



Arawak Walton Housing Association

Allocations & Lettings Policy 2023

Approved by	Board of Management
Date of Approval	September 2023
Date issued to staff	September 2023
E&D impact Assessed	Yes
Date of Next Review	2026
Policy Ownership	Housing Services Manager
Strategic Bridges	We Value our People and our Roots
Legal Review	Yes
Version	1.0
Revision details	
Statement of Values	We value people We rely on teamwork We are open and accountable

CONTENTS

- 1 Policy Aims
- 2 Key Objectives
- 3 Scope of Policy and Definitions
- 4 Statutory and Legislative Framework Policy
- 5 Policy Principles
 - 5.1 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - 5.2 Confidentiality and Data Protection
- 6 Associated Policies

Allocations and Lettings Policy 2020

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Arawak Walton aims to have a high quality, equitable, customer centred approach to allocating properties that enables households requiring housing to make informed choices about their housing options.
- 1.2. The Association aims to achieve a balance between offering properties to those in greatest need and making best use of its housing stock and achieving balanced and sustainable communities.
- 1.3. The association aims to maintain the high number of applications from members of the BME communities that it specialises in housing.
- 1.4. Arawak Walton works in areas where BME communities predominantly live, or aspire to live. Our approach is based on analysing housing enquiry forms that ensure not only do we collate data on who wants to live where we operate geographically now but also analyse aspirational data to deliver on our aim to create multi-cultural neighbourhoods across the local authorities where we operate.
- 1.5. Our Allocations & Lettings Policy enables us to house BME people who might otherwise be unable to access housing in the area due to local lettings policies that often give greater preference to local connection rather than housing need requirements.
- 1.6. As a specialist BME association, our policy approach provides a safety net for BME people with the Right to Rent who might otherwise be unable to access social housing due to 1.2 above or e.g. due to having no recourse to public funds.

2. Key Objectives

- 2.1. To achieve efficiency, accountability and equality of opportunity in the selection of applicants for housing.
- 2.2. To give priority in lettings to those in the greatest housing need.
- 2.3. To ensure that all applications are dealt with systematically, fairly and equitably to meet tenants' needs for accommodation where and whenever possible.
- 2.4. To make best use of available stock and respond to local housing need.
- 2.5. To let tenancies which are sustainable in the long term and contribute to stable communities by giving home seekers choice in where they want to live.
- 2.6. To co-operate fully with Local Authorities, especially in respect of the authority's statutory responsibilities towards homeless persons.

- 2.7. To work with Local Authorities and other Registered Providers of social housing in the establishment of joint working practises aimed at facilitating improved access to housing, increasing choice for applicants and increasing our effectiveness
- 2.8. To respond to tenants' requirements for mobility and to participate actively in national and local mobility and exchange schemes.
- 2.9. To have clear procedures with delegated authority for staff to implement.
- 2.10. To be readily available to deal with enquiries and give advice on housing solutions
- 2.11. To ensure voids are kept safe, secure and let in a good condition and to minimise rent lost due to empty properties.
- 2.12. To have all offers accepted first time
- 2.13. To provide a full range of housing options to applicants/tenants in fulfilling their housing needs. This will include providing options for new applicants and existing tenants, making them aware of other solutions such as, accessible or supported housing, mutual exchange, transfers, downsizing and private rented sector.

3. Scope of Policy/Definitions

- 3.1. This policy covers the letting of the Associations' general needs, Category 1 and 2 supported properties.
- 3.2. An Applicant means a person or household who is seeking a home and has made an application to Arawak Walton for accommodation.
- 3.3. A Void is a property or unit of accommodation owned or managed by Arawak Walton which is about to become vacant or is already vacant.
- 3.4. Letting refers to the matching of a void to an applicant, where the offer of accommodation is accepted, and the applicant becomes a tenant.

4. Statutory and legislative framework

- 4.1.1. Housing Act 1988 (as amended).
- 4.1.2. Housing Act 1985 (as amended).
- 4.1.3. Housing Act 1996 (as amended).
- 4.1.4. The General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR)
- 4.1.5. Equality Act 2010
- 4.1.6. Welfare Reform Act 2012 / The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016
- 4.1.7. Immigration Act 2016
- 4.1.8. The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013

4.1.9. Data Protection Act 2018

4.1.10. Human Rights Act 1998

4.1.11. Localism Act 2011

4.1.12. The Tenancy Standard: The Regulator of Social Housing expects compliance with various standards and, amongst them, is the Tenancy Standard, which requires Registered Providers to allocate homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way, with clear application, decision making and appeal processes in place.

5. Policy & Principles

5.1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1.1. The organisation will continue to identify areas of unmet need in the public sector particularly in relation to minority ethnic and other groups who are recognised as facing discrimination, and act to meet them, where possible.

5.1.2. The organisation will operate within equality legislation and regulation and recognises the nine protected characteristics of Equality Act 2010 which are: Race, Sex, Sex Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Age and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly.

5.1.3. The organisation will provide all relevant information for tenants and applicants, especially information relating to the operation of the housing system, translated or interpreted into relevant languages and other communication methods. Assistance will be given to all applicants/tenants who are unable to read or understand. Assistance and the consideration of reasonable adjustment will be given to all applicants/tenants who have a disability. Assistance will be given to any applicants/tenants who have a disability. Information will be given on the potential impact for individuals of the phasing in of any new benefit arrangements or of upcoming/new legislation. Where appropriate applicants will be signposted to specialist advice agencies.

5.1.4. Arawak Walton will promote equality, diversity and inclusion by:

5.1.4.1. Encouraging individuals to participate and gain full access to services to which they are entitled.

5.1.4.2. Recognising that some individuals and certain communities are particularly disadvantaged and will require extra recognition and support to deal with their disadvantages and access services.

5.2. Confidentiality and Data Protection

5.2.1. We will collect and process your personal information in accordance with the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, our Privacy Statement and data protection policy in force from time to time which can be located here: <https://arawakwalton.com/wp-content/uploads/App-1.-Customer-Privacy-Policy-Dec-2022.pdf>.

5.2.2. All applicants are asked to give their consent to references and supporting information being taken up with other agencies and previous landlords. Files and applications are kept in secure cabinets and only removed from the Office in order to conduct home visits to applicants. Information is recorded on computer systems and this is covered by GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018.

6. Associated policies

- 6.1. Anti-Social Behaviour
- 6.2. Complaints
- 6.3. Void management
- 6.4. Tenancy Management Policy
- 6.5. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
- 6.6. Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
- 6.7. Arrears Policy
- 6.8. Code of Conduct for Board Members & Employees

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING FORM

This form should be used when a strategy/policy/procedure/process/project (SPPPP) has been identified as minimal/low impact.

This may be due to the fact that the overall strategy in an area of operation had a full EIA.

It may also be due to the type of SPPPP and because it has mainstreamed equality, diversity and inclusion.

Title of the SPPPP being assessed	Allocations and Lettings Policy.	Lead Officer	Chief Executive.
Aims of the SPPPP being assessed	To outline in detail the organisations approach to allocations and lettings.	Staff carrying out the EIA screening	Chris Root – External EDI Critical Friend completed this EIA screening.
Date of EIA screening	15th June 2023.	Why is the document being screened?	Part of on-going EIA timetable.
Date for next EIA	2026.	Was this screening process taken as an opportunity to update language and wording of policy	YES.

THE EIA SCREENING OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

This EIA screening process is undertaken by an external equality, diversity and inclusion champion/critical friend, considering the Equality Act 2010 and its Protected Characteristics including: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Marriage or Civil Partner, Age and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly.

Have actions arisen from the screening process	YES.
	This Policy will be in line with equality legislation and the organisations equality, diversity and inclusion commitments and requirements, if the following are undertaken. In 2020 this policy had an EIA undertaken and the following were recommended and included in this most recent policy: 1. Should the list in 4 include GDPR? 2. 5.1. 2 – change gender to sex in line with the Equality Act 2010. 3. 5.1.3 – add – and other communication methods at the end of the first sentence. 4. 5.1.3 – add to the end of the second sentence – unable to read or understand. This EIA recommends additional changes as listed below: 1. Page 3 - Contents - change Equality and Diversity to: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. 2. Page 5 - 5.1 - Change title to: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. 3. Page 6 - Change the second sentence of 5.1.3 to read: Assistance will be given to all applicants/tenants who are unable to read or understand. Assistance and the consideration of reasonable adjustment will be given to all applicants/tenants who have a disability. 4. Page 6 - 5.1.4 change to read: Arawak Walton will promote equality, diversity and inclusion by: 5. Page 7 - Change 6.5 to read: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

