

Allocations Policy for Homes

Policy statement

We are a registered provider of social housing and a registered charity whose mission is to house and support vulnerable veterans within our Supported Housing stock. Stoll will offer properties to those in greatest need of our accommodation, according to our eligibility criteria. Stoll will ensure that we meet any relevant statutory and regulatory responsibilities, whilst being committed to ensuring that properties are offered to potential customers in a transparent, fair, customer focused and timely manner. The policy aims to help us make the best use of our housing stock to meet the housing and support needs of vulnerable veterans.

1. Purpose

This policy details the ways in which our homes are let, who we house, the eligibility criteria and other relevant information

- 1.1. To ensure that applicants can access clear information on how to apply and obtain housing from Stoll.
- 1.2. This policy outlines the approach to the provision of housing and support to vulnerable veterans to enable them to work towards moving on into independent living where possible.
- 1.3. This policy also applies to housing made to veterans nominated or referred by local authorities, housing associations and partner agencies and properties let to internal transfer applicants.
- 1.4. Ensure the allocations process is fair and transparent.
- 1.5. To maintain and sustain communities at sites where we house tenants
- 1.6. work in cooperation with local authorities and other partner organisations to allocate properties appropriately.

2. Principles

The guiding principles for allocations at Stoll are:

- Openness, fairness and efficiency
- To enable beneficiaries to move onto independent living where possible
- Affordability
- To provide a positive experience for customers, through excellent communication, efficient ways of working and clear outcomes
- Adherence to Stoll's Equality & Diversity principles
- Assessment of priority on the basis of need
- Sustainability of our Supported Housing schemes, including financial and community sustainability
- Cooperation with local authorities in meeting needs of vulnerable veterans
- Suitability of properties to meet the needs of individual households

- To allow for flexibility to enable us to meet demand or urgent/specific needs that are identified for example, homelessness, victims of hate crime and domestic abuse, demolition or redevelopment
- To ensure long term organisational viability
- Adherence to the Regulator of Social Housing regulatory standards. If there are any variances between this policy and individual tenancy agreements, then the tenancy agreement takes precedence.

3. Terms and Definitions

We define 'vulnerable veteran' as:

Having served or completed basic training in the British Armed Forces or Reserve Forces or the Merchant Navy under Arms **and**

Having support needs due to physical disability and/or mental health issue or other vulnerability **and**

Having need for social housing or alternative social housing.

We define "vulnerable" as being any condition or circumstance that puts a veteran at risk of losing their home, or any situation which, without support or intervention, places them at risk of abuse, neglect or causes detriment to their overall wellbeing.

4. How We Let Homes

- 4.1. Stoll will offer an agreed percentage of vacancies to each local authority in accordance with any Nomination Agreement.
- 4.2. Stoll will allocate properties to internal transfer requests based on level of priority.
- 4.3. There may also be circumstances where a local letting plan may take precedence over this policy, such as estate regeneration, re-development, or a new housing scheme. Please see our Decant Procedure.
- 4.4. When a property becomes available for letting, a decision is made regarding how to let the home. This decision will be based on whether the property is:
 - 4.4.1. Subject to a nomination agreement.
 - 4.4.2. The appropriate level of support can be provided.
 - 4.4.3. A local lettings plan is in place.
 - 4.4.4. Required for priority move transfer.

5. Who We House

- 5.1. Vulnerable veterans as defined above, with the greatest need.
- 5.2. Widow, widower, civil partner of a deceased veteran with support and social housing needs as defined in item.3.
- 5.3. The application can include members of the veteran's household.
- 5.4. Remaining family member or household member of a deceased veteran, in line with our tenancy and succession policy.
- 5.5. Where capacity exists and in accordance with the Memorandum of Association of the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation, any other person who is disabled, vulnerable or infirm and in housing need.

- 5.6. Stoll operates a one offer policy. In exceptional circumstances and where the applicant and Stoll agree that the offer may not be suitable, one further offer may be made subject to application re-assessment.

6. Eligibility Criteria

- 6.1. Our lettings are subject to verification of applicants' service, identity, support needs, housing needs, risk assessment, and affordability to ensure that all tenancies are sustainable. We reserve the right to carry out our own checks, conduct needs and risk assessment and decline applicants or seek further information or assurances before offering a tenancy to any applicant who we believe to be needing our services.
- 6.2. We may decide, on a case-by-case basis and where there are exceptional circumstances, to house an applicant who does not meet the eligibility criteria with approval from the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Housing and Services Committee.
- 6.3. We will consider the following applicants to be ineligible for a property:
- 6.3.1. Applicants who provide false or misleading information in relation to their application.
 - 6.3.2. Applicants who own or have a legal interest in a property anywhere in the UK or abroad.
 - 6.3.3. Applicants we have served with a Notice due to a breach of tenancy, unless we no longer consider the Notice to be valid – a Notice served for rent arrears will not be considered valid where the tenant has repaid their arrears.
 - 6.3.4. Applicants who we have obtained a Possession Order against, unless the order is for rent arrears and they have repaid their arrears, or the order is for another breach of tenancy, but we are no longer pursuing legal action.
 - 6.3.5. Applicants who have an outstanding debt with us, excluding a debt which is the result of Housing Benefit payments being made in arrears, or where the applicant is maintaining an agreement to repay this debt for a period of not less than 6 consecutive months.
 - 6.3.6. Any applicant who is subject to legal action by another landlord on the grounds of a serious breach of tenancy, such as anti-social behaviour or action under the Environmental Protection Act – this includes service of a formal Notice including but not limited to a Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit.
 - 6.3.7. Applicants who owe rent arrears to another landlord, unless they are taking reasonable steps to repay the debt and can demonstrate that those steps have been maintained for a period of 6 months.
 - 6.3.8. Any applicant who has perpetrated anti-social behaviour within the last two years or who has an unspent conviction for serious crime against a person.
 - 6.3.9. Applicants who have been convicted of violent or sexual offences where we are not provided with full access to their Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement assessment and other relevant data.
 - 6.3.10. Stoll reserve the right to refuse an applicant we believe has the means to achieve suitable housing and support elsewhere. We will adopt the income cap as specified by the government in their policy

statement on social housing which is currently set at £60,000 per annum per household.

- 6.3.11. Applicants who do not provide evidence to confirm they have the means to pay the rent (including eligible service charges) at the point of letting – this requirement may be waived where an appropriate third party or agency has agreed to guarantee or underwrite the rent liability.
- 6.3.12. Applicants with support needs which we are unable to meet.
- 6.3.13. Applicants with property needs which we are unable or unlikely to be able to meet due to current stock levels.
- 6.4. We will cancel any application which has been suspended for 12 consecutive months.

We reserve the right to reject or suspend an application where an applicant is deemed ineligible by the above criteria. External applicants who are assessed as ineligible for one of our homes will be signposted to other agencies who may be able to help. Stoll may also use an independent referee to undertake checks .

7. Special Circumstances

- 7.1. We may expect applicants to start a tenancy whilst waiting for adaptations to take place, if the property is habitable and the tenant can safely live in the property.
- 7.2. Where homes have been built, or adapted to be accessible to people with disabilities, we will allocate these to people with similar needs wherever possible to make best use of these homes.
- 7.3. We may consider a “sensitive let” is required in certain circumstances where we will impose restrictions on who can move into a property, in order to maintain sustainable communities. This may be because of ongoing anti-social behaviour, the vulnerability of the potential tenant, environmental issues, or where the new or current resident could pose a risk to their neighbours which will aid in maintaining sustainable communities.

8. Assessment Criteria

- 8.1. All applicants meeting the eligibility criteria will be assessed across housing need, support need, and level of risk.
- 8.2. Housing need points will be allocated as follows.

Housing Needs	Points
Staying with Family/Friends	30
Hostel/Temporary Accommodation	30
Medical condition that directly affects your ability to live in your home	75
Medical Assessment identifying need	75
Pending Homelessness	100

- 8.3. Stoll will offer housing and support to those applicants assessed as low and medium needs across support needs and level of risk, and with a housing score applied as above.
- 8.4. The support scoring threshold will take into account the scoring used by statutory bodies and other supported housing providers.
- 8.5. The support scoring threshold is as follows: *

Support Needs	Service delivery model	Score Range
None	Staff available for informal support with maintaining the tenancy - No formalised process of support	30
Low	Low Needs: - No staffed based on site - Visiting support by appointment-ad hoc support- Tenants engaged in a formalised support planning and risk assessment process. Assessment of risk to self or others “medium to low”	18-29
Medium	Staff available Monday to Friday 9pm – 5pm - some lone working - Staffing includes access to enhanced and/or specialist support - Tenants engaged in a formalised support planning and risk assessment process. Assessment of risk to self or others “medium to low”	14-18
High	High Needs: - Staffed 24/7 - Staffed with double cover at all times - Staffing Structure includes specialist roles (Mental Health/Substance Misuse) - Tenants engaged in a formalised support planning and risk assessment process – Has no blanket exclusions based on support need	Under 18

* based on Riverside definition for Supported Housing

- 8.6 Stoll will offer housing and support to those applicants assessed as having low and medium needs. Stoll recognises that some sites will have mix of low and medium needs, and the service delivery model of each site will reflect this.
- 8.7 A quota will be applied to all schemes ensuring sustainable communities, and Stoll reserves the right to vary these as required:

Support Needs	Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions /Kings Road Park	Banstead Court; Countess of Wessex House; Chiswick War Memorial Homes	Centenary Lodge
	Quota	Quota	Quota
No needs	0%	0%	0%
Low	75%	75%	75%
Medium	25%	25%	25%
High	0%	0%	0%

9. Appeals

- 9.1. An applicant can appeal the decision on whether they are added to Stoll's housing waiting list within 15 working days of the assessment decision, if they can show using documentary evidence not previously supplied that they meet the eligibility and property needs criteria.

10. Waiting List

- 10.1. Stoll's Housing Waiting List will be monitored on a quarterly basis to establish a continued need for housing and support
- 10.2. Where we do not receive a response from an applicant, their application will be suspended.

11. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- 11.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it continues to meet the stated purposes and take account of good practice developments.

12. Legislation and Regulations

- Due regard has been given to the Equality Act 2010.

Approval and Review

The form below is designed to ensure that all of Stoll's policies remain 'live' and also confirm to the high levels expected of Stoll around areas such as equal opportunities, beneficiary involvement and continuous improvement.

The lead on each policy should retain this form and keep it updated in order to feed into the ongoing review process of all policies. When presenting a new or existing policy for sign off by the SMT or the Trustee Board the completed policy review form must be presented.

Date of last Review	
Date of Next Review	May 2027
Approved By SMT	01/05/24
Approved by HSC	17/05/24
Tenant Consultation	N/A
Policy Owner	Director of Tenancies/Housing
Policy Authors	Adeline Abbam, Janet Smith, Claire Bendall
Consultation	Adeline Abbam; Janet Smith Tani Sullivan, Claire Bendall, Bernice Walters, Sue Suther, SMT, HSC.

Version Control

Date	Author	Version	Details of Review
09/06/24	Claire Bendall	11	Amendments following HSC
07/2024	Claire Bendall	10	Amendments following workshop
05/2024	Claire Bendall	9	Amendments following HSC
05/2024	Claire Bendall	8	Amendments following SMT
04/2024	Claire Bendall	7	Amendments
03/2024	Claire Bendall	6	Amendments
02/2024	Adeline Abbam	5	Feedback Amendments
02/2024	Adeline Abbam	4	Final Draft
11/2023	Adeline Abbam	3	Reviewed in line with Fulham site partial sale
07/2022	Janet Smith	2	Unprompted review
11/2020		1	Board approved policy