

## Horton Housing Association

### SELECTION AND ALLOCATION POLICY

#### 1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that HHA selects and allocates its housing and other support services in a fair, equal and consistent manner to those whose needs are greatest and consistent with the aims and objectives of any particular scheme.
- HHA will retain final control over the selection and allocation of its services.
  - Each of HHA's schemes will have a clear policy for selecting clients and allocating services to them.
  - Equal access will be given to all sections of the community and assessment procedures will ensure that services are offered to those in greatest need.
  - The policy for selection and allocation will be in writing, publicised and widely circulated to avoid any indirect discriminatory practice.
  - The allocation of services will be monitored and reviewed to ensure that HHA's services are responsive to changing needs and priorities.

#### 2.0. Legal and Good Practice Requirements

- 2.1. The Race Relations Act 1976 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 make it illegal to discriminate directly or indirectly against a person on the grounds of their race or gender.
- 2.2. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provides grounds for disabled people to take action if they have been unfairly treated.
- 2.3. The Housing Corporation's Performance Standards expect that the Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in rented housing is implemented. The code sets out certain "recommended" elements which HHA will consider.
- 2.4. Whilst the legislation and guidance from the Housing Corporation relates principally to discrimination on the grounds of race, sex and disability HHA recognises the need to promote equality and diversity in its service provision to other disadvantaged groups. (See Equality & Diversity Policy).

#### 3.0. Definitions

- 3.1. *Direct Discrimination*  
Explicit policies which deny access to a section of the community.

3.2. *Indirect Discrimination*

Policies which operate in such a way that persons of a particular group are unable or find it disproportionately difficult to find access to services

3.3. *Positive Action*

Policies or strategies which aim to redress discriminatory practice and inequality of access by encouraging take-up of services and prioritising from under-represented groups.

4.0. The use of targets

4.1. HHA's Equality and Diversity Policy addresses this issue. In certain circumstances the need for specific targets, aimed at providing services to particular groups, based on the level of identified need, may be adopted by the organisation.

5.0. Principles

5.1. HHA recognises that fair and equal allocation of its services depends upon;

- assessment of need across all sections of the community
- all staff being aware of anti-discriminatory practice
- adequate monitoring and review of referral and allocation procedures
- ensuring the choice of referral agencies is not in itself discriminatory
- publicising the organisation's equal opportunities statement and all relevant selection criteria in appropriate languages and formats
- ensuring that selection criteria do not indirectly discriminate by placing unnecessary conditions on prospective referrals
- making sure that practice is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to identify and combat any discriminatory trends.

6.0. Information for Referral Agencies

6.1. In order that referral agencies, prospective clients and other relevant parties are informed about the specific schemes HHA operates, each project will produce a service description detailing:

- the scheme's aim and objectives
- the schemes commitment to equality and diversity
- the services provided

- the selection criteria
- the basis for assessing priority need
- the timescale for decisions
- any requirement to provide supplementary information

#### 7.0. Selection Criteria

7.1. Selection criteria for HHA schemes will address the following issues:

#### 7.2. *Aims and Objectives*

- who the scheme is for
- support services provided
- type of accommodation
- equality and diversity statement

#### 7.3. *Who is eligible*

- any specific requirements (e.g. age, gender, dependency or health problems etc)
- type or level of support needed
- current status (e.g. homeless, single, under CPA etc)

#### 7.4. *Who is excluded*

- reasons for not offering the service ( There should be no blanket policy - an assessment of risk should be made for each individual)

#### 7.5. *How to refer*

- how to apply
- who to contact
- what assessment needs to be carried out
- whether self-referrals are accepted
- details of referral agencies

#### 7.6. *The allocation process*

- how this will be conducted
- application forms
- interview arrangements
- involvement of other agencies

#### 8.0. The referral form

##### 8.1. The referral form will:

- allow for monitoring of the organisation's E.O.P (Equality and Diversity monitoring)
- assess the level of need of the applicant
- examine a person's medical history, only in so far as is relevant to the scheme
- cover areas which have been highlighted for refusal of services
- indicate how the information will be used and who will have access to it

#### 9.0. Interviewing/Assessing Referrals

9.1. Where possible all referrals should be interviewed by at least two members of staff. Interviews should follow a standard format and assess the person against objective criteria. (See Assessment Procedure)

9.2. The interview should give the person additional information about the scheme and allow them to judge whether it suits their needs or not. If at all possible, a prospective clients should be given the chance to view the scheme.

9.3. The person should always be told how and when they will be notified of the decision.

#### 10.0. Appeals

10.1. Any person who is refused services must be informed of their right of appeal.

10.2. Appeals will be heard in accordance with the Association's Assessment Appeal Procedure

#### 11.0. Prioritising

11.1. Those referrals in greatest need of the service will receive priority

11.2. Where appropriate, a waiting list, indicating the level of need for the service will be maintained by individual schemes

12.0. Commencing Occupation (Housing Schemes)

12.1. Once an offer has been made and accepted then staff should:-

- explain the terms and conditions of the occupancy agreement and Tenants' Charter
- identify welfare benefit entitlement and gain necessary information from the client
- explain house rules
- explain care/resettlement planning process
- provide information on local services/amenities
- issue and explain:
  - the residents' handbook
  - the Tenants' Guarantee
  - the complaints procedures
  - the Equality & Diversity statement
- give guidance on health and safety issues

13.0. Monitoring

13.1. Monitoring and review of the selection and allocation process will be implemented to identify potential areas of discrimination, assess changing patterns of need and inform future strategies.

13.2. For supported housing schemes, Supported CORE lettings information will be completed for each new letting.

13.3. Annual reports will be made to the management committee detailing by age, gender and ethnic origin:

- referrals
- rejections
- withdrawals
- acceptances