

**TOPIC:** East End Housing: Lettings Policy

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## **CONTENTS**

1. Introduction
2. Eligibility Criteria
3. Selection
4. Advertising / Offers
5. Deposit
6. Cancellation of Applications
7. Appeals Procedure
8. Equalities
9. Review

## 1. Introduction

East End Housing Development Company owns a selection of properties in Shettleston. This includes properties which are let as Mid-Market Rent (MMR) properties and East End Housing Owned properties, which are let in the private market. This Policy sets out how applicants will be assessed and prioritised for our Mid-Market Rent (MMR) properties and for our East End Housing Owned properties.

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

All applicants must be at least 16 years of age.

Mid Market Rent properties will be let to applicants that meet the eligibility criteria below

- Applicants will normally be employed, or have a formal offer of employment.
- Applicants must be on 'low to moderate incomes' with a gross annual income which is within a specified range, which will be approved annually by the East End Housing Development Company Board.
- We will not normally rehouse owner occupiers, unless there are exceptional circumstances which are preventing them occupying their present home e.g. threat of abuse or where the occupancy may endanger the health of the occupant and there are no alternative remedies available to the owner

Where joint applications have been submitted, at least one of the applicants must meet all the eligibility criteria. Income will be calculated as a 'household' – combining the salaries of all applicants who wish to be on the tenancy agreement. The total income must not be below or above the income thresholds set by the Board.

For new build MMR developments, a Lettings Plan will be approved by the Board prior to the allocation of the properties. This plan may include specific quotas around applicant types or housing need factors.

## 3. Selection

Applicants who meet our eligibility criteria will be placed on a list in date order. Where demand exceeds supply, we will ensure that lets are made in line with any Lettings Plan approved by the Board. Date order will then be used to prioritise applicants.

All properties have two bedrooms or less. There are no criteria around the size of household, which means that households will be considered for properties that will result in them having an extra bedroom.

Where possible we will try to accommodate the applicant's preference for property type or position. This will be particularly relevant when allocating several properties at a time in new build developments.

Applicants will be invited to complete an income and expenditure assessment before an offer is made. If there are concerns about whether an applicant can afford a tenancy then an applicant may be bypassed.

We normally request written references from current and former landlords. Applications will normally be cancelled and applicants will be considered ineligible as follows:

Reason	Period of time
The applicant has rent arrears or any other debts attributed to a current or previous tenancy.	Until debts are cleared
The applicant has perpetrated antisocial or criminal behaviour or breached their current or previous tenancy conditions within the last five years.	For five years from the date of the behaviour or tenancy breach
The applicant has provided false or misleading information or withheld relevant information.	For two years

#### 4. Advertising / Offers

Available properties will be advertised in line with the requirements of the Lettings Agent Code of Practice published by the Scottish Government.

Applicants selected will be contacted as soon as possible by telephone, text and/or email. Formal offers will be made by writing to the applicant. Applicants will be given three working days from the date of an offer letter to respond either by refusing the offer, or by making an arrangement to view the property. Failure to do so will result in the offer being withdrawn

An applicant must normally accept an offer within one working day of viewing the property, although this may be extended by a further working day in special circumstances. Failure to do so will result in the offer being withdrawn and recorded as a refusal.

#### 5. Deposit

All applicants who are made a formal offer of a property will have to pay a deposit equal to one month's rent prior to taking entry to their property, along with one month's rent in advance. Deposits will be transferred to the Scheme Administrator under the Deposit Schemes (Scotland) Regulations 2011.

Pets will not normally be allowed in our mid-market rent properties.

#### 6. Cancellation of Applications

Applications will be cancelled in the circumstance set out in paragraph 3.4. Applications will also be cancelled in the following circumstances:

- The applicant asks us to cancel their application;
- The applicant dies; or
- The applicant fails to respond to a review of the list or to other correspondence.

## **7. Appeals Procedure**

Applicants who are unhappy with the way their application for Mid-Market Rent has been dealt have a right to appeal. Appeals should be made in writing. A response will be provided by the Housing Manager or Senior Housing Officer.

## **8 Equalities**

We will not discriminate in the operation of this policy on the basis of age, disability gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We aim to promote equal opportunities and comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## **9. Review**

This policy will be reviewed on a five yearly basis from the date of implementation, which will be the date the policy is approved by the East End Housing Development Company's Board, or earlier if deemed appropriate.