

SUSTAINING TENANCIES POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy describes how we will seek to achieve sustainable tenancies. Tenancy Sustainment is a generic term for the prevention of tenancy breakdown or a 'failed tenancy'.

This Policy, along with a number of other supporting policies and procedures, , aims to ensure compliance with the Scottish Social Housing Charter, Outcome 11, 'Tenancy Sustainment' - Social landlords ensure that tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

This outcome covers how landlords can help tenants who may need support to maintain their tenancy. This includes tenants who may be at risk of falling into arrears with their rent, and tenants who may need their home adapted to cope with age, disability, or caring responsibilities.

2.0 SUSTAINING TENANCIES

2.1 Lettings

Through implementing our [Allocations policy](#) and procedures we will seek to match applicants with the most suitable property available, according to their housing needs and their stated preferences regarding the type of property and/or the area they would like to live in. At this stage we will consider whether it is appropriate to provide a furniture package for communal areas, thus removing any financial inequalities that may exist between sharing tenants. This will be provided in accordance with our [Furniture Procedure](#)

2.2 Rent and Service Charges

Through implementing our [Rent](#) and [Service Charges](#) policies we will seek to ensure that:

- our property rents are comparable with those of other local landlords;
- our rents are 'affordable' according to current definitions;
- our service charges represent 'value for money' and only seek to recover the costs we incur in providing the services.

2.3 Property standards

We will seek to ensure that any properties we build or refurbish are to the highest construction standards possible and that they incorporate appropriate energy efficiency elements, both as part of our overall sustainability measures and to help tenants to reduce their expenditure on heat and power. By December 2020 at the

latest, and from that date onwards, we will ensure that all our properties, where practically possible” will comply with the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

2.4 Repairs and maintenance

Through implementing our [Maintenance policy](#) and Void Properties Policy and procedures we will seek to provide a high-quality responsive repairs service to all tenants. We will ensure that each empty property is brought up to our current lettable standards before it is offered to an applicant, so that we give each new tenant a ‘good start’ at the beginning of their tenancy. Through our programmes of cyclical and planned maintenance we will seek to maintain the key elements of our properties to a high quality, meeting or exceeding current standards.

2.5 Tenancy and Estate management

Through implementing our landscape maintenance procedures we will seek to ensure that we keep the areas around our properties for which we are responsible neat and tidy, contributing to making the area an attractive and desirable place to stay. Through implementing our [Void Properties](#) and [Abandoned Properties procedures](#) we will seek to minimise the length of time a property is empty before it is re-occupied or, in the case of an abandoned property, before it is re-possessioned and available again for occupation.

Through implementing our [Neighbour Disputes and Anti-Social Behaviour policy and procedures](#) we will seek to take prompt and appropriate action to deal with issues and problems affecting one or more tenants and/or the local community.

Through implementing our [Hoarding procedure](#) we will seek to take appropriate action to deal with issues which may affect the health and safety of tenants and neighbour.

3.0 MONITORING

ARK use the definition set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator in Scottish Social Housing Indicator 20 (Percentage of new tenancies sustained for more than a year) to assess our effectiveness in this area. The Head of Housing Services will report annually to the Finance Sub Committee on the number of tenancies that have lasted less than 12 months, with reasons where known and any action being taken as a result.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

4.1 The Head of Housing Services is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and that it is reviewed at least every three years.

Approved by the SLT: November 2018

Approved by the Finance Sub-Committee: November 2018

Review of policy due by: November 2021

Complies with: Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcome 11.