

Tenancy Policy

1. Aim

- 1.1. Onward Homes Limited (“Onward”) aims to meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of Tenancy Agreements or terms of occupation. In particular, we will meet the requirements of the Tenancy Standard of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, within the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023.
- 1.2. We will grant tenancies that are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of our housing stock.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy sets out our approach to issuing tenancies for rented properties across Onward. The policy applies to all general needs, older persons, supported, market rent and intermediate market rent properties.

3. Tenancy Types

- 3.1. To comply with the Tenancy Standard, the table below sets out the type of tenancies that we grant, the circumstances when they are used and timescales involved where applicable. Our approach is to offer tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability to tenants of Onward properties.

Tenancy Type	Circumstance used	Tenancy Agreement Length
Assured Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given to tenants who have been a Social Housing tenant prior to and since Section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 (1.4.12) came into force and have remained a social housing tenant since that date. 	Lifetime tenancy (generally for as long as the tenant requires it, provided they continue to abide by tenancy conditions).
Assured Tenancy for Market Rent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given to tenants who have applied for properties advertised by Onward on a market rent basis. 	Tenancies are monthly periodic tenancies, rolling over on the first day of each calendar month.
Assured Shorthold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onward is the leaseholder • Rent to Buy • Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (“RSAP”) tenancies 	These agreements may continue to be used in the limited circumstances set out until the abolition of Assured hold Tenancies is extended to the Social Housing Sector. At present the government are liaising with Regulator of Social Housing so that the Tenancy Standard can be

		updated. As a consultation is required for this the new system will be applied to social tenancies from October 2027.
Assured Tenancy with Protected Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tenants whose tenancy start date preceded a Local Authority/New Town stock transfer will have protected rights whilst they remain in their home or if they transfer into a new Onward property (even if the property has been designated an Affordable Rent property). 	Lifetime tenancy (generally for as long as the tenant requires it and provided they continue to abide by tenancy conditions).
Secure Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tenants where the tenancy start date preceded 15th January 1989 	Lifetime tenancy (generally for as long as the tenant requires it, provided they continue to abide by tenancy conditions).
Periodic Tenancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise use of specially adapted stock Make best use of stock or property types in high demand 	Periodic tenancy agreement length to be determined via relevant service level agreements.

3.2. In addition to the above, we may on occasions issue licenses in cases where the temporary occupation of a property is appropriate.

3.3. In accordance with section 154 of the Localism Act 2011, Onward will grant those who were social housing tenants on this day and have remained social housing tenants since this date, a tenancy with no less security than previously. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms). We will also grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.

4. Succession and Assignment

4.1. Succession rights are generally a statutory entitlement to a spouse/cohabitee/civil partner (and sometimes family members) in the event that the tenant dies. Such succession rights will be acknowledged by Onward when certain conditions are met, usually that the potential successor was living with the deceased tenant at the time of or immediately prior to the tenant's death. There may be additional contractual rights for spouse/cohabitee/civil partners and family members relating to succession within the deceased tenant's Tenancy Agreement and these will be considered. In most cases, only one succession will be permitted. Some Tenancy Agreements may allow for a second succession.

- 4.2. Onward will consider requests for discretionary succession, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members where the person is a member of the deceased tenant's family and they meet all of the following:
 - 4.2.1. Resided with the tenant for a minimum of 12 months preceding the tenant's death (6 months for Assured Tenants with Protected Rights) and occupied the premises as his or her principal home at the time of the Tenant's death:
 - 4.2.2. Is a suitable beneficiary of Onward's charitable objectives.
 - 4.2.3. Will agree in writing to abide by the terms of the tenancy.
- 4.3. Consideration may also be given to whether the premises are suitable in all other circumstances and succession may be refused if this is not the case.
- 4.4. Assignment is the transfer (passing on) of the tenancy to somebody else, whilst the tenant is still alive. Generally, assignment is prohibited without the consent of Onward and such consent will not be unreasonably withheld. However, assignment is restricted by the tenancy type and relevant clauses within the Tenancy Agreement.
- 4.5. Further detail on our approach to succession is set out in our Succession Policy.

5. Vulnerable Tenants

- 5.1. We will have a particular focus on ensuring that our tenancies provide a reasonable degree of security for those households considered vulnerable by reason of age, disability of illness and households with children.
- 5.2. Where a tenant has been identified as vulnerable, we will work with them to try and provide access to additional support to help them understand their tenancy. We will also provide services to support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.

6. Responsibility and monitoring

- 6.1. The Director of Neighbourhoods will be responsible for ensuring the policy is complied with.
- 6.2. This Policy will be reviewed every 2 years and as required by the introduction of new legislation, changes in regulatory standards, changes in the tenancy strategies produced by Local Authorities in the areas where Onward owns social rented properties or as a result of system audits.

Linked Documents	Tenancy Policy, Adaptations Policy, Neighbourhood Management Policy, Lettings Policy, Tenancy Fraud Policy, Mutual Exchange Policy, Vulnerable Customers and Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
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Policy lead:	Joanne Danaher, Director of Neighbourhoods
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