Rightsizing Internal Lettings Policy

Policy Owner	Executive Director of Customers and Communities
Approval Level	Customer Experience Committee
Resident Input	
Policy Review Due	September 2029
EIA Date	October 2024
Linked strategies/policies	Manchester City Council Allocations Scheme Tenancy Policy Tenancy Fraud Policy Tenancy Changes Policy Income Collection Policy
Scope	This policy applies to former Southway Housing Trust homes in the following wards: Burnage, Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, Gorton and Abbey Hey, Levenshulme, Longsight, Northenden, Old Moat and Withington.
Version	1

Date of Approval	November 2026

Contents

1. What this policy is for 3
2. Who this policy applies to 3
3. Regulation and Legal Requirements 4
4. What we will do 4
General Needs Homes 4
Age Friendly Homes 4
Eligibility Criteria 5
Age Friendly Homes 5
Appeals 6
5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 6
6. Who is responsible 6
7. Monitoring and Reporting 7
8. Glossary 7

1. What this policy is for

1.1 This Policy outlines the approach Southway Wythenshawe Homes Wythenshawe Homes will take when allocating homes to existing tenants, and person's left in occupation, wishing to move to a home that better meets their housing needs (Rightsizing) and freeing up a family home.

1.2 This policy applies to homes owned by Southway Wythenshawe Homes that are let at social or affordable rent within the city of Manchester boundary.

1.3 This policy does not include the letting of Extra/With Care Schemes which are let in partnership with Manchester City Council and the care provider for each scheme.

2. Who this policy applies to

Customers	Southway Wythenshawe Homes tenants who need to rightsize, including older tenants and people remaining in a home following succession. It may also apply to tenants of other Manchester housing providers seeking age-friendly homes.
Colleagues	Southway Wythenshawe Homes colleagues responsible for lettings, housing management, appeals and monitoring the policy.
Partners	Manchester City Council and other Manchester registered housing providers involved in allocations and lettings

2.1 To make best use of our homes we will offer opportunities through this policy at existing and new build homes to:

- Any Southway Wythenshawe Homes tenant that is under occupying their home.
- Older Southway Wythenshawe Homes tenants who are under-occupying or living in a home that is no longer suitable for their needs.
- Any person(s) left in occupation of a family home who has been offered a direct let to a smaller home following a succession application.

3. Regulation and Legal Requirements

3.1 The Tenancy Standard within the Regulatory framework for social housing, requires registered providers to:

- Allocate and let their homes in a fair and transparent way that takes the needs of tenants and prospective tenants into account.
- Co-operate with the local authorities' strategic housing function and assist them to fulfil their duties to meet identified local housing needs; and
- Seek to allocate homes that designated, designed, or adapted to meet specific needs in a way that is compatible with the purpose of the housing.

4. What we will do

General Needs Homes

4.1 A direct let may be offered to a Southway Wythenshawe Homes tenant or family affected by under-occupancy and will free up a family home.

4.2 To ensure equity and fairness up to a maximum 10% of relets will be made available through this policy each year and 30% of new build homes in line with MCC's New Build Local Lettings Policy.

4.3 In addition, priority will be given:

- As an alternative to costly possession action and potentially eviction.
- A person(s) left in occupation of a Southway Wythenshawe Homes family home who has been offered a direct move to a more suitable smaller home.

Age Friendly Homes

4.4 Whenever possible Southway Wythenshawe Homes will aim to rightsize an existing tenant and person (s) left in occupation, into an age friendly property and will give priority as follows:

1. Southway Wythenshawe Homes older tenants who are rightsizing applicants freeing up a family home.

2. Any older occupant left in occupation of a Southway Wythenshawe Homes family home who has been offered a direct move to a more suitable smaller home.

3. Applicants who are tenants of any Manchester Registered Provider who are rightsizing and registered on Manchester Move in housing need.

4.5 In line with Manchester City Councils Allocation Scheme age friendly direct let's will be capped at 50% of the available homes.

Eligibility Criteria

4.6 All applicants will need to have:

- A clear rent account or rent arrears less than £1,000 and have kept to a regular repayment plan for at least three months.
- Passed a pre-termination inspection or agree to rectify problems identified at the inspection within an agreed timescale.
- Not have caused anti-social behaviour, or any other breach of the tenancy.

4.7 The following additional eligible criteria will apply to direct lets for tenants in rent arrears of more than £1k:

- Manchester City Council revenue and benefits has offered to pay a proportion of the rent arrears through a direct payment to Southway Wythenshawe Homes to support the move.
- The home the tenant is leaving will be offered directly to MCC Homelessness to house a larger family in temporary accommodation and an incentive payment has been offered to support the move.

Age Friendly Homes

4.8 The following additional eligible criteria will apply to direct lets at Age Restricted Homes. The applicant:

- Must meet the prevailing age criteria for sheltered schemes, bungalows and apartments.

- For sheltered schemes, have a low care or support need and can live independently with support and would benefit from having a Community Alarm and increased social interaction.

4.9 All applicants wishing to move under this policy will receive two reasonable offers to move taking into consideration location, bedroom need and floor level where relevant.

4.10 A refused offer of a direct let will not count against the applicant's offers on Manchester Move but will mean that the applicant will not receive another offer of a direct let from Southway Wythenshawe Homes.

Appeals

4.11 Appeals or requests to review any allocation that an applicant or tenant believes is unreasonable or unfair will be carried out by either the Assistant Director of Landlord Services or the Head of Housing Management and Support.

5. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.

5.2 There is a selection process based on the applicants meeting the eligibility criteria. Therefore, ethnicity and diversity monitoring will be included in the monitoring of this scheme to ensure that no specific groups are excluded or under-represented.

6. Who is responsible

6.1 MCC Housing Strategy team will be required to approve this change to the way that Southway Wythenshawe Homes allocates a proportion of its homes.

6.2 As part of MCC's approval process to the Policy, they will consult with relevant ward Councillors.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

7.1 All lettings through this Policy will either be recorded on Manchester Move or the Housing Management system and will be monitored by the relevant Housing Manager.

7.2 Outcomes will be included within the annual lettings report to the Customer Experience Committee.

7.3 The date of the next review for this policy is on the cover sheet.

8. Glossary

Word	Definition
Age-friendly home	A home intended for older applicants
Affordable rent	Rent charged in line with affordable housing requirements.
Direct let	A home offered directly to an applicant rather than advertised through the usual lettings process.
Family home	A property suitable for a household with children or a larger family.
Manchester Move	Manchester's system for applying for social housing.
Registered provider	An organisation registered to provide social housing.
Relet	An existing home made available to a new tenant.
Rightsizing	Moving to a smaller or more suitable home that better meets the household's needs.
Social rent	Rent set using the national formula for social housing.
Succession	The legal transfer of a tenancy following the tenant's death.
Under-occupancy	Living in a home with more bedrooms than the household needs.