

SIGN-UP POLICY

30 November 2019

Prepared by:	Sarah Higgins
Date effective from:	30/11/2019
Policy approved by:	Si Welch
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EIA Required?	<input type="checkbox"/>
EIA Completed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision number:	03
Lead officer:	Jane Allen

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 All customers (including those existing Stockport Homes' (SHG) tenants) must have a sign-up before starting a new tenancy.

1.2 A sign-up takes place to ensure that customers understand that by signing a Tenancy Agreement (which is a legally binding document) they understand the rights and responsibilities associated with the tenancy. The customer is committing to upholding the obligations within it, such as payment of rent and charges and around not contributing to anti-social behaviour. The tenancy agreement must be completed correctly and signed by the customer.

1.3 The sign-up process enables the SHG to work with the customer to ensure they have the knowledge and understanding of how to maintain a tenancy to ensure sustainability. It is also another opportunity to identify any support needs and ensure that these are being met, if support is not already in place.

1.4 The sign-up is also used to communicate essential property information to the new customer whilst ensuring that all customers/households with identified additional needs have the relevant support put in to place to aid tenancy success.

2 STRATEGIC LINKS

2.1 This policy links to the following:-

- SHG's Allocation policy
- SHG's mission of Transforming Lives
- SHG's aims to "support customers in all aspects of their lives through effective partnership working" and also to "develop our thriving, safe and sustainable neighbourhoods, maximising our contribution to meeting housing need".

3 KEY FEATURES OF THE POLICY

3.1 During the sign-up, the customer is provided with information to ensure that they understand that by signing a Tenancy Agreement (which is a legally binding document) they understand the rights and responsibilities associated with the tenancy.

3.2 Sign-ups are arranged on the date that the keys are expected to be returned from the contractor.

3.3 Customers must be advised that failure to comply with these terms may result in the offer of the property being withdrawn.

3.3.1 The exception to this is when there is a confirmed reason for the customer not being available to attend a sign-up appointment (for example if a person goes on holiday).

3.4 In these cases, the Customer Services Manager (CSM) or Housing Services Manager (HSM) will agree the outcome. This will be to either reallocate the offer due to not being available / no response or completing the sign-up at a later date and the tenancy start date being backdated.

3.5 In addition to the tenancy agreement and other standard items that are covered within sign-ups, it will also be used to cover any topical and necessary points, for example, welfare reform changes that have occurred or are on the horizon and the impact they will have.

3.6 The sign-up will always take in to consideration a customer's personal circumstances however void turnaround time and letting properties in the most effective manner are a focus for SHG.

3.7 SHG aims to turn around properties quickly to minimise rent loss and to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods.

4 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

4.1 As part of the EIA assessment, it was determined that a full EIA was not required, however the following were addressed and put into place:

- Ensuring accessibility by varying location of sign-up where appropriate
- Using interpreters when required with the CSO adding that information to Northgate for future communications
- Ensuring where appropriate how to report hate crime and emphasising that SHG takes zero tolerance approach towards it.

5 OWNERSHIP, MONITORING & REVIEW

5.1 The procedure will be monitored and reviewed in line with the Policy Review Group schedule to ensure that the procedure reflects current legislation and practice.

5.2 Ownership of the procedure lies with the Head of Neighbourhoods within the Neighbourhoods and Support Directorate.

5.3 Any queries with the procedure should be forwarded to the Project Officer on 0161 474 4151.