



RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN POLICY

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RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN POLICY

1.0 Policy Statement and Objectives

- 1.1 Three Oaks Homes (TOH) properties are allocated with the aim of achieving the best use and occupancy of each property. To achieve this, the Lettings/Allocations Policy and Procedure provides guidelines on property types and the allocation and occupation of these by individuals and families.
- 1.2 TOH acknowledges that in some circumstances relationships break down and consequently rehousing may become necessary for the individuals concerned. The Relationship Breakdown Policy provides a framework to address future housing requirements where a stable relationship has broken down. This applies to any person approaching TOH for rehousing where relationship breakdown has occurred.
- 1.3 TOH is committed to providing advice and support at the point of need. To ensure we meet this commitment we will ensure that:
 - Staff are trained on this policy and other policies, such as the Lettings/Allocations policy, that relate to relationship breakdown issues;
 - We work with other agencies to provide advice and guidance to people that is appropriate to their individual circumstances;
 - A clear summary leaflet outlining this policy and the options available to those suffering from relationship breakdown issues is available.

2.0 Consideration under this Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to tenants, applicants of TOH and to anyone living within a Three Oaks Homes property who might be affected by relationship breakdown.
- 2.2 For consideration under this Policy, residents must have been living together in a stable relationship and that relationship must have broken down permanently.
- 2.3 For the purpose of this policy TOH considers a stable relationship to be one where either party or both parties:-
 - Were granted the original tenancy,
 - Are named on the original tenancy agreement, and
 - Have been living together in their main or principle home.

3.0 Advice and support

- 3.1 In cases of Relationship Breakdown, TOH will seek to provide advice and support to anyone suffering relationship breakdown:-
- Clarifying their rights and the options available to them regarding their tenancy (where they are a TOH tenant) and potential tenancy changes.
 - Explaining their options regarding alternative accommodation.
 - Providing information (as appropriate) on support agencies, benefit entitlements, local help services and contact numbers.
 - Sign posting to home ownership options.

4.0 Rehousing by TOH

- 4.1 Relationship Breakdown will be covered in the Lettings/Allocations Policy.
- 4.2 TOH will seek to re-house one or both parties if suitable accommodation is available and in accordance with the Lettings/Allocations Policy. However, there are increasing and competing demands on available accommodation and we must consider the needs of everyone applying for housing according to Government legislation and local need.
- 4.3 Before agreeing to a request for rehousing TOH will:
- Consider the basic criteria set out in the Allocations policy, and any other special factors relating to the request.
 - Interview all parties requesting rehousing individually.
 - Require evidence/proof that the relationship breakdown is permanent.
- 4.4 If there are dependent children and the existing property is of an appropriate size, TOH will encourage the person who is responsible for looking after the children to stay in the original property, whenever possible.
- 4.5 If the relationship breakdown occurs between occupiers of a TOH property and TOH approves the rehousing of both parties, we will require vacant possession of the existing property where both parties are rehoused into different homes. Where the relationship breakdown is complex and potentially puts vulnerable people at risk, TOH may seek further professional/legal advice on its responsibilities to all parties.
- 4.6 TOH may allocate an existing home to one party of a couple suffering relationship breakdown, where it is practicable and desirable to do so, for example, where it is appropriate for children to remain in their

existing home. This is also particularly relevant in the case of joint tenancies, where one party can legally terminate the tenancy on behalf of both tenants, whether this is desired by both or not. To prevent homelessness as a result of this action, TOH will, at its discretion, re-allocate the property to the remaining occupier subject to the property being suitable for their circumstances.

- 4.7 Where joint custody of children exists, TOH will consider the circumstances of this before allocating appropriate accommodation in line with the Lettings/Allocations Policy.
- 4.8 If a relationship breaks down because of domestic violence the Domestic Violence Policy will apply.

5. Related Policies

5.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Tenancy Agreement
- Lettings/Allocations Policy
- Tenants' Transfer Policy
- Domestic Violence Policy