

VOIDS AND ALLOCATIONS PROCEDURE



MONITORING INFORMATION:

POLICY/PROCEDURE/STRATEGY:

DATE APPROVED:

EXPIRY DATE:

OWNER:

APPROVAL ROUTE:

VOIDS & ALLOCATIONS PROCEDURE

JANUARY 2026

JANUARY 2029

INCOME & LETTINGS MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Voids & Allocations Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This procedure will give the appropriate guidance to teams when dealing with notices to terminate tenancies, void repairs and the lettings process including advertising properties, allocating homes, decision making and dealing with requests for reviews.
- 1.2. To ensure effective management of void properties, a weekly Void meeting is held with members of each team and involved residents.
- 1.3. There is a glossary of terms at the end of the document.

2. Dealing with a Notice

- 2.1 All tenants are required to give four weeks written notice starting from a Monday to end their tenancy. The only exceptions to this are when a tenant has died or is doing an internal transfer to another one of our properties. In these situations, we can accept a minimum of two weeks' notice.
- 2.2 Internal transfer tenants will not be charged for the 2 weeks' notice period.
- 2.3 Where the tenancy is fixed term joint tenancy, we can only accept notice if both tenants agree to give notice.
- 2.4 When we are informed of a tenant wishing to give notice, we will aim to arrange a pre-void property inspection to be completed with them within 48 hours of notification. If the tenant is unable to attend a PVI within the required timescales, the Customer First Team should discuss whether the notice should start from a later date. The tenant can write / email in giving us notice in writing.
- 2.5 Lesser notice periods or a surrender of the tenancy may be accepted at the discretion of the Communities & Compliance Manager, Independence & Wellbeing & OT Services Manager or Head of Communities in exceptional circumstances. An example might be where either a surrender or abandonment is suspected. When determining if a shorter notice period or surrender should be accepted, the focus should be on preventing rent debt from accruing.
- 2.6 If a tenant requires an extension to their notice period, then this can be agreed if there is no rent debt on the rent account and they are able to pay up front for the additional weeks rent. An email needs to be sent to the notice group to make them aware.

- 2.7 The relevant information will be logged onto CX in order to ensure all departments are aware that notice has been received and relevant internal processes can commence.

3. Property Inspections (Pre-Void Inspections)

- 3.1 We will aim to carry out a pre-void inspection within 48 hours of being notified of a tenant's intention to give notice. This appointment will be carried out by Templer HomeBuild and the Community Housing Officer / Hub Co-ordinator when available.
- 3.2 The representative from Templer HomeBuild will be given information to give to the tenant at the inspection, which will include a formal termination letter confirming the notice dates, a termination of tenancy form to be signed by the tenant, and our Leaving Your Home leaflet.
- 3.3 The representative from Templer HomeBuild will have a conversation and agree with the tenant any re-chargeable works that they will be charged for if they are not remedied prior to the end of the tenancy.
- 3.4 While at the property, we will check for alterations or improvements carried out without Teign Housing's consent. If any are found, we will inform the tenant of their liability to rectify the alterations at their own cost. If an improvement is identified that we wish to accept, we will consider making a payment under our Compensation Policy and the Right to Improve.
- 3.5 The representative from Templer HomeBuild will return the signed documents from the pre-void inspection to Teign Housing as well as updating the Asset Characteristics in Civica CX, to ensure that all properties can be advertised correctly, and we have the legal signed paperwork.
- 3.6 Where there has been no access for an agreed PVI, Templer HomeBuild will notify the Customer First Team who will re-arrange and inform the 'notice' group by email.
- 3.7 Options appraisals should be considered for properties that are difficult to let, present potential for redevelopment, or are affected by construction-related issues or structural defects. Where such properties are unlikely to offer long-term value for money, we will assess the viability of retaining them and these should be highlighted by the representative from Templer HomeBuild to the Head of Strategic Asset & Development Appraisal periods will be deducted from the void period. Templer HomeBuild will provide repair cost estimates to inform the appraisal process in line with the Acquisitions & Disposal Policy.
- 3.8 Properties highlighted as needing an options appraisal should not be advertised until the outcome of the options appraisal is confirmed. The 'notice' group should be

updated in relation to this. Following the pre void inspection the representative from Templer HomeBuild will identify works required to meet the re-let standard and consider whether any planned or component replacements such as kitchens or bathrooms should be done while the property is void.

4. Key Management

- 4.1 Keys should be returned by the vacating tenant by 10am on the next working day from when the tenancy ends. If the keys are not returned by 10am the Customer First Team should attempt to make contact to confirm the reason for delay. If no contact or arrangement can be made and the keys are not returned the property should be visited by the Community Housing Officer or Hub Co-ordinator on the same day where possible but no later than 2 working days to establish if the tenant has vacated and the locks should be changed. If the tenant has not vacated the property a Notice to Quit will be served.

5. Tenancy Terminations

- 5.1 The Agreement should be terminated in CX once the keys have been received.
- 5.2 If the keys are not returned as agreed, rent will still accrue, and the tenancy will not be terminated until the Sunday of the week the keys are returned. Customer First Team will inform the tenant or executor of this when they take the initial notice. Where a lock change is arranged following occupancy checks (4.1 above) on the Monday, the tenancy will be terminated from the Sunday as planned.
- 5.3 In the case of evictions, the tenancy will be terminated once possession has been obtained. Confirmation will be provided by the team dealing with the eviction.

6. Advertising available homes

- 6.1 At least 75% of our available homes should be advertised through the local CBL scheme, up to 25% may be offered as direct matches (Management Moves) (see section 15 below).
- 6.2 All adverts must be on the CBL system by close of business on a Monday in order to be advertised on the Wednesday of the same week. Bidding closes midnight on Monday. The CBL newsletter will be circulated to the Housing Team every week.

- 6.3 Local Connection – As per the CBL scheme, preference to those with a local connection to the relevant local authority will be applied if we exceed 2% of allocations being allocated to cross border moves. We are notified by the CBL when these preferences should be applied.
- 6.4 Where there is a Section 106 or Local Lettings plan properties will be advertised clearly as having further local connection criteria. A copy of the wording from the Section 106 or Local Lettings plan will be included within the advert, in line with CBL procedure. If there is a possibility that the property could be adapted, we will give as much information as possible when advertising the property, regarding the access and potential for adaptations and not restrict the bidding to those with specific needs to ensure everyone can bid on the property.

7. Older Persons Housing

- 7.1 When advertising Older Person's housing, the adverts will confirm that we will only consider applicants aged 55 years.
- 7.2 Some older person schemes have planning restrictions with a higher age requirement, and this should be checked prior to advertising to ensure that planning restrictions and covenants are not breached.
- 7.3 The age criteria for a specific older people's property may be lowered where there are exceptional circumstances, provided this would not breach planning restrictions or covenants, it would not cause housing management issues and that the successful applicant needs enhanced housing management services.
- 7.4 When we have a 2-bedroom older people's property, we will allow those with a 1 bedroom need to bid, however priority will be given to those with a 2-bed need. When applying preferences, the advert must state the preference applied. e.g. "preference to applicants with a 2 bed need".

8. Applying preference on adverts

- 8.1 We can give additional preference for certain types of applicants when advertising homes to address a specific and/or urgent housing need. This may be done in the following circumstances with agreement of the Income & Lettings Manager, Communities & Compliance Manager or Head of Communities.

- **Transfer Tenants** – Preference for transferring tenants may be given if there are known applicants who have an exceptional need or have been waiting a long time for an appropriate move. This does not guarantee those applicants will be successful and still gives an opportunity for other social housing tenants to transfer within social housing.
- **Under-Occupiers** – We can advertise homes giving preference to downsizing tenants if we are aware of tenants who may be interested in the property.
- **Larger Households** – Where we have larger homes with a dining room that could be used as a bedroom, we can advertise with preference to applicants with households that maximise the occupancy space available. For example, a 3-bedroom home (2 x doubles & 1 single) with a dining room (single bedroom size) could be advertised giving preference to maximum occupancy (in this case 6 persons) and opening up the bedroom need restrictions to allow those with a 4 bed need with a maximum of 6 persons in the household, as demand for these size properties is high and there is a limited number of these properties becoming available.
- **Homelessness** – In order to assist the local authority to discharge homeless duties, we may advertise properties with a preference to homeless applicants. This will be driven by current demand in co-operation with the local authority.
- **Adapted Homes** – Properties that have major adaptations and have level access or maximum 3 steps access will be prioritised to those applicants who have a need of such adaptations. We may decide to direct match properties to applicants who we know have a need for an adapted property. We may also prioritise a household that would under-occupy the property if they have a need for the adaptations, this will be subject to an affordability check and approval from the Head of Communities.
- **Tenancy Fraud** – Where evidence provided by the local community has resulted in us addressing tenancy fraud and getting the home back, we may advertise the home giving preference to applicants within that community.
- **Sensitive lets** – where there are tenancy management issues within a certain area the Community Housing Officer, or Hub Co-ordinator can request a void property is advertised with a sensitive let, with a view to reducing further issues and obtaining a good balance of tenants within the area.

This is not an exhaustive list and other preferences may be applied with the agreement of the Head of Communities and in conjunction with the CBL partnership.

9. Allocations Process

- 9.1 Shortlisting should be carried out at the earliest opportunity and the CBL scheme shortlisting procedure will be followed.
- 9.2 If we cannot speak to the successful applicant, we will leave a message giving them 24 hours to contact us. If we do not have contact within the given time frame, we will skip their application and move on to the next.
- 9.3 We will have regard for any communication needs specified in their application before skipping, for example by contacting a named contact or contacting via email.
- 9.4 Applications should be checked against the CBL policy and procedure and our own.
- 9.5 **Code of Conduct** - Any applicants with links to Teign Housing employees or Board members or that of other CBL scheme partner local authorities or landlords will need to be notified to the Income & Lettings Manager. All employees involved should act within our Code of Conduct. The Income & Lettings Manager will ensure that appropriate employees are involved in the allocation process for that applicant and will seek the necessary Senior Management or Board approval.
- 9.6 Applicants known to be Schedule 1 Offenders and/or managed by MAPPA should be referred to the Communities & Compliance Manager or Independence & Wellbeing Manager. They will seek the necessary risk assessments before proceeding with the allocation further and giving approval for the allocation to proceed.
- 9.7 **Initial Verification** - Once a successful applicant has been identified, contact should be made to complete initial verification checks. This will involve checking the following:
 - There have been no changes in circumstances on their application form.
 - They are eligible for social housing (e.g., immigration status).
 - They are aware of the property details, are happy it will meet their needs and still wish to continue the process.
 - They can move within the expected timescales.
 - They can pay the required rent in advance.
 - They do not have any rent arrears or owe other outstanding monies to their current landlord.

- Confirm that they do not have any history of anti-social behaviour in the last 2 years
- If a bid has been placed on an adapted property, the applicant can evidence the need for the types of adaptations the property has.

9.8 **Proofs** - Applicants will be required to provide proof of current address, proof of income & savings, local connection (if required) and photographic ID. If applicants cannot provide adequate proofs or ID this should be discussed with the Income & Lettings Manager for a decision. Consideration should be given to individual circumstances and cultural factors that may affect the ability to provide proofs and photographic ID.

The applicant will be sent details of what they can expect from the allocations process. What we expect of them as a tenant and what they can expect from us. This document is currently called Welcome to Teign Housing and is produced as a SWAY document.

9.9 **Viewing** – Unless in exceptional circumstances, all applicants will have an in person viewing of the property they have applied for. Wherever possible they will also be sent a virtual viewing prior to the in person viewing. Templer HomeBuild will be notified of the viewing date and time. The applicant is expected to be able to attend a viewing within 3 days of the property being ready to view. If void works are being undertaken, we will ensure the applicant is aware of this and advise that no children under the age of 18 attend and that suitable footwear is worn. If there is a question over whether the property is suitable for an applicant in relation to their mobility needs, we can refer the matter to our internal Occupational Therapist to ensure suitability and sustainability of the property. Alternatively, if the applicant already has their own Occupational Therapist, we will make arrangements for them to view the property to confirm suitability.

9.10 **Pre-Tenancy Interview** - The applicant will need to be available to complete a pre tenancy interview within a reasonable timescale. They will be required to complete relevant documentation and provide proof's requested via our Panconnect system prior to telephone pre tenancy interview. Where an applicant has particular vulnerabilities, support needs or limited digital skills the PTI will be completed in person usually at Millwood House.

- 9.11 **Rent in Advance** - Applicants will be expected to pay rent in advance. Where they are in receipt of full housing benefit the requirement will be 2 weeks rent in advance. If they are paying fortnightly in line with the tenancy agreement the requirement will be two weeks in advance. We will allow tenants to pay less frequently than fortnightly however if they chose to do this, they will be asked to pay rent in advance to pay up until their first payment date. This will not normally exceed 1 months' rent.

If they are unable to pay the full rent in advance, then a minimum of 2 weeks will be required, and we must be satisfied that they are able to make a further payment before their account falls into arrears.

In exceptional circumstances lesser rent in advance may be accepted with approval by the Income & Lettings Manager.

During the allocation process the applicant will be sent a draft version of the tenancy agreement they will be signing and given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

The applicants' affordability will be checked by our Head Start Team at an Affordability appointment. The purpose of the affordability check is to ensure the rent liability can be met, the tenant has sufficient funds to be able to sustain a tenancy, and to agree how and when rent payments will be made to ensure the tenant does not fall into rent arrears. The applicant's eligibility for the New Home Grant is also assessed at this appointment.

Teign Housing will not usually refuse applicants on affordability grounds however there may be some instances where this needs to happen. These instances will usually be due to the applicant being impacted by the under-occupation charge or being a mixed age couple. Where the applicants have applied for an affordable rented property, we will ensure that the total cost of rent is not over 40% of the household's total income - if it is we can refuse them for the affordable rented property and give advice regarding social rented tenancies.

- **Tenancy Reference** – We will try to obtain a tenancy reference for all applicants from their current landlord and/or previous landlords if their current tenancy has been held for less than one year. It may not be possible to obtain references for all applicants, for example where they have not held a tenancy before or if they have

not held a tenancy for some time. Some private landlords may refuse to provide a reference or not provide one in a timely manner. This should not adversely affect an applicant.

- **Sign up** – Applicants must be available to sign up for the property, within 48 hours of the property being ready to let, however exceptional circumstances will be considered, for example, if an applicant requires support by a support worker who may not be available. We will not hold properties for applicants. If they cannot move in straight away, we could allow them to sign the tenancy, and pay the rent in full until they can move in. This must be agreed by the Income & Lettings Manager, and they would be expected to move in within 2 weeks of signing the agreement.
- **Applicants under 18 years of age** – We will consider applicants over 16 years however they will be required to nominate a suitable agency prepared to hold their tenancy in trust and to be guarantor for the rent until they turn 18. A support package will need to be in place to ensure the terms of the tenancy are complied with. The tenancy will be held in trust until the applicant reaches 18 years of age.
- **Existing Tenants** – Prior to any move, all existing tenants are required to undergo a property inspection. In order for the allocation to proceed, the total value of any re-chargeable items identified shall not exceed £250.00, exclusive of on-costs such as administration fees and VAT. Exceptions to this requirement may only be granted under exceptional circumstances and with prior approval. In cases where the tenant is downsizing, associated costs may be offset through downsizing assistance.

10. Rent and other debts

10.1 Applicants or any household members owing rent or other tenancy related debt to Teign Housing or any other social or private landlord will be refused a property unless:

- they can pay off the debt in full immediately.
- they have kept to an agreed payment plan for at least the last 13 weeks, and we are satisfied that they have substantially reduced the debt.
- they are eligible for downsizing assistance that will cover the debt.
- the move will prevent severe financial hardship and further debt accruing.
- they can evidence an entitlement to benefit that will cover the debt.
- there are exceptional circumstances around how the debt accrued.

- there are exceptional circumstances around need.

- 10.2 If rent arrears or other monies owing have been written off, we can consider refusing the allocation.
- 10.3 Where the applicant's household has rent debts and/or other debts with Teign Housing the Lettings Co-ordinator should consider the above taking into account the amount owed and how long ago it accrued and refer it to the Income & Lettings Manager for consideration.

11. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Unacceptable Behaviour

- 11.1 We will normally refuse applicants if a member of the household has been found guilty of ASB in the last two years as defined in our ASB Policy and Procedure. We may also refuse applicants who have been guilty of ASB more than 2 years ago if the ASB was severe.
- 11.2 Examples of guilt are convictions, evidence of ASB from their current or former landlord or admittance of guilt.
- 11.3 Where an applicant has recently been released from prison, we will require supporting information from professionals working with the applicant and support plans in place to ensure we are satisfied they are able to sustain a tenancy and pose no risk to the local community.
- 11.4 We gather information about applicants and their household by looking at the Devon Home Choice application, the information provided at a pre tenancy interview, tenancy references provided by landlords and publicly available information such as using an internet search.
- 11.5 If we believe the applicant is withholding or misleading us in relation to ASB we may make an exchange of information request to the Police in accordance with the Information Sharing Protocol. We will not hold properties whilst this takes place, but applicants will have the right to request a review of the decision. Once this information is gathered, we will determine if the applicant's or member(s) of the household are guilty of ASB in the last two years.
- 11.6 We may consider some applicants who have been guilty of ASB in the last two years in some circumstances and at the discretion of the Communities & Compliance Manager or Independence, Wellbeing & OT Services Manager. Circumstances might include but is not limited to drug related incidents where they have been engaging with support and no further incidents have occurred.

- 11.7 Applicants, or members of their household, may be refused housing if they have demonstrated unacceptable behaviour during the allocation process. Such behaviour will be taken into account where it is assessed that:
- There is a significant risk to our ability to manage the tenancy successfully, or
 - The applicant may have a detrimental impact on the surrounding community.
- Unacceptable behaviour is defined in our **Contact Management Policy and Procedure**. Any decision to refuse housing on these grounds will be subject to approval by the **Head of Communities**.
- 11.8 We can refuse previous tenants of Teign Housing if during their previous tenancy with us they poorly managed their tenancy examples being, refused access for safety inspections, non-engagement with the housing team, poor condition of property / garden.

Consideration should be given to the length of time since they were a former tenant and any significant changes in circumstances since. If the applicant has since held a successful tenancy for the last 2 years consideration will be given to accepting them. Any refusal on these grounds needs to be approved by the Communities & Compliance Manager.

Decisions made in relation to ASB and unacceptable behaviour will be done so in conjunction with the Communities & Compliance Manager or Independence and Wellbeing & OT Manager.

12. Tenancy Sustainment

We are committed to ensure that all of our new tenancies are sustainable, and that relevant help and support is in place to assist with this.

- 12.1 To ensure tenancy sustainment and to prevent rent debt, all applications will benefit from an affordability meeting. This will include where needed a check to ensure they are receiving the correct amount of benefits, the review of an Income and Expenditure form alongside bank statements to ensure the new budget it's realistic. We will also check to see if the applicant may be eligible for any grants to assist with the move and a check will be completed to see if we can assist them via our New Home Grant.

- 12.2 The tenant will be advised during this appointment of the rent in advance required, and ongoing payment arrangement.
- 12.3 Where vulnerability is identified the Head Start Advisor will ensure that a vulnerable person CRM case is raised in CX.
- 12.4 The Head Start Advisor will monitor the tenancy closely for the first 12 months of the tenancy, assisting with utility queries, benefit applications, monitoring rent accounts etc. The Head Start Advisor will also make referrals to specialist agencies for example money management organisations, South West Water etc
- 12.5 Where it is identified that an applicant requires support from a third-party agency to sustain their tenancy, information regarding the support which will be in place during and after their move must be agreed prior to the allocation being approved. If this cannot be confirmed we will consider declining the applicant for this particular allocation, however we will consider allocating to a future property when support can be confirmed. Any decline for this reason will be agreed with the Communities & Compliance Manager.

Consideration should also be given to other potential risk factors, for example, there may be a known drug user within a block of flats, and the incoming applicant may be engaging with support agencies regarding a drug issue so this may not be the most suitable location for the applicant. There may be known ASB in close proximity to the property which may not be a suitable environment for a vulnerable applicant. In these instances, we may refuse the applicant for a particular property, but they will be free to bid on other Teign Housing properties.

13. Decision Making

Once all available information has been gathered the Lettings Co-ordinator will make a decision regarding the allocation.

- 13.1 If the Lettings Co-ordinator has any concerns in relation to an allocation these concerns should be discussed with the Lettings Team Leader and referred to Income & Lettings Manager. A summary of concerns should be documented and saved on file confirming the final decision. If we refuse an applicant for housing, we will notify the applicant by telephone where possible and follow up in writing explaining the decision we have taken and their right of review. We will also update the CBL system as appropriate.

- 13.2 All documentation around decision making and financial assessments should be saved in the relevant applicants or tenant folder.
- 13.3 When a decision has been made to approve an allocation to someone the Lettings team know are vulnerable or they may have concerns about the conduct of the tenancy, they will advise the Head Start Advisor (New tenants) who will add them onto the People at Risk register to ensure their tenancy is reviewed on a regular basis with the view to ensuring correct support and if necessary tenancy related issues are addressed in an appropriate and timely way.

14. Direct Matches (Management Moves)

- 14.1 Our Allocations Policy permits us to allocate up to 25% of our homes by making direct matches ("Management Moves") to suitable applicants. It's important that we allocate the majority of our homes through the CBL as this ensures fairness and transparency. Where possible we will only direct match where the property has not already been advertised via the CBL scheme or where we have been unsuccessful in letting it via the CBL scheme. The exceptional circumstances that we will consider a direct match include:-

- Where we have exhausted the CBL process or where the property is significantly adapted for people with disabilities,
- Where a household is in use and occupation of one of our homes following a succession and needs to move to a different home, e.g. as the home is too large for their needs;
- Where a home is significantly adapted and we can match to an existing tenant whose needs match the property
- Where a property is required for disposal or demolition and the tenant therefore needs to be offered a new home;
- To reduce the impact of high-level anti-social behaviour on vulnerable tenants and a direct match will enable this to happen without delay
- Following a complaint or review of an allocation decision being upheld;
- Where a tenant who has a high need to stay in a particular area for support needs and properties infrequently become available there
- Where a move is needed for major repair work to be done to the tenant's home and a temporary move would be inappropriate;

- Where in a sheltered scheme, a property becomes unsuitable for the tenant due to mobility reasons and a more suitable property on the same scheme becomes available.

14.2 All direct match requests should be made by the Communities & Compliance Manager or Independent Living & OT Manager, and all direct match requests need to be approved by the Head of Communities & Estates.

14.3 All direct match moves will be reported on the CBL system.

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15. Difficult to let properties – Also see Appendix 1

15.1 A property is classed as DTL if it falls into one of the following two categories:

- The property has been advertised and no bids, or no eligible bids, are placed.
- The property has been advertised and the shortlist has been exhausted. Refer to the DTL Process in Appendix 1.

16. Right of Review

16.1 All applicants have the right to request a review of the decision we make about their application for housing with us. Requests should be:

- made in writing (including emails)
- addressed to the Director of Customers & Communities
- received no later than 14 calendar days after the notification date (notification date is taken as 5 working days from the date of the refusal email/letter)

16.2 Attention should be given to the communication needs of the applicant and assistance with a letter/email should be provided if required and they can also be directed to Citizens Advice.

16.3 A request should be acknowledged within 5 working days explaining the following:

- that properties will not be held vacant during the review
- who will be dealing with their review
- when they can expect an outcome

16.4 All reviews will be dealt with by the Director of Customers & Communities or another Director if the Director of Customers & Communities has been involved in the original decision or is unavailable to respond with the timescales.

- 16.5 The review should consider the following:
- If the CBL policy and procedures have been followed correctly
 - If our Allocations Policy and Procedure have been followed correctly
 - If there are any exceptional circumstances that were not considered or have now come to light
- 16.6 The review may involve additional meetings with the applicant, staff involved in the allocation process and/or reviewing additional evidence.
- 16.7 The outcome of the review should either be “upheld” or “not upheld” and should be provided to the applicant within 28 working days of the original request. If a longer time is required, and is appropriate, this will be agreed with the applicant.

17. Recording and Monitoring

- 17.1 New tenancies should be entered onto CX as soon as possible after the sign up has been completed.
- 17.2 A Change of Tenancy (COT) report is generated weekly by CX for tenancies commencing the preceding week. This should be circulated to relevant internal colleagues
- 17.3 CoRE (Continuous Recording) Reporting – we are required by our regulators to complete basic anonymous details regarding every letting that we do so that lettings can be monitored nationally. The Lettings Co-ordinator is responsible for completing CoRE submissions for all re-lets.
- 17.4 All new tenants will be contacted to complete a new tenant satisfaction survey (Welcome Call) and questions asked in relation to satisfaction with the lettings process and the property. Responses to this are collated and reported by the monthly balanced scorecard.

Glossary of Terms

CBL	Choice Based Letting (Currently Devon Home Choice)
DTL	Difficult to Let
Void	Empty Property
Cx	This is our Housing Management System – Civica Cx
Disposal	Where a property is to be sold
Demolished	Where a property is to be demolished
Options Appraisal	A review of the properties use and future potential
S106	This is a planning agreement which sets out who the properties should be allocated to.
TDC	Teignbridge District Council
LLP	Local Lettings Plan
MAPPAs	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements

APPENDIX 1 – Difficult to Let Process (DTL)

1. From previous bidding knowledge, we have an awareness of which properties may be DTL. However, for all applicants to have the opportunity to express an interest in a property, all properties should be advertised for one lettings cycle unless a direct match has been approved.
2. Where no successful applicant can be identified after the property has been advertised on DHC the following process should be followed
 - TDC will be notified to identify whether they have any applicants that they wish to put forward for housing and they will need to advise us within 24 hours.
 - If the above is not successful the property should be advertised, using other methods of advertising, including 'available now' on the CBL system, Gumtree etc. In these instances, we will allocate the property on a first come first served basis.
 - If alternative methods of advertising are still unsuccessful, then we will look to re-advertise the property on DHC after having reviewed the eligibility criteria as detailed below.
3. **Options Appraisal for DTL Properties**
 - When there are several DTL properties in one location, such as an older people's scheme or a particular street, an Options Appraisal may be carried out to assess the future viability of retaining the properties within the Housing Stock. Outcomes may include remodelling of properties, re-designation to different client groups, disposal to other social landlords or demolition.
 - Re-designation should only be considered where there are multiple properties deemed to be DTL (e.g., on an older person's scheme), or where the location/size or other similar circumstances affect the ability to let the properties.
 - Re-designation will only be pursued following agreement by the Senior Management Team.
4. **Eligibility Criteria for re-advertising a DTL Property.**
 - Each advertised property has distinct eligibility criteria which either allows or disallows an applicant to place a bid for the tenancy. When a property

becomes DTL and is to be re-advertised, the eligibility criteria may be altered as suggested below:

- **Age Criteria** - the age criteria may be lowered for older people's properties where this would not breach planning restrictions or covenants, it would not cause housing management issues and the applicant needs enhanced housing management services. This should be reflected when re-advertising.
- **Occupancy Criteria** - where a group of properties have previously been refused on size, the property may be advertised for smaller households, where affordability has been established.

5. Additional Incentives

- In some circumstances, if a DTL property is accepted upon viewing but the payment of dual Housing Benefit is unavailable, consideration might be given to a rent credit period of one week in order to facilitate the allocation. The applicant must sign the tenancy agreement at the earliest opportunity (to accept responsibility for the keys and the property) but the rent-account will be credited for one week. This option will be agreed by the Income & Lettings Manager and Head of Communities, in exceptional circumstances where all other options have been explored and discounted.