

**Self-Assessment against the Tenancy Standard
July 2019**

Outcome	Evidence	Gaps	Action to be taken/ Local offer
REQUIRED OUTCOMES			
<p>1.1 Allocations and mutual exchange 1.1.1 Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and Potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:</p> <p>a) make the best use of available housing</p>	<p>Homes are fully occupied where possible and let in accordance with the sub regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL), Tyne and Wear Homes.</p> <p>Local Lettings Plans are used where appropriate and are agreed with and monitored by Newcastle City Council (NCC) to ensure fair and equitable access to housing.</p>	None	<p>BCT have actively contributed to the review of the Tyne and Wear Homes CBL scheme.</p> <p>An action plan has been developed and will be delivered during the course of 2019/20.</p>
<p>b) are compatible with the purpose of the housing</p>	<p>All properties are allocated to make best use of the stock.</p> <p>All vacancies are advertised on the Tyne and Wear Homes website.</p> <p>Adapted properties that become available are let in accordance with housing need and medical requirements, making best use of recycling adaptations.</p>	None	<p>As above.</p> <p>BCT are currently carrying out CCVs this includes a task to identify adapted properties so that we can hold a register and ensure all adaptations are serviced in accordance with regulations.</p>
<p>c) contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities</p>	<p>All BCT vacancies are advertised through Tyne and Wear Homes, which is the CBL scheme for Tyne and Wear.</p> <p>BCT aim to create sustainable tenancies and have introduced a pre tenancy assessment that will identify any risks to tenancy, particularly concerning affordability.</p> <p>BCT also adhere to the NCC pre action protocol to ensure that appropriate support has been offered prior to taking any enforcement against a tenancy.</p>	None	<p>As above.</p>

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d) There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.	The Allocations and Lettings Policy has a clear appeals process should anyone be unhappy with any decisions made. Applicants are assessed in line with housing need. Properties are advertised and shortlists are transparent.	None	As Above.
1.1.2 Registered providers shall enable their tenants to gain access to opportunities to exchange their tenancy with that of another tenant, by way of internet-based mutual exchange services.	<p>BCT tenants have access to the Tyne and Wear Homes CBL scheme.</p> <p>This includes a web based system used to support the exchange of homes, both internally within BCT and locally with other landlords in the Tyne and Wear Homes scheme. This is a free service to customers.</p> <p>BCT has a mutual exchange policy and procedure in place.</p>	None	As Above.
<p>1.2 Tenure</p> <p>1.2.1 Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.</p>	Tenancy types are offered suitable to the needs and requirements of individual. Offers of accommodation are made in line with making the best use of BCT stock.	None	
1.2.2 They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.	BCT offers two tenancy types; BCT Assured Shorthold (Starter tenancy), BCT Assured Tenancy.	None	

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SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS			
<p>2.1 Allocation and mutual exchange</p> <p>2.1.1 Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements.</p>	<p>All vacancies are through the Tyne and Wear Homes Allocations Policy of which NCC are the lead partner.</p> <p>The allocation of homes may include offers of accommodation to a proportion of homeless household and others in housing need as defined by the Housing Act.</p> <p>BCT meet regularly with NCC Fairer Housing Unit and Housing Options Service to ensure that properties are allocated in accordance with NCC requirements.</p>	None	<p>BCT continue to meet regularly with NCC Fairer Housing Unit and Housing Options Service. BCT continue to monitor the allocation of properties to ensure that the required 75% of properties are let in accordance with the stock transfer requirements.</p>
<p>2.1.2 Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants, and will offer choices to them.</p>	<p>The introduction of the pre-tenancy risk assessment ensures that where under occupation is allowed tenants are not financially excluded or unable to meet their housing cost.</p> <p>Households overcrowded in their home are supported via the Tyne and Wear Homes Policy to move to alternative suitable accommodation, often within the BCT stock given the availability and variety of good quality stock available.</p> <p>This helps to maintain sustainable communities.</p>	None	
<p>2.1.3 Registered providers' published policies shall include how they have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations,</p>	<p>The Allocations and Lettings Policy sets out how BCT works sub-regionally through the Tyne and Wear Homes CBL scheme to streamline the rehousing process for customers. This includes criteria for housing need, qualification and eligibility reasons.</p>	None	<p>Allocations and Lettings Policy to be included in website refresh.</p>

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mobility or mutual exchange schemes.			
2.1.4 Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.	<p>All written literature can be translated into community languages.</p> <p>The Tyne and Wear Homes IT systems are accessible through language selection, Dixarit Speaking Tool and have the ability to change font size and background colour.</p> <p>BCT also offers a translation service for customers.</p>	None	
2.1.5 Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.	<p>Re-let performance is monitored by BCT Executive Team, BCT Board and the Customer Scrutiny Committee. BCT aim to achieve the median level of re-let performance in comparison to the housemark peer group.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Housing Officers have re-let target times and weekly monitoring meetings are held with the Head of Housing and Communities.</p>	None	<p>Following an audit of Void Management some changes have been made in the procedures to reflect recommendations.</p> <p>Void costs exceeding £3,000 must be approved by BCT Technical Services Manager or Director of Property and Development before they can proceed.</p> <p>BCT Technical Services Manager will carry out an inspection of a minimum of 10% of completed void properties to ensure the work meets the lettable standard and has been carried out to a good standard of workmanship.</p>

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2.1.6 Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.	CORE is used to record all allocations activity within the BCT area.	None	
2.1.7 Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options.	<p>The Tyne and Wear Homes website has an online Housing Options site which gives tenants a Personal Plan that details what advice, support and accommodation is available to them. This is also supported by BCT's Neighbourhood Housing Officers and Customer Service Advisors.</p> <p>Through the pre tenancy assessment process, BCT are also able to provide advice relating to the best affordable options for applicants.</p>	None	
2.1.8 Registered providers shall subscribe to an internet based mutual exchange service (or pay the subscriptions of individual tenants who wish to exchange), allowing:			
a) a tenant to register an interest in arranging a mutual exchange through the mutual exchange service without payment of a fee	The Tyne and Wear Homes Partnership includes all Registered Providers who have accommodation in the area. All have access to the Tyne and Wear on-line mutual exchange scheme. There are no fees charged for this service.	None	<p>The Tyne and Wear Homes Mutual Exchange Scheme has been reviewed as part of the wider review of the CBL Scheme.</p> <p>BCT have contributed to this review and findings will be shared with partners during 2019/20.</p>
b) the tenant to enter their current property details and the tenant's requirements for the mutual exchange property they hope to obtain	Tenants are able to enter their requirements into the Tyne and Wear Homes online mutual exchange scheme.	None	As above.

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c) the tenant to be provided with the property details of those properties where a match occurs	Tenants are able to access property match information.	None	As above.
2.1.9 Registered providers shall ensure the provider of the internet based mutual exchange service to which they subscribe is a signatory to an agreement, such as HomeSwap Direct, under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange services.	The Tyne and Wear Homes Partnership includes all Registered Providers who have accommodation in the area. All have access to the Tyne and Wear on-line mutual exchange scheme.	None	As above.
2.1.10 Registered providers shall take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) to which it subscribes to its tenants.	As above.	None	As above.
2.1.11 Registered providers shall provide reasonable support in using the service to tenants who do not have access to the internet.	<p>A weekly list of property adverts is made available at the BCT reception desk.</p> <p>BCT also offer support to assist customers in accessing on line services.</p> <p>BCT have also invested in training and hardware (Learn my Way) for a number of tenants who offer peer support for those tenants who do not have access to the internet.</p>	None	BCT to continue to support 'Learn my Way' in order to increase the number of tenants who can offer support to others in accessing on line services.

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<p>2.2 Tenure 2.2.1 Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:</p>	<p>BCT have a number of policies in place specifically designed for the management of tenancies, and tenancy sustainment.</p> <p>BCT undertake pre- tenancy work to assist in achieving sustainable tenancies.</p>	None	An updated Tenancy Fraud Policy will be presented to Audit and Risk Committee during 2019/20.
a) The type of tenancies they will grant.	<p>BCT offers two tenancy types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCT Assured Shorthold (Starter tenancy) • BCT Assured Tenancy 	None	
b) Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms.	<p>As above.</p> <p>BCT do not offer fixed term tenancies.</p>	None	
c) The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type.	All BCT properties are let in accordance with the Allocations and Letting Policy and in line with Tyne and Wear Homes. The aim is to provide choice, address housing need and make best use of stock.	None	
d) Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period.	As above.	None	
e) The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property.	As above.	None	

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f) The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term.	As above.	None	
g) Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability.	As above.	None	
h) The advice and assistance they will give to tenants on finding alternative accommodation in the event that they decide not to grant another tenancy.	BCT would make a referral to the NCC Housing Options Service and would support tenants to find alternative accommodation.	None	
i) Their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members.	<p>All homes within BCT are let in line with the Allocations and Lettings Policy. The aim of this policy is to provide choice, address housing need and make best use of stock available.</p> <p>BCT would assess all succession rights individually, taking into account the requirements of the Housing Act.</p>	None	

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2.2.2 Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years, or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period.	As above.	None	
2.2.3 Before a fixed term tenancy ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or that they propose to end the tenancy.	As above.	None	
2.2.4 Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these shall be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review.	Probationary tenancies are in place for 12 months and would only be extended where there was an appropriate reason such as rent arrears, ASB etc. Tenants have the opportunity to appeal decisions relating to the extension of a tenancy.	None	

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2.2.5 Where registered providers choose to let homes on fixed term tenancies (including Under Affordable Rent terms), they shall offer reasonable advice and assistance to those tenants where that tenancy ends.	BCT would make a referral to the NCC Housing Options Service and would support tenants to find alternative accommodation.	None	
2.2.6 Registered providers shall make sure that the home continues to be occupied by the Tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant tenancy agreement, for the duration of the tenancy, allowing for regulatory requirements about participation in mutual exchange schemes.	All homes within BCT are let via Tyne and Wear Homes Allocations and Lettings Policy. The aim of this policy is to provide choice, address housing need and make best use of accommodation available.	None	
2.2.7 Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.	<p>BCT have introduced pre-tenancy support to ensure tenants are able to sustain tenancies.</p> <p>BCT have adopted a pre-eviction protocol that ensures all necessary support is offered to tenants prior to any enforcement action being taken.</p> <p>Annual customer care visits are completed to identify any needs of tenants and assess the condition of property.</p> <p>Appropriate mechanisms are built into income management processes and ASB processes to avoid unnecessary evictions.</p>	None	

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<p>2.2.8 Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 comes into force, and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).</p>	<p>All tenancies are let in accordance with legal requirements and via the Allocations and Lettings Policy. The aim of this policy is to provide choice, address housing need and make best use of accommodation available.</p>	<p>None</p>	
<p>2.2.9 Registered providers shall 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.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>None</p>	

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