

Managed Move Policy

Scope of Policy

This policy sets out the approach of Platform Housing Group (the Group) to managed moves, designed to facilitate the relocation of customers from one property to another within the Group's housing stock. The aim is to address exceptionally urgent housing need by enabling customers to move to more suitable accommodation.

Applicability

The policy applies to all members of the Group.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 We recognise that there may be circumstances where the only and most effective and timely way an **exceptionally urgent housing need** can be resolved for an existing customer, is using a managed move.

In the interests of fairness to all applicants seeking housing, managed moves are kept to a minimum and will be considered when **all other options have been explored** including action against offenders and supporting the work of appropriate agencies, including the Police, the Local Authority and Health Service. A decision on a managed move will only be made when all relevant information has been considered.

2. Context

- 2.1 This policy is aligned with our Lettings Policy and sets out our adopted approach when asked to consider a managed move across both general needs and specialist housing accommodation.

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1 When should a Managed Move be considered

Examples of exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- 3.1.1 **Victims of crime, serious anti-social behaviour, harassment, hate crime or domestic abuse** that puts the customer's life at risk; where it is no longer safe to remain where they are, or where the impact through a trauma informed lens, is such that the customer can no longer reasonably be expected to live in the property.

Managed moves will also be considered where there are safeguarding concerns that cannot be resolved without a move to alternative accommodation. Advice for victims of domestic abuse will be in line with our Customer Domestic Abuse Policy and procedures.

- 3.1.2 Where permanent rehousing is required to allow **major repairs** to be carried out and remaining in the property will cause serious disruption to family life and potentially a health and safety risk. Our Tenancy Management Policy outlines our approach to temporary decants.
- 3.1.3 Where permanent rehousing is required as part of a **regeneration project**.
- 3.1.4 Where there is an **urgent medical or disability need** which means that the customer cannot access or continue to occupy their current home; following trauma, a life changing accident, for example, a medical condition requiring specialist equipment that there is insufficient space for. This must be confirmed by medical professionals and an assessment provided by an occupational therapist to determine what accommodation and any adaptations are required. Partnership working with agencies, where there are physical or mental health needs, is key to successfully considering a managed move and support needs for customers.
- 3.1.5 Customers who **no longer have a need for major adaptations**.
- 3.1.6 Customers housed within our **Young People's Service** who have not secured a move on to independent living within two years.
- 3.1.7 Customers with **no statutory right to succeed to a tenancy** will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.1.8 Where a customer has **an evidenced need for a mobility vehicle** but does not have appropriate storage.
- 3.2 We recognise that no set formula or assessment criteria can be adopted for managed moves. Each customer or household is individual, and their circumstances are unique to them. A managed move will be considered on a case-by-case basis and having a cohort of subject matter experts to form a Managed Move Panel aims to ensure we have consistency in our decision-making process and an understanding of the thresholds to accept a referral.

When submitting a managed move request, it is essential that all information and evidence required to reach a robust conclusion, is provided and accurately interpreted. We aim to provide a person centred and coordinated response that is timely and effective.

4. Policy Outline

4.1 Who can request a Managed Move

Managed moves are available to existing customers regardless of their rented tenure type or length of tenancy with the Group.

When reviewing a managed move request, consideration will be given to any tenancy breaches such as rent arrears.

A Neighbourhood Officer/Retirement Housing Officer may, following discussions with a customer or a professional partner or from involvement in Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) or other multi-disciplinary meetings, feel that a managed move request should be submitted. The Officer should then discuss this with the customer and relevant partners. Consent from the customer is required along with an understanding of the process and what may be required from them. The discussion should refer to all housing options available to the customer.

If a customer, or a professional working with a customer, feels that an urgent move is required, they should contact the relevant Officer. The Officer will make contact and arrange a home visit where necessary, as appropriate, and does not put the customer at risk, for example if there is domestic abuse.

The Officer, in partnership with others, is responsible for exploring all housing options and solutions with the customer. Consideration should be given by the Officer to setting up a multi-disciplinary meeting with partners to ensure that all options for both housing and support are considered. We do recognise that, for example, the evidence base for domestic abuse cases may be limited and this will not restrict our decision making. However, we do expect applications to be robust and comprehensive to enable a decision to be reached. If a customer has support needs it is important that we identify if a move will represent the best solution and, if a move is required, that the support will continue.

Registering on to a Local Authority Housing Register (Waiting List) provides customers with the opportunity to secure alternative accommodation with another Registered Provider or Local Authority and as part of the managed move process we will require customers to register. This means that a solution could be found in areas where the Group does not hold housing stock or where it is not readily available due to low turnover rates. It is important to recognise that a managed move does not happen immediately as a suitable property has to be identified with a potential termination period and repair works.

Customers cannot make a direct application for a managed move.

4.2 Who makes the decision on a Managed Move

- 4.2.1 The Group covers a wide range of geographical areas, divided into three localities – Severn, Tame and Witham and all include our specialist housing portfolio. Each Locality has a Head of Service, supported by a management team, Neighbourhood Officers and Retirement Living Officers. Within each locality there is a breadth of knowledge of the housing stock, local services and local challenges coupled with strong partnerships with statutory and voluntary agencies. This knowledge base is vital in supporting decision making.

A panel meeting will be held every month. The Panel will reach a decision on the managed move request which must be fully completed and with all relevant supporting information.

- 4.2.2 It is recognised that managed move requests are to meet an urgent housing need. In order to ensure that robust, consistent and sustainable decisions are reached, a panel approach best supports our goals. It is accepted that an emergency panel meeting may be required for certain cases which will be instructed by the Head of Service or Operations Manager.

In the event of an immediate need for a move, it may be necessary to advise our customer to approach their Local Authority as homeless. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to consider households which are unable to remain in their current home and to consider the provision of temporary accommodation.

4.3 **The Decision-Making Process**

- 4.3.1 We have detailed guidance and procedural documents which support this policy on managed moves.

- 4.3.2 In reaching a decision on a managed move request, the Managed Move Panel will consider any tenancy breaches, for example, rent arrears, outstanding recharges and court costs. An agreement will be made regarding these factors as part of any move.

In addition, the Officer will consider property condition, following an inspection. Whilst not a barrier to a managed move, any breaches are a material consideration, and the Managed Move Panel will seek to understand why they have arisen and why the property has not been maintained.

The Sustainable Lettings Manager will sit on all Managed Move Panel meetings, as part of the role is to ensure that decision making is consistent across the Group.

4.4 **How a Property is Identified**

- 4.4.1 When completing a managed move request, a customer will agree with the Officer, the property types, location and size, and identify any additional needs, for example, the need for level access shower, wheelchair accessibility. This information will be considered by the Managed Move Panel.

When a managed move is agreed, the Sustainable Lettings Manager will arrange for the details to be added to the managed move register. This will include identifying on the register, the property type sought, the location and any additional needs or requirements. It will also include the reason(s) for the move so trends can be understood and identified.

When a tenancy is terminated, or we are made aware of forthcoming new build properties (subject to certain conditions), the Empty Property Team will advise the Officer who will in turn speak to the customer to ascertain suitability and interest.

- 4.4.2 It is important that customers understand that a managed move will not happen immediately and if a property is identified, it is likely to be subject to a four week notice period followed by repairs and maintenance works.

Customers are prioritised in date order, based on the date the managed move was approved by the Panel. If it is identified that a customer should be prioritised above others due to evidenced risk, this must be agreed by panel members to ensure fairness and transparency.

When a property has been successfully identified, the customer is expected to follow the Group's termination process and give notice on their current home. If there is any overlap from the existing tenancy to the new tenancy, the customer is liable for payment of both rents.

4.5 **Right of Appeal**

- 4.5.1 If a request for a managed move is declined by the Managed Move Panel, the customer has a right of appeal to the Panel, via the Head of Lettings and in their absence the Head of Empty Property Management. The Head of Lettings will not have been involved in the original decision making. Any appeal must be in writing and received by us within 10 days of the notification of the decision, setting out the reasons for appeal. The written appeal should include any additional information, not previously considered by the Panel.

The Head of Lettings will advise the outcome of the appeal within 10 working days.

4.5.2 **Review and Removal from the Managed Move list**

Managed move cases will be reviewed every three months.

If a customer refuses two offers of suitable accommodation and the Panel decision is to remove from the register, the customer has no further right of appeal.

Consideration of whether accommodation is suitable will require an assessment of all aspects of the accommodation in the light of the relevant needs, requirements and circumstances of the customer and their household. The location of the accommodation will always be a relevant factor.

If the customer has been on the managed move register for more than 3 months without a property being identified, and the Panel decide to remove the customer, the customer has no further right of appeal.

If the customer remains dissatisfied with the decisions reached, other than the initial decision, they can utilise the Group Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy (see section 6 below).

4.6 Security of Tenure

Customers who are moved following a managed move request, will retain their tenancy status. Security of tenure will not be removed or reduced.

A customer's 'Right to Buy' or 'Right to Acquire' may be impacted by a move.

4.7 Reporting and Monitoring

The managed move register will record details of the managed move request and outcome. The register will also record the reason(s) for the managed move request to monitor trends that may need further action by the Group.

The reason(s) for managed moves will be reported annually at the beginning of the financial year by the Sustainable Lettings Manager.

5. Equality and Diversity

5.1 We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief, family circumstances or offending history, as referred to in our relevant Group policies. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

5.2 An equality impact assessment is to be considered and undertaken in respect of this policy, if necessary.

6. Complaints

6.1 We aim to meet the needs of our customers by providing an excellent service. However, it is acknowledged that occasionally things go wrong and customers may wish to complain. Should the need arise to make a complaint, please refer to our Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy.

7. Review

7.1 The next policy review is scheduled for October 2027 and every three years thereafter.

7.2 Approved documents are valid for use after their approval date and remain in force beyond any expiry of their review date until a new version is available.

8. Associated Documents

8.1 List of documents - associated policies, procedures and publications:

- Managed Move Guidance and Procedures
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
- Condition of Property Policy
- Customer Domestic Abuse Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Hate Crime Policy
- Lettings Policy
- Neighbourhood Management Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy
- Tenancy Fraud Policy
- Tenancy Management Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Regulator of Social Housing - Tenancy Standard
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Equality Act 2010
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Housing Acts 1985, 1988 and 1996
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Localism Act 2011
- Occupiers' Liability Act 1957
- Welfare Reform Act 2012

Author:	Gemma Lawrence
Document type:	Policy
Version 1:	Final
Version 1 Approved by:	Performance & Risk Forum
Approved date:	30/10/2024
Release date:	28/11/2024
Customer Voice Panel:	Yes 15/10/2024
Next review date:	10/2027
DPIA completed:	No
EIA completed:	To be considered

