

Policy: Management Move Policy

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Control Schedule

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Decisions affecting this policy

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Policy Statement

1. This Housing Management Move Policy sets out Ashford Borough Council's (ABC) approach to housing management moves for ABC social housing tenants. A management move is where an urgent managed move is agreed on the basis that a Council tenant is not safe to remain in their current home due to reasons such as domestic abuse, violence, harassment, intimidation, hate crime, or threats of violence likely to be carried out or for other urgent housing management reasons. Management moves are at the discretion of Ashford Borough Council.
2. The Regulator of Social Housing has a set of regulatory standards known as the Consumer Standards, that contain specific expectations that social landlords must comply with and the outcomes that landlords are expected to achieve. Under the Tenancy Standard, landlords should publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management.

Scope of the policy

3. This Policy does not apply to moves outside of the Ashford borough area. Where a move out of the borough is requested or required, a reciprocal move may be arranged with the authority for the area that the tenant is moving to. We do not have any influence over the decision made by the receiving authority. ABC is a signatory to the Kent High Priority Rehousing Reciprocal Scheme. The aim of the scheme is to assist the Local Housing Authorities across the county to meet statutory homelessness duties to prevent and relieve homelessness. This scheme should be used to assist in rehousing an applicant in another borough/district who is at risk of domestic abuse, violence or serious harm within the borough/district who owe the applicant a homelessness duty.
4. This Policy does not cover moves that are due to urgent and major works required to a property that cannot be reasonably carried out with the tenant in occupation, including works required under Awaab's Law, or where the property needs to be demolished, redeveloped or re-designated. This is covered by our Decant Policy.

Relationship with other existing policies

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

5. The overarching aim of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy is to set out our strategic approach to preventing and relieving homelessness in the borough. If a person is not safe in their home due to a risk or threat of violence, they can make a homeless application to any local authority in England or Wales. Priority need is given to various categories of applicants, including:
 - A person who is homeless because of having left their accommodation due to being a victim of domestic abuse.

- A person who is vulnerable because of ceasing to occupy accommodation because of actual violence from another person or threats of violence from another person which are likely to be carried out. In this context, violence can also mean abuse.
6. Management moves prevent homelessness by removing tenants from areas where they may face risk or threat of abuse and by providing tenants who may have fled their home due to abuse, with a permanent and safe home.
 7. We recognise that there will be circumstances where the time in which a management move could occur will not be sufficient to mitigate or manage risk. As such, staff will work across teams to ensure that tenants can be supported to make a homelessness application where required.

Allocations Scheme

8. Our Allocations Scheme explains the criteria and procedures we use to prioritise applicants in housing need for social rented homes. Management Moves sit outside of the Allocations Policy.

Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

9. Our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy sets out what Ashford we mean by anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the principles that we apply to demonstrate a clear and consistent approach to tackling ASB. The overall aim of our policy and the procedures that sit behind are to promote safer, stronger communities and to provide and sustain a better quality of life for the residents of Ashford.
10. We recognise that ASB can have a significant impact on victim's lives and the wider communities. It can affect an individual's feelings of personal safety, make a neighbourhood an unpleasant place to live or work in and greatly reduce on the overall quality of life for residents living in local communities. All residents are entitled to live in a peaceful environment and visitors to Ashford have the right to visit and enjoy a safe and attractive borough. Ashford Borough Council recognises that the problems created by ASB need to be dealt with in a robust and timely manner. We aim to work as quickly and efficiently as possible to tackle ASB, this may be determined by the nature of the ASB incidents and appropriate resolutions. We therefore recognise the importance of management moves where appropriate to mitigate and manage the impact of ASB.

Safeguarding Policy

11. Our Safeguarding Policy sets out the procedures that must be followed when there are concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect towards a child or adult at risk. We recognise that there may be circumstances where a management move may help to mitigate safeguarding risks. If through the management move process we become aware of a serious risk to a child or adult with care and support needs, we will make an appropriate safeguarding referral.

Policy content

Criteria for a Management Move

12. As a social housing landlord, we recognise that there will be occasions where tenants need urgent rehousing in specific situations. The agreement of a management move is an exceptional decision, made at our discretion. This policy and the decision to agree a management move sits outside of the Allocations Scheme, but may result in a delay to the rehousing of other applicants on the housing register and transfer list who may also have a high housing need. A management move will therefore only be considered when all other options have been explored.
13. Any application for a management move will be considered on its individual merits and evidence base, ensuring that the approach to the process is fair and transparent.
14. A management move will be considered where there is a credible and exceptional risk of harm to a tenant or their household. The circumstances could include, but are not limited to, domestic abuse, violence, harassment, intimidation, hate crime, or threats of violence likely to be carried out. We may consider other urgent housing management reasons at our discretion.

Applying for a Management Move

15. A request from a tenant for a management move should be made in writing by the tenant to their Neighbourhood Housing Officer (NHO) or Independent Living Officer (ILO).
16. The tenant(s) will need to provide details of any support for their request for a management move from an independent agency, such as, but not limited to, Social Services, Kent County Council, Kent Police (above the rank of Constable), Domestic Abuse Advocate or a Hospital Consultant. Subsequently the supporting agencies or advocate will be contacted to provide supporting evidence for the management transfer. In some cases, the NHO/ILO will need to apply for a Police disclosure. Where a tenant is unable to obtain this information or require support to do so they should discuss this with their NHO/ILO.
17. Once all the supported information is received and reviewed by the NHO/ILO they will confirm whether the request is to be supported by them to progress for consideration by the management move panel, if not they will clearly set out the reason why. If the request is supported by the NHO/ILO, they will complete Management Move Approval Form (see Appendix A) and supply all supporting evidence.
18. A tenant being supported by a member of the housing service that is not their NHO/ILO, can request that member of staff to make a management move application on their behalf, who will use their professional judgement and adhere to this policy.

19. Once an application for a management move has been submitted, we will contact the tenant within five working days setting out the need for any additional evidence or information that is required to support the application. If a tenant(s) fails to provide the evidence or other information reasonably required by us to process the request within ten working days, the application will be refused.

How a Decision is Made

20. A management move request will be considered with all supporting evidence by the Management Move Panel, which will have representation of two Senior Managers within the Housing Service. The officers are the Service Lead for Options and Allocations and the Service Lead for Income and Neighbourhoods. While supporting evidence from agencies or internal departments will be considered as part of the management move application process, the final decision on whether to approve the management move rests solely with the Management Move Panel.

24. The evidence submitted to support a management move request will be expected to set out all the process and mitigation actions that have been undertaken or deemed inappropriate to support the tenant to remain in their home. It is at the discretion of the management move panel reviewing a management move application to ask for confirmation or more evidence to ensure that the panel can make an informed decision.

25. The management move panel reserves the right to return the management move request to the relevant staff member where additional information is required, or where the form is otherwise incomplete.

26. If there is a challenge on a refusal of a management move request this must be submitted by email to housingresolutions@ashford.gov.uk or in writing to Housing Resolutions, Ashford Borough Council, Dover Place, Ashford, TN23 1HU or and it will be handled in line with our formal complaints policy and process.

Temporary Accommodation Authorisation

27. Where temporary accommodation may be required, tenants will need to make a homeless person's application under Part 7 Housing Act 1996 (as amended). Interim accommodation can then be provided, usually under s188(1) of the Act.

28. Whilst in temporary accommodation, the tenant's situation will be reviewed weekly to ensure that they are being considered for suitable vacancies if the intention is they are to be permanently moved via a management move. We reserve the right to make a direct allocation of housing in these circumstances to make best use of our existing homes and of temporary accommodation.

29. The tenant will be not required to pay rent, bills and council tax at their previous home, but this would be required for their temporary accommodation, unless otherwise stated at offer stage.

Safety and ongoing support

30. Throughout the management move process we will work with the relevant agencies to help ensure the safety of the tenant and their household.
31. Management moves are part of a multi-agency response to residents at risk of violence, harassment and intimidation. Tenants will have their wider needs assessed and be provided with all necessary support and/or referred to specialist support services as required. For example, high risk victims and survivors of domestic abuse will be referred to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and specialist domestic abuse services.
32. Where a child or an adult with care and support needs is at risk of harm due to violence, harassment, intimidation, or threats of violence likely to be carried out, a child and/or adult safeguarding referral will be made in accordance with our Safeguarding Policy.
33. The tenant will be notified of their single point of contact for their management move.

Agreeing a Management Move

34. A tenant will be notified in writing and verbally whether or not a management move has been agreed. If the tenant does not already have an active and verified Kent Homechoice application, they will be asked to complete and submit one as a priority to enable an application for housing to be registered, assessed and banded accordingly. Neighbourhood Housing Officers and Independent Living Officers can support with this process, if required.
35. The tenant can bid for a home which is based upon their banding, as set out within the Allocation Scheme. Tenants who are transferring to alternative housing via a management move have auto bidding set into place as standard.
36. Tenants moving via management move can be housed by either:
 - a) Expressing a successful interest in a property via bidding, or
 - b) Us making a direct offer of housing.
37. We will make one offer of housing, either via bidding through Kent Homechoice or a direct let. This is to ensure that an applicants' urgent housing needs are met as quickly as possible.
38. Tenants will only be able to bid for properties that are the same size and type as currently occupied unless there are exceptional circumstances or there is a need for a smaller home. If applicants are vacating a larger property for a smaller one, they may benefit financially. For further details please contact your Neighbourhood Housing Officer. If a larger home is required, then an allocation for this will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Management Move Panel at the time of submission. They will consider the individual needs of the

household, balanced against the wider need in the community to ensure homes are available for those with a variety of housing needs.

39. In accordance with section 79 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, where we grant a new tenancy to a victim of domestic abuse who has or had a secure lifetime tenancy, the tenancy offered will also be a secure lifetime tenancy.
40. If a tenant has fled the property and not been provided temporary accommodation by Ashford Borough Council, they are still responsible for the tenancy, including upkeep and payment of rent, council tax and utilities up until the time the tenancy is legally ended. Where a tenant has accrued rent arrears, the presence of rent arrears will not be a reason to refuse a management move request. However, we will carefully consider the circumstances in which the arrears accrued and the options for arrears recovery in line with the ABC Income and Arrears Policy.
41. The Management Move Panel may at their discretion consider appropriate assistance to facilitate a move. This could include practical support or general advice. Please Appendix A.
42. Some tenants may have been on the housing register prior to their management move request for other re-housing reasons, for example an overcrowding need. As a management move is to a property that is the same size and type as currently occupied, such tenants will need to re-submit a Kent Homechoice application once the management move has been completed, unless a management move to larger accommodation has been undertaken. The housing application must be submitted within 28 days of the management move taking place to be backdated to the original application date and banding.

Requesting a review of the suitability of an offer of housing

43. If a tenant refuses a direct offer or a successful bid of housing, the tenant may request a review of the offer. The request must be made at the time of viewing the property or no later than two days following the viewing. If no request for a review is made, the management move status will end and no further offer will be made on this basis.
44. Any request for a review must be made in writing and clearly set out the reasons why the tenant disagrees with our decision on the suitability of the housing. A refusal form will be provided at the viewing for this purpose.
45. Formal reviews will be conducted by a Senior Officer within Housing Services with no previous involvement in the case, who will notify the tenant of the outcome of the review, including the reasons for their decision. During this process, we may seek any further information if required, including advice from medical and other specialist advisors, if necessary.
46. If, based on the evidence submitted by the tenant, if we conclude that the reasons for refusal of the offer of suitable housing are not valid, the tenant will be given five further days to reconsider the offer. If the offer is still not accepted,

the offer of housing will be withdrawn, and the management move status will end.

Complaints

47. If a tenant is not satisfied with the way we have dealt with their management move request, they can refer to and follow the Housing Service Complaints Policy.

48. The Housing Ombudsman Service can be contacted if further advice and support is needed on making a complaint to us. Their contact details are as follows:

- Website at: www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Telephone: 0300 111 3000
- Email: info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk
- Write to them at Housing Ombudsman Service, PO Box 152, Liverpool L33 7WQ

Data Protection Responsibilities

49. The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR regulate the processing of information relating to individuals, which includes the obtaining, holding, using or disclosing of such information.

50. We need to collect and use certain types of information about our service users in order to carry out our everyday business and to fulfil our objectives and statutory functions.

51. We operate a [Privacy Policy](#) and this explains how we as a data controller collect use and protect your personal data.

52. We are signed up to the Kent and Medway Information Sharing Agreement and will abide by the conditions set out in this document that applies to all ABC directorates. The agreement ensures that appropriate information is securely exchanged between the agencies when dealing with management transfer cases, and that such information is used appropriately in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR, and the Human Rights Act 1998.

53. We will treat all information received with the strictest of confidence wherever possible. Information relating to management transfer cases may however be shared with other agencies for lawful purposes such as the purpose of preventing domestic abuse, anti-social behaviour, crime or if there is a safeguarding concern.

Equalities Impact Assessment

54. We are committed to welcoming and valuing diversity, promoting equality of opportunity and tackling unlawful discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. We, in delivering this policy, will have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensure that no individual is discriminated against based on their sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion, belief, disability or age.
55. The Public Sector Equality Duty is a duty on us and that responsibility cannot be delegated to a contractor/service provider and is a continuing duty.
56. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact this policy will have on affected persons with protected characteristics. The review concluded there were no known circumstances of a negative impact.

Review of Policy

57. This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner, in the event of major legislative or operational changes.

Appendix A- Examples of Disturbance Payments

The following table outlines examples of where we may cover reasonable costs relating to a management move. This list is not exhaustive and other reasonable requests will be considered and confirmation of what costs, if any, will be covered by us will be confirmed when a management move is agreed

Example	
Removals	Cover the cost or make arrangements
Disconnection/reconnection of cooker/gas appliances	Yes, if required
White goods	Ensure provision of suitable cooking, washing and refrigeration facilities are provided. This may include the cost of removals and reinstallation rather than new items.
Mail redirection	If arranged by the tenant, the Council can cover the re-direction of mail for all household members for up to 6 months.
Carpets and flooring	Where possible, households are expected to re-use the floor coverings in their home. Payments for the uplift and refitting of flooring may be made. Otherwise, a fitter will be directly instructed to undertake the fitting of new flooring.
Curtains and blinds	Where possible, households should use curtains or blinds from their previous home. The Council may pay for the removal and refitting of rails etc. new curtains may be provided where window coverings are not of adequate size to provide a reasonable level of privacy.