

MID-MARKET RENT ALLOCATION POLICY

Classification: Strategic

Status: Approved

Policy Lead:	Director Community Services
Last Review Date:	May 2024
Review Due Date:	May 2027
Review Period:	3 years unless required earlier due to changes in the law, regulation, best practice or requirement of the Association

REFERENCE PAGE

Document Title:	Mid-Market Rent Allocation Policy
Aim:	Provide housing for individuals or families who may not qualify for social housing and cannot afford private rented housing
Objective:	3 The Eildon Group will ensure the delivery of high quality, responsive and affordable housing and support services
Scope of Policy:	Customers
Nominated Officer:	Private Residential Tenancies Officer
Approval Source:	EEL
Procedural References:	MMR Procedures Scottish Letting Agent Code of Practice.
Consultation Completed:	Yes - Staff
Risk Implications:	2- Existing policy, substantial revision
Equalities Assessment:	Full/Partial or Not required
Accessibility:	Accessible electronically/online and in print. All documents can be translated and made available in audio, braille and large print versions upon request.
On the Website:	Yes

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INTRODUCTION

Eildon Housing Association, in partnership with Eildon Enterprise Ltd (its wholly owned subsidiary) provides quality homes to the mid-market rental (MMR) sector throughout the Scottish Borders.

In addition to managing MMR properties owned by Eildon, Eildon Enterprise Ltd provide a management service for MMR properties to other housing providers which will include marketing and allocating MMR properties based on this policy.

MMR properties are aimed at assisting people on low and modest incomes to access affordable rented accommodation who may not be a priority for social housing, and who would be unable to purchase property in the current market.

Where the applicant applying for a MMR property is not working, exceptions can be made where the applicant can evidence they have stable income, for example where the household includes a person with a disability in receipt of long term benefits and where they require to move home. In these cases, non-working benefits will be considered in assessing eligibility.

In certain circumstances the Scottish Government will offer grant funding to housing associations to provide housing for MMR as another affordable housing option to the market. Eildon may also buy-back properties which it will then re-let as MMR. In both cases the qualifying criteria will be the same.

Our marketing and allocation of MMR properties complies with the Scottish Letting Agent Code of Practice.

QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Applicants aged 16 years and above will be considered from MMR properties, subject to meeting the following criteria:

- The total household income meets the affordability threshold required to sustain the tenancy.
- Where the applicant is in employment, the total household income will not exceed £50,000 before tax.
- The applicant and their household will use the property as their permanent and only home.
- There is no requirement to have a local connection with the Scottish Borders.

All prospective tenants are assessed on their ability to afford and sustain a tenancy as part of the formal offer stage. We do not discriminate against an applicant based on the source of that income but do require evidence of sustainable income.

Prospective tenants are required to pay one month's rent in advance plus a deposit of one month's rent and set up a monthly direct debit. Rental deposits will be collected by Safe Deposit Scotland.

A waiting list for MMR properties is maintained and in the event of vacancies occurring, we refer to and allocate from that list in accordance with the above criteria.

If the number of applicants who fulfil the criteria exceeds the number of properties available, allocation will then be made based on the date of application and applicant most suited to the specific property.

REFERENCES

When an applicant has viewed a property and been made a provisional offer, we will seek a full tenancy reference using the services provided by the Scottish Association of Landlords. This may include references from current and/or former landlord and employers. If an unacceptable reference is received, the offer of tenancy will be withdrawn.

IDENTIFICATION

Photograph identification must be provided by all applicants prior to an offer being made. This must be in form of an up to date driving licence or passport.

MARKETING AND ALLOCATION

Available properties are advertised through our own website and social media. Other local advertising and "for let" signage in key locations is used where appropriate

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be subject to regular monitoring and review.

POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed three years from the date of approval, or earlier should the need arise to reflect changing circumstances or changes in legislation or good practice standards.