

Tenancy Management Policy

1.0 Introduction and scope

1.1 This document covers our policy on tenancy management and outlines the rights customers have to make tenancy changes. It highlights the procedures required to create sustainable tenancies. This toolkit covers the following areas:

- Tenancy Fraud
- Right to Rent
- Starter Tenancy
- Mutual Exchange
- Assignment
- Succession
- Relationship Breakdown
- Housing Advice: Homelessness
- Tenancy Fraud, Abandonment & Unlawful Occupation
- Terminating Tenancies
- Improvements Procedure
- Right to have a Lodger
- Right to Sublet
- Home Ownership
- Tied Accommodation
- Mortgage Rescue Properties

1.2 The scope of this Policy covers:

Gentoo Group	X
Gentoo Homes	

Gentoo Developments Ltd	
Gentoo Genie	

It applies to:

General Needs rented properties	X
Supported Housing	X
Sheltered Housing	X
Leasehold/Shared ownership	X
Rent to Buy properties	X
Market rented properties (domestic)	X
Temporary Accommodation	X
Stock owned but not managed by the Group	
Communal Areas, including those relating to Leasehold/Shared Ownership properties	X
Commercial Property (offices, depots etc)	
Stock managed by Gentoo on behalf of a third party	
Garages and outbuildings	X
Remote plant (district heating, electrical pumps etc)	
Curtilage	X

2.0 Links to organisational goals

- 2.1 Our Vision and Values set the direction and culture of the Group. They ensure that the business is aligned around the desire to create sustainable homes and communities and to improve the lives of our customers. The Vision and Values ensure that all of our people understand Gentoo's ethos and are clear about what is expected of them and the contribution they can make.

Vision:

Great Homes - Strong Communities - Inspired People
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Values:

Do the right thing
Make a difference
Work together
Keep learning
Give all you've got

2.2 This Policy operates within our Vision and Values.

3.0 Regulation and legislation

3.1 The Policy takes into account the following Legislation:

- Matrimonial Causes Act 1973
- Matrimonial Homes Act 1983
- Children Act 1989
- Family Law Act 1996
- Housing Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1988
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Protection From Eviction Act 1977
- Criminal Law Act 1977
- The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013
- Part 55 of the Civil Procedure Rules 1998
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

3.2 The Policy has been cross referenced with good practice and the CIH Manual.

3.3 Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Regulatory Framework

The Tenancy Standard includes the following outcome which Gentoo must achieve:

‘Registered Providers (RPs) 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. They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.’

The RSH specific expectations with regard to tenure are:

‘RPs shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions.’

‘Where RPs 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.’

4.0 Our Policy statement

4.1 In order to deliver an effective tenancy management service we have developed a Tenancy Management Toolkit which highlights our approach to providing an efficient service which reflects legislation, regulation and good practice. We are committed to ensuring that our customers understand that they have rights and responsibilities when they hold a tenancy with Gentoo.

4.2 We use Starter tenancies, which are a good tool that enable us to provide support to those who need it in the beginning stages of their tenancy. We also use starter tenancies as part of our drive to prevent customers building up

unsustainable arrears. We will regularly contact our new customers to ensure they are managing their tenancy successfully.

- 4.3 We will monitor that all of our tenants keep to the terms of their tenancy agreement, and take appropriate action to resolve any breaches effectively. Tenancy breaches could result in legal action (see legal remedies). Where a customer requires it, we will provide them with a number of support options to help them maintain a tenancy with us i.e. referral to our money matters team.
- 4.4 Tenancy and Neighbourhood Management each have their own toolkit. Tenancy management focuses on managing the tenancy, in terms of customer rights, for example Succession, Assignment, Mutual Exchange, and Right to Improvements. Neighbourhood management focuses on managing neighbourhoods and the quality of our estates and the environment, in addition to ensuring that customers are aware of their responsibilities and adhere to them.
- 4.5 Effective management of the customer's rights is necessary to ensure that everyone can live safely and sustainably in their homes. It is important that we ensure that all sections of the community in which we work have equal access to our services, and that our services are relevant, responsive and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future customers. We will treat all of our customers fairly whilst valuing diversity. We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity throughout the organisation and aim to:
- Meet the needs and choice of people from all backgrounds
 - Ensure that our services are relevant, responsive and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future customers
 - Ensure that all sections of the community in which we work have equal access to our services
- 4.6 Our Tenancy Management Toolkit will ensure that customers will be treated as individuals and with fairness and respect.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 The Head of Operations (South) will have overall responsibility for this Policy and Toolkit.

6.0 Monitoring & Review

- 6.1 The Policy will be fundamentally reviewed in 3 years' time by the Policy Team, or in line with business need. Executive Director (Operations) is accountable for ensuring implementation of the policy effectively. The Business Assurance team will monitor this policy every 3 years in line with the audit plan. We have inbuilt checks into these procedures so that members of staff can monitor that processes are being followed.
- 6.2 Any proposed changes or recommended amendments to this Policy will be reported to the executive director for comment prior to implementation.
- 6.3 The Local Service Offers can be found in Appendix 1.

7.0 Policy Outcomes

- 7.1 Our policy aims to achieve the following outcomes:
- Ensure excellent performance in housing management, preventing rental loss, whilst taking account of this policy and toolkit.
 - Create sustainable tenancies and communities by supporting customers and allowing persons whom are eligible to succeed and assign.
 - Reduce the number of empty properties through tenancy sustainment.
 - Ensure all customers are treat fairly and consistently.
 - Tenants are well informed about their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of any breach.
 - Properties which are well managed and maintained.

- Ensure we provide a consistent approach across all of our neighbourhoods.
- Provide support to those who need it in the beginning stages of their tenancy.

8.0 Records

8.1 Records relating to tenancy management are kept in the appropriate location this may include, Orchard, Apex updates, Streetwise and relevant databases.

9.0 Vulnerability

9.1 It is important that vulnerability is considered throughout our tenancy management procedures.

9.2 It is imperative that all staff check for UDC's prior to taking any action to ensure the specific needs of each customer are considered throughout.

Appendix 1 Local Service Offers

Description	We will
Tenancy Management - to ensure you are aware of your rights and responsibilities in relation to your tenancy and appropriate management of those tenancies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide you with timely information specific to your tenancy• Offer advice and support to help you sustain your tenancy• Be members of and actively promote a mutual exchange scheme