP_REFNO%>

NB you may re-apply for re-housing 12 months from the date of this letter.

]]]

12.5 All term surrender

[[[

<%TODAY%>
<%PEO_NAMES%>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE1 %>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE2 %>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE3%>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE4%>
<%PAR_ADR_PCODE%>

Dear <%PEO_NAMES%>

RE: SURRENDER OF TENANCY – <%PAR_ADR_ONELINE%>

Further to you surrendering the keys to the above property.

In accordance with the terms of your tenancy agreement, I confirm that your tenancy will officially end on <%TERM_DATE%>.

Rent payments are due up to the end of your tenancy. I enclose a statement of your rent account which shows a balance of £<%LAST_BAL%> outstanding at <%LAST_BAL_DATE%>. A further <%REMAIN_WEEKS%> weeks rent amounting to £<%ADDTNL_RENT%> will become due to the end of your tenancy, making a total of £<%TOTAL_RENT_OWED%> to be paid before your tenancy ends.

If you foresee any problems ensuring your account is paid in full by the end of the tenancy, please contact your Housing Officer within 7 days to discuss the situation. The telephone number is at the top of this letter.

Yours sincerely

<%SIGNATURE%>

<%SIGNATURE_NAME%>
<%JOB_TITLE%>
Direct Dial: <%DDT_NOS%>

Enc.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – PLEASE READ

Housing Benefit – If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, you must notify the Housing Benefit section of your intention to end your tenancy and the date on which the tenancy will end.

Property Inspection – You will be contacted within the next few days to arrange an appointment for the inspection of your home before you leave. Please note that your tenancy agreement requires you to leave the property in good condition and clear of all personal belongings and rubbish. Should any items be left in the property the Association will deem these to be “unwanted” and will dispose of them accordingly and the cost of disposal will be charged to you.

Re-letting the Property – The Association will be looking to offer your property to an applicant on our housing list and we may require your assistance in allowing the prospective applicant to view the property before you leave.

Return of Keys – If you live on a scheme that has a resident member of Guinness Northern Counties staff, you should return the keys to them on or before 09:00am on the Monday after your tenancy ends. Where there is no scheme based staff you **MUST** return the keys to this office. Keys **MUST NOT** be left with a neighbour or in the property itself. If you foresee any problems returning **ALL** the keys you must contact this office to discuss the matter before the end of your tenancy.

Payments – A condition of the acceptance of your notice is that you move out of the property at the expiry of the notice period, any monies paid for a period after this date will be considered payment for use and occupation only and not as rent.

Forwarding Address – If you have not already provided us with a forwarding address, please do so by return of post.

]]]

12.6 All term general

[[[

<%TODAY%>
<%PEO_NAMES%>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE1 %>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE2%>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE3%>
<%PAR_ADR_LINE4%>
<%PAR_ADR_PCODE%>

Dear <%PEO_NAMES%>

RE: NOTICE TO TERMINATE TENANCY – <%PAR_ADR_ONELINE%>

Thank you for your recent letter giving notice to terminate your tenancy of the above property.

In accordance with the terms of your tenancy agreement, I confirm that your tenancy will officially end on <%TERM_DATE%>.

Rent payments are due up to the end of your tenancy. I enclose a statement of your rent account which shows a balance of £<%LAST_BAL%> outstanding at <%LAST_BAL_DATE%>. A further <%REMAIN_WEEKS%> weeks rent amounting to £<%ADDTNL_RENT%> will become due to the end of your tenancy, making a total of £<%TOTAL_RENT_OWED%> to be paid before your tenancy ends.

If you foresee any problems ensuring your account is paid in full by the end of the tenancy, please contact your Housing Officer, to discuss the situation within 7 days. The telephone number is at the top of this letter.

Finally, in accordance with the terms of your Tenancy Agreement, it is possible that prospective tenants may wish to view your home. If this is the case then I will contact you to organize a convenient time for yourselves.

Yours sincerely

<%SIGNATURE%>

<%SIGNATURE_NAME%>
<%JOB_TITLE%>
Direct Dial: <%DDT_NOS%>

Enc.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION – PLEASE READ

Housing Benefit – If you are in receipt of Housing Benefit, you must notify the Housing Benefit section of your intention to end your tenancy and the date on which the tenancy will end.

Property Inspection – You will be contacted within the next few days to arrange an appointment for the inspection of your home before you leave. Please note that your tenancy agreement requires you to leave the property in good condition and clear of all personal belongings and rubbish. Should any items be left in the property the Association will deem these to be “unwanted” and will dispose of them accordingly and the cost of disposal will be charged to you.

Re-letting the Property – The Association will be looking to offer your property to an applicant on our housing list and we may require your assistance in allowing the prospective applicant to view the property before you leave.

Return of Keys – If you live on a scheme that has a resident member of Guinness Northern Counties staff, you should return the keys to them on or before 09:00am on the Monday after your tenancy ends. Where there is no scheme based staff you **MUST** return the keys to this office. Keys **MUST NOT** be left with a neighbour or in the property itself. If you foresee any problems returning **ALL** the keys you must contact this office to discuss the matter before the end of your tenancy.

Payments – A condition of the acceptance of your notice is that you move out of the property at the expiry of the notice period, any monies paid for a period after this date will be considered payment for use and occupation only and not as rent.

Forwarding Address – If you have not already provided us with a forwarding address, please do so by return of post.

]]]

12.7 All term Next of Kin

18 January 2006

Miss P Green 7
Main Road
Anytown AN23 8KL

Dear Miss Green

I was sorry to hear about Mr Greg Green's death, and would like to offer condolences on behalf of Guinness Northern Counties.

You'll have a lot to deal with over the next few days, but I hope these notes will help you plan what you need to do about Mr Greg Green's home.

1. The tenancy will officially end on 19 February 2006 and we will charge rent until then. It may help to know that the balance of the rent account will be £250.00 on 19 February 2006.
2. If Mr Greg Green received Housing Benefit, someone should contact the Housing Benefit section at the local council, telling them the date that the tenancy will end.
3. You should arrange for the house to be cleaned and cleared, including all furniture. If there is anything left in the house, we will need to get rid of it and we will charge you for this. You can contact the local council who will be able to help you with unwanted or bulky items.
4. As soon as the house has been cleared and cleaned, please give the keys back to the Estate Manager or to this office. You shouldn't leave the keys with a neighbour or in the property itself. If you think there will be a problem handing the keys back, please contact us.

Please contact me or any of my colleagues if you need any more information that will make ending the tenancy as easy as possible for you or if you have any questions about the rent. The telephone number is 01234 567890.

Mr Greg Green was a valued customer of Guinness Northern Counties and I would again like to offer my condolences at this sad time.

Yours sincerely

Customer Services Officer
Customer Services Officer

12.8 All offer transfer

[[[

<%TODAY%>

<%TITLE_INIT_NAME%>

<%APP_ADDL1%>

<%APP_ADDL2%>

<%APP_ADDL3%>

<%APP_ADDL4%>

<%APP_ADDL_PCODE%>

Dear <%TITLE_NAME%>

Offer Ref: <%OOF_REFNO%>

Property: <%PRO_ADR_ONELINE%>

Further to your transfer application, I am pleased to offer you the tenancy for the above vacancy. To make arrangements to view the property, <%CONTACT_TEXT%>. If accepted, the tenancy will be an Assured Tenancy.

Property Type: <%PROPERTY_TYPE%>
Nos of Bedrooms: <%NUMBER_OF_BEDROOMS%>
Floor Level: <%P_FLOOR_LEVEL%>
Rent: £ <%P_RENT_VALUE%>
Tenancy Type: <%TENANCY_TYPE%>

When attending the viewing could you also bring the following four items with you;

Proof of identity e.g. passport, driver's licence or birth certificate

National Insurance number

Details of current income

Proof of current residency e.g. Rent book or council tax bill

If I do not hear from you within two days of receipt of this letter, I will assume that you no longer require re-housing and cancel your application with Guinness Northern Counties Housing Association.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

<%SIGNATURE_NAME%>

<%SIGNATURE%>

<%PATCH_NAME%> <%JOB_TITLE%>

12.9 Transfer/mutual exchange

Letter Transfer To

Ref

23 June 2006

25 Buck in The Park Drive
Bucksworth Buckinghamshire
1BU XXB

Dear

Transfer/Exchange To ... Park Road, Parksfield, Buckinghamshire

I'm really pleased that you've applied for a transfer/ mutual exchange with us – our aim is to keep tenants happy in homes that suit them. First, I need to visit you with our Maintenance Officer to talk about any issues with your tenancy. At the meeting we will discuss the following with you:

1. Housing management and Estate services (Conduct of your tenancy, Rent, Arrears)
2. Repairs and Maintenance (Authorised / Unauthorised home improvements, Damage to internal / external fixtures and fittings, property fabric)

During the visit, we'll check your home, including all the rooms and the garden. We'll talk about any tenancy issues and repairs or replacements you need to do before you move, to leave your home ready for the next person who moves in. We will inform you of any items that need to be dealt with prior to your move. We will need to agree if you'll do the work yourself and then we can inspect it, or if we do the work and then charge you for the cost.

Following the home visit we will confirm in writing what you need to do. Any items listed will need to be completed before we can authorise your transfer.

I'd like to remind you that when you move, you need to leave the property clean and tidy, and take all your belongings with you. We could charge you if we need to clean up after you. We can also charge you if we need to do any other repairs after you have left because you've neglected or damaged the property.

Please contact me on 01246 593100 to make a mutually agreeable appointment.

Yours sincerely

xxxxxx Housing
Officer

12.10 Transfer – post meeting letter about home repairs

Letter Transfer To

Ref

23 June 2006

25 Buck in The Park Drive
Bucksworth Buckinghamshire
1BU XXB

Dear

Transfer ToPark Road, Parksfield, Buckinghamshire

Thank you for meeting with the maintenance surveyor Mr xxxxx and me on the 25th January 2005 to discuss your proposed transfer / exchange to the above property and allowing us to view you're home.

As part of the process we undertook a home interview together with an inspection of the internal and external fabric of your home, including gardens, drives, paths, outbuildings and discussed the following with you:

1. Housing management and Estate services (conduct of your tenancy, rent payments etc)
2. Repairs and Maintenance (authorised / unauthorised home improvements, damage to internal / external fixtures and fittings, property fabric)

We gave you a verbal report at our interview and viewing of the property, as detailed below:

Housing management and Estate servi

Items Discussed

1. Rear Garden has a large amount of waste (washing machine, fridge, old bike, number of full black
2. The shed is of a poor quality and is full of old car parts

ces

What yo need to do

1. Remuove all items and re instate the garden (level out apply top soil) household
2. Remove shed and all car parts, make good to ground (level out apply top bags soil)

Repairs and Maintenance	
Items Discussed	What you need to do
1. 6 Internal doors have been damaged (Lounge, kitchen, bed No1, No2, No3 and bathroom) 2. The rear elevation plastic down right has been smashed	1. Agreed for NCHA to employ our contractor and replace the doors these costs will be charged to the customer @ £ 157.35 per door £944.14 inclusive of vat 2. The customer has agreed to replace this section of down right at his or her own expense. This work will be inspected upon completion and prior to agreement of transfer.

The items listed above must be completed before we can authorise your transfer. Can you please confirm in writing your agreement to complete the items, or where the association is undertaking the works on your behalf, your agreement to pay these costs and your preferred method of payment Your method of payment will have to be agreed before work is started.

After consideration of the listed items you still wish to proceed, please contact me on 01246 593100 so we can agree time scales.

Yours sincerely

xxxxx Housing
Officer

12.11 Transfer - approved

Letter to Transfer/exchange To

Ref

23 June 2006

25 Buck in The Park Drive
Bucksworth Buckinghamshire
1BU XXB

Dear Mr xxxxxxxxxxxx

Transfer/exchange To xxx Park Road, Parksfield, Buckinghamshire

Further to our meeting on the 28th January 2005 I am pleased to inform you the items listed below have all been completed to our satisfaction. I can now approve your application to transfer/exchange to the above property.

Housing Management and Estate services Items of Discussed Rear Garden has a large amount of household waste (washing machine, fridge, old bike, number of full black bags) The shed is of a poor quality and is full of old car parts	Remove all items and re instate the garden (level out apply top soil) Remove shed and all car parts, make good to ground (level out apply top soil)
Repairs and Maintenance Items of Discussed Internal doors have been damaged (Lounge, kitchen, bed No1, No2, No3 and bathroom) The rear elevation plastic down right has been smashed	Agreed for NCHA to employ our contractor and replace the doors these costs will charged to the customer @ £ 157.35 per door £944.14 inclusive of vat The customer has agreed to replace this section of down right at his or her own expense. This work will be inspected upon completion and prior to agreement of transfer.

Can I remind you that when you move, you need to leave the property clean and tidy, and take all your belongings with you. We could charge you if we need to clean

up after you. We can also charge you if we need to do any other repairs after you have left because you've neglected or damaged the property.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your co-operation with your move and wish you all the best in your new home.

Yours sincerely

xxxxx Housing
Officer

12.12 Change to Tenancy Agreement – arrears

Ref MW/Lettings

23 June 2006

Miss J Pankowski 46
Summersgill Close
Heywood Rochdale
OL10 2EL

Dear Miss Pankowski

CHANGE TO TENANCY AGREEMENT

Further to your request to the Rochdale Office to have the above tenancy amended into your married name. I regret to advise that whilst your rent account is in arrears, we are unable to comply with your request.

However, if you would like to contact the Office to make arrangements to clear your account, arrangements can then be made to amend our records.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Whatmough
LETTINGS OFFICER

12.13 Succession to Tenancy

Ref JM

23 June 2006

Mr P Buckley 23
Scowcroft Lane Shaw
Oldham

Dear Mr Buckley

Succession to Tenancy

Further to your recent request to have the above tenancy transferred into your sole name.

I would be grateful if you could sign both copies of the Succession document where indicated by a pencil cross. Someone who is not related also needs to witness your signature on each copy.

Once both copies have been signed and witnessed by all parties, please return both copies to this office, on receipt of which an Endorsement signed by the Association will be forwarded for your records.

Please note that no changes can be made to the above tenancy until the above signed Endorsement is received back at this office.

Should you have any queries whatsoever regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Melanie Whatmough
LETTINGS OFFICER

12.14 Change to Tenancy Agreement - completed

Ref MW/Lettings 5th

October 2005

Mr & Mrs A Lomax 5
Croft Hill Court
Braddocks Close
Hurstead Rochdale

Dear Mr & Mrs Lomax

CHANGE TO TENANCY AGREEMENT

Further to your recent request to have your tenancy changed into joint names following your Marriage.

I can confirm that your details have now been amended on our system.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Melanie Whatmough
LETTINGS OFFICER

enc

12.15 Name Change - Single to Joint Tenancy

Ref MW/Lettings

23 June 2006

Mr & Mrs N Holt
31 Dunwood Park Court
Milnrow Road
Shaw
Oldham
OL2 8ED

Dear Mr & Mrs Holt

NAME CHANGE TO TENANCY AGREEMENT

Further to your recent request to have the above named tenancy amended into joint names, I have pleasure in enclosing two copies of a new tenancy agreement for this purpose.

I would be grateful if you could both sign and date each copy of the Tenancy Agreement where indicated by a pencil cross and return BOTH signed copies back to the Rochdale Office.

On receipt of which we will forward you a copy back signed by the Association for your records.

Please note that no amendments will be made to the above tenancy until both signed copies are received back at this office.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Melanie Whatmough
LETTINGS OFFICER

12.16 Offer Letter – ASST procedure

Dear

Further to your re-housing application I am pleased to provisionally offer the tenancy for the above vacancy and I would be grateful if you would contact this office to make arrangements to view.

If accepted the tenancy will be an Assured Shorthold Tenancy which will be for a fixed period of 6 months but which may be extended to 12 months. Please read the attached notes carefully.

TYPE.....

No. Bedrooms.....

Rent.....

When attending the viewing could you also bring the following four items with you.

Proof of identity (e.g. passport, drivers licence or birth certificate).

National Insurance Number.

Details of current income (e.g. benefit books or wage slips).

Proof of current residency (e.g. rent book or council tax bill).

Please note that if you do not produce this information this offer may not be confirmed.

If I do not hear from you within 2 working days of receipt of this letter I will assume you no longer require re-housing and your application will be cancelled without further notice.

Yours sincerely

Lettings Officer

