

SOCIAL LETTINGS SERVICE POLICY

31 October 2019

Prepared by:	Lisa Delezio
Date effective from:	31/10/2019
Policy approved by:	Si Welch
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EIA Required?	<input type="checkbox"/>
EIA Completed?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Revision number:	3
Lead officer:	Anne-Marie Heil

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Social Lettings Service (SLS) is a private letting service operated by Stockport Homes (SHG).
- 1.2 SLS manages properties on behalf of landlords within Stockport and surrounding areas, providing a reliable lettings and management service to landlords and tenants alike.
- 1.3 SLS has direct links with other SHG services, including the Deposit Scheme, Housing Options and Homechoice as well as Stockport Council's Housing Standards Team.

2 STRATEGIC LINKS

- 2.1 This policy links to the following;
 - Stockport Homes' Mission of Transforming Lives and its specific aim to 'provide comfortable, affordable homes'.
 - Stockport Council's Empty Property Strategy.
 - 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 SERVICE

- 3.1 SLS provides a comprehensive letting service through the 'Tenant Only' and 'Full Management services by effectively:
 - Promoting the service to maximise the number of private sector properties available to those customers who are deemed to be vulnerable and those on low incomes.
 - Inspecting all new properties before they are accepted onto the scheme, ensuring they meet a lettable standard as set by the SLS Standard for Lettable Homes.
 - Working with those landlords whose properties do not meet the lettable standard in order to raise standards.
 - Advertising properties to let in order to maximise customer awareness.
 - Assessing applications from prospective customers to ensure that they are able to take on and sustain a tenancy and can comply with any specific requirements set by the landlord.
 - Co-ordinating and managing customer viewings.
 - Reviewing all customer applications and carrying out necessary checks (such as credit checks/references) and selecting the most suitable applicant as set out by the landlord.

- Co-ordinating and managing tenant signups with the relevant parties.
 - Ensuring rent is collected and carrying out inspections on fully managed tenancies.
 - Ensuring tenants adhere to the terms of their Tenancy Agreement and taking appropriate action where breaches occur.
 - Terminating tenancies when required.
 - Re-letting; minimising void periods.
- 3.2 All tenants signed up to a tenancy who have housing related support needs can be referred to SHG's Housing Support service who will provide support to ensure the tenancy is sustainable.
- 3.3 SLS offers landlords a guaranteed rent scheme to provide security for any loss of rental income for an additional fee.
- 3.4 SLS offers access to an optional repairs service for landlords.
- 3.5 For those properties that are accepted onto the leasing scheme, SLS will manage this for either a three or five year term.
- 3.6 SLS works in partnership with Stockport Council to identify empty homes within the Borough, referring owners of empty homes to the SLS service to explore possible options for letting.

4 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening has been completed. A full EIA is not required.
- 4.2 As part of the assessment, it was determined that as part of the letting process, SLS work with landlords to ensure there is consistency in the selection process.

5 OWNERSHIP, MONITORING & REVIEW

- 5.1 This Policy is owned by the Neighbourhoods and Support directorate. This procedure will be monitored by the Policy Review Group and reviewed in line with the Policy Review Group schedule.
- 5.2 Any queries with the policy should be forwarded to the Projects Officer on 0161 474 4151.