



Portus
Supported Housing

Policy Title: Lettings Policy

Version: 2.0

Review

Date of this review	Date of last review	Author(s)	Owner	Next review date
26.05.2026	30.10.2025	Sophie Hayward – Customer Director	Tom Hodgson – Managing Director	26.05.2029

Details of amendments

Version	Date	Update/ amendment detail	Resulting from
2.0	26.05.2026	Comprehensive rewrite of the Lettings Policy, including full operational detail, alignment with updated voids and lettings procedures, clarified roles and responsibilities and updated EDI commitments.	Full policy review incorporating new procedures, commissioner expectations, and organisational updates.

Approved by

Executive Team		18.08.2026
Committee		n/a
Board		n/a



1. Introduction

Portus Supported Housing (PSH) provides specialised supported accommodation for adults with a range of needs, including learning disabilities, mental health conditions, autism, physical disabilities, complex needs, and individuals requiring step-down or transitional support. This policy explains how PSH allocates and lets its homes in a fair, transparent, safe, and legally compliant manner. It ensures that decisions are based on assessed need, risk, suitability, and sustainability, and that homes are let efficiently to minimise void loss and maximise customer outcomes.

2. Purpose / Aim

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all lettings' decisions are made consistently and transparently, in accordance with legislation, regulatory standards, commissioner requirements, and internal procedures. It aims to ensure that customers are offered homes that are safe, suitable, and sustainable, and that PSH makes best use of its housing stock while supporting independence, wellbeing, and positive long-term outcomes.

3. Objectives

This policy aims to ensure that homes are allocated to those with the greatest housing and support need, that void periods are minimised, that decisions are defensible and compliant, and that customers are supported to sustain their tenancies. It also aims to strengthen relationships with commissioners and support providers and ensure that allocations reflect both individual need and the safe functioning of shared schemes.

4. Scope

This policy applies to all PSH properties, whether owned or leased, and covers all lettings, transfers, decants, and emergency placements. It applies to adults aged 18 and over, and to 17–18-year-olds where a guarantor or appointee is in place. It applies to all staff involved in allocations, risk assessment, tenancy setup, and void management.

5. Definitions / Key Terms

Supported Housing

Accommodation with care or support that enables individuals to live independently.

Nomination

A referral from a Local Authority, NHS commissioner, or contracted support provider.

Specialised Supported Housing (SSH)



Accommodation requiring commissioner approval and high-level or 24-hour support.

Risk Assessment

The process of assessing whether an applicant can safely and appropriately live alongside existing customers.

Unauthorised Occupancy

Any occupation not approved through PSH procedures.

Best Interest Decision

A decision made under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 where a customer lacks capacity.

6. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy complies with the following legislation and regulatory standards:

- Regulator of Social Housing – Tenancy Standard
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Localism Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Fire Safety Act 2001
- Regulator of Social Housing – Consumer Standards (2024), including the Tenancy Standard, Safety and Quality Standard, Neighbourhood and Community Standard, and Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard

7. Related Policies and Documents

- Voids Procedure
- New Customer & Lettings Procedure
- Safeguarding Policy
- Tenancy & Neighbourhood Policy
- ASB Policy
- Data Protection Policy

8. Policy Statement / Principles

This policy supports compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards



(2024), ensuring that lettings decisions are transparent, fair, well-evidenced, and enable customers to influence and understand how homes are allocated.

PSH allocates homes in a way that is fair, transparent, and based on assessed need, risk, and suitability. All decisions must be fully documented, evidence-based, and compliant with legislation, regulatory standards, and commissioner requirements. The lettings procedure must ensure that customers are placed in homes that are safe, appropriate, and sustainable, and that the needs of existing customers are considered when allocating shared accommodation.

Eligibility

Applicants must be aged 18 or over, or 17-18 with a guarantor or appointee. They must have a legal right to live in the UK and recourse to public funds. They must require supported housing and have a commissioned support package of more than minimal hours. Applicants must be able to sustain a tenancy with support and must not present unmanaged or unmanageable risk to others. SSH applicants must have commissioner approval before progressing.

Referral Routes

Referrals may be received from Local Authority commissioners, NHS commissioners, contracted support providers, Adult Social Care, or through internal transfer requests. All referrals must be submitted to the designated applications mailbox and logged on the housing management system to ensure a complete audit trail.

Assessment and Verification

All applications undergo eligibility checks, document verification, and a full risk assessment. The Customer Experience Team is responsible for gathering documentation, confirming eligibility, and completing the initial assessment. Missing information must be requested promptly, and applicants or representatives must be given reasonable opportunity to provide it. The Housing Officer reviews property suitability, local risks, and compatibility. The Regional Housing Manager makes the final decision to accept, refuse, or request further information.

Risk and Compatibility Assessment

Risk assessments must consider safeguarding concerns, historical tenancy behaviour, ASB or criminal history, financial risk, environmental and community risks, support needs, and property suitability. Compatibility with existing customers is essential in shared schemes and must be assessed carefully. Risk assessments must be factual, evidence-based, and clearly recorded. Where necessary, additional information may be requested, including care plans, but only where proportionate and justified.

Property Suitability Confirmation

In most cases, the support provider and commissioning body will identify a potential placement before submitting an application to PSH. Once an application is received, PSH will confirm whether the proposed property is suitable by reviewing the applicant's assessed needs, risk profile, support requirements, and compatibility with existing customers. This includes consideration of the physical layout of the property, any adaptations, the level of staffing available, and any scheme-specific requirements agreed with commissioners.

PSH will only approve a placement where the property is safe, appropriate, and capable of meeting the applicant's needs, and where the placement does not create unacceptable risks



for existing customers, staff, or the wider community. Where the property is not suitable, PSH will provide clear reasons and work with the support provider and commissioner to identify alternative options where possible. Sustainability and affordability must be confirmed before any tenancy is offered.

Support Requirements

Applicants must have a confirmed support package in place before a tenancy is offered. Support providers must confirm that they can meet the applicant's needs and that the placement is suitable. PSH will not offer a tenancy where support arrangements are unclear or insufficient.

Tenure Types

PSH issues Assured Shorthold Tenancies for most supported housing placements and Licence Agreements for short-term, transitional, or specific-commissioned services. Customers who are decanted due to works will retain equivalent security of tenure.

Transfers and Decants

Internal transfers require eligibility checks, risk assessment, and confirmation that the move is appropriate and sustainable. Transfers to a different property type require a new application. Decants will be managed in line with the relevant policy and procedure, and customers will retain equivalent tenure.

Refusals and Suspensions

Applications may be refused where eligibility criteria are not met, where risks cannot be safely managed, where compatibility concerns cannot be mitigated, where support arrangements are insufficient, or where commissioner approval is not granted for SSH placements. Applications may be suspended where information is missing or where further assessment is required. All refusals must be clearly recorded and communicated in writing, including reasons and appeal rights.

Appeals

Applicants may appeal a refusal within 28 days. Appeals must be reviewed promptly, and any new information must be considered. The final decision will be made by the Customer Director. All appeal documentation must be retained in accordance with GDPR.

Reasonable Adjustments

PSH is committed to providing reasonable adjustments to ensure fair access to the lettings process. This may include accessible communication formats, Easy Read documents, advocacy involvement, or adjusted processes for applicants with disabilities or communication needs.

Tenancy Sustainability

PSH will support applicants to prepare for move-in, ensure affordability, and understand their tenancy obligations. Settling-in visits will be completed within six weeks of move-in. Early tenancy risks will be monitored in partnership with support providers to promote long-term stability.



Links to Void Procedure

No property will be let until it has passed void inspection, met the PSH Minimum Void Standard, and completed all compliance checks. The Housing Officer and support provider must jointly confirm that the property is ready to let. Void escalation timelines apply where properties remain empty despite efforts to fill them.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

Board

The Board is responsible for approving this policy and maintaining oversight of how effectively it is implemented. It receives regular performance reports on lettings activity, voids, and tenancy outcomes, enabling it to provide strategic challenge and assurance that the lettings process is fair, compliant, and aligned with organisational priorities.

Executive Team

The Executive Team ensures that the organisation has the resources, systems, and governance arrangements required to deliver this policy. It is accountable for ensuring compliance with legislation, regulatory standards, and commissioner expectations, and for addressing any systemic issues identified through monitoring or audit.

Regional Housing Managers

Make final allocation decisions based on the full application pack, including risk assessments and Housing Officer feedback. They oversee escalations, such as long-term voids or high-risk placements, and act as the key link between PSH, commissioners, and support providers. Their role ensures that placements are safe, appropriate, and consistent with contractual and regulatory requirements.

Housing Officers

Carry out property inspections, confirm that void standards have been met, and assess the suitability and compatibility of proposed placements. They coordinate move-ins, complete tenancy sign-ups, and undertake settling-in visits to ensure customers are safe and supported. Their local knowledge and day-to-day contact with schemes are essential to ensuring that placements are sustainable and that risks are appropriately managed.

Customer Experience Officers

Manage the administrative and compliance elements of the lettings process. This includes receiving and acknowledging applications, completing eligibility checks, gathering documentation, preparing tenancy agreements, and submitting Housing Benefit claims. They ensure that all actions are recoded accurately and that applicants and referrers receive timely communication throughout the process.

Support Providers

Responsible for supplying accurate information about the applicant's needs, risks, and support arrangements. They work with commissioners to identify suitable placements before an



application is submitted and must confirm that they can meet the applicant's support needs within the proposed property. They play a central role in ensuring tenancy sustainment and in managing risks collaboratively with PSH.

Income Officers

Monitor rent accounts once the tenancy has begun, ensuring that Housing Benefit claims are progressing and that payment arrangements are in place. They work closely with Housing Officers and support provider to identify early signs of financial difficulty and to support customers in line with income procedures.

10. Risk Management

PSH will assess and mitigate risks for all applicants, considering safeguarding, ASB, community impact, and compatibility. All decisions must be recorded clearly and supported by evidence. High-risk cases must be escalated appropriately, and information sharing must comply with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

11. Training and Awareness

Staff involved in lettings will receive training on risk assessment, safeguarding, data protection, regulatory compliance, and supported housing practice. Training will be refreshed regularly to ensure consistent and compliant delivery.

12. Monitoring, Review and Compliance

PSH will monitor turnaround times, allocation outcomes, appeals, refusals, and compliance with procedures. CORE data will be submitted monthly. Internal audits will review the quality of assessments and documentation. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if required by legislative, regulatory, or organisational change.

14. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

PSH is committed to ensuring that every applicant is treated fairly, respectfully and without discrimination through the lettings process. All decisions must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and with PSH's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, ensuring that protected characteristics never influence the outcome of an application.

PSH recognises that some applicants may face additional barriers when engaging with housing processes. To support equitable access, reasonable adjustments will be offered wherever needed. This may include providing information in alternative formats, involving advocates,



adapting communication methods, or allowing additional time for applicants who require support to gather documentation. Any adjustments must be proportionate, clearly recorded, and designed to remove barriers without compromising safety or regulatory requirements.

Staff will remain sensitive to cultural, disability-related and communication needs when assessing applications, discussing risks, or explaining tenancy obligations. Decisions about suitability or compatibility must always be based on assessed need, risk and safety, rather than assumptions or stereotypes. PSH aims to create inclusive, safe and supportive environments where all customers can thrive.

