

Responsibility:	Head of Empty Homes and Allocations
Approved by:	Director/Executive Director/ET/Board
Approval Date:	April 2023
Review Date:	April 2026



(Minor amendments made on 11 October 2024 as authorised by Executive Director of Customer Experience: All references to 'Decant Policy' changed to 'Temporary Moves Policy' and numbering amended).

Priority Move Policy (formerly Management Move Policy)

Summary
Your circumstances can change due to specific life events or for health reasons. When this happens, your home may no longer be suitable for your needs and you may need our help. We'll always try to help you to find a solution that's right for you. This policy explains the circumstances in which you would qualify for a Priority Move to another Moat home.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 If your home is no longer suitable for your needs or you're not able to continue living in your home, we're here to help. When you contact us, we'll try to help you find a solution that works for you.
- 1.2 You may qualify for a 'Priority Move', where we help you move to another Moat home as quickly as we can, if:
 - You can no longer live safely in your home and we, or a statutory body (such as the police or local authority), has assessed your situation as 'high risk'
 - You can no longer live healthily in your home – because, for example, of reasons related to age, disability or health.
 - Your circumstances have changed, specifically:
 - The main tenant has died and we've told you that you'll have to move
 - You're living in a Moat supported housing home and no longer need supported housing.
 - We need to carry out major repairs or upgrade works to your home or block which will mean that you need to move out permanently or for a period of six months or more.

2. Scope

- 2.1 You can only qualify for a Priority Move if you have one of the following tenancy types (if you're not sure if you do, we'll be happy to clarify):
 - Assured Shorthold
 - Assured Non-Shorthold
 - Secure
 - Fixed Term tenancy

- 2.2 Shared owners and customers in market, intermediate and discounted rent homes cannot qualify for a Priority Move but you're welcome to contact us to discuss other options.
- 2.3 If you need to move due to regeneration or redevelopment, or so that we can carry out emergency repairs to your home, any move is covered separately by our Temporary Moves Policy.
- 2.4 We work closely with local authorities across Essex, Kent, London and Sussex. We help them by offering our homes to people in need on their local housing lists. If you qualify for a Priority Move, we'll always aim to ensure you're prioritised over any other customer, but we must do this in accordance with local nomination agreements.

3. Enabling Priority Moves

- 3.1 A Priority Move is just one housing option available to customers in emergency and high priority situations. We'll also help you to consider other options, such as applying to the local authority or mutual exchange initiatives. We'll also work with other housing providers to see if they can help.
- 3.2 So that we can consider your eligibility for a Priority Move, we'll ask you for information from organisations such as the police, social services, local authority, or your doctor. If we need to ask them to provide any information, we'll ask your permission first.
- 3.3 Once we have all the information we need, we'll let you know in writing (or by your preferred communication method if different) that you will now be considered for a Priority Move. We'll then let you know as soon as a suitable home becomes available. The length of time this takes will depend on the area and type of housing you need.
- 3.4 Let us know if your situation changes. If you're still waiting after three months, we'll offer to help you to assess whether other rehousing options may offer you a better solution. We'll keep doing this at least every three months until we find a solution.
- 3.5 The homes that we offer will generally be on a 'like for like' basis – For example, we'll offer you a two-bedroom flat if you're currently in a two-bedroom flat, although if we can, we may offer you a larger property if this would solve an overcrowding issue. We may offer you a smaller home that meets your needs if this would be more affordable for you.
- 3.6 Where several customers require Priority Moves in the same area, we'll offer the home to the person in most need (as judged by us) first. Where this isn't clear, we'll offer the home to the customer that has been waiting the longest.
- 3.7 If you qualify for a Priority Move, we'll make only one reasonable offer to you – A reasonable offer is an offer of the tenancy of a home that will meet your current needs in terms of location, tenure, size, floor level and accessibility (where relevant). If you refuse a reasonable offer without a valid reason, we may remove you from the Priority Move list. Any decision to offer you a tenancy of another home will be at our discretion.
- 3.8 If you have rent arrears with us, this will not be a barrier to you moving, as long as you agree to pay these off as part of your new tenancy.

4. Appeals

- 4.1 We're committed to working in a fair and transparent way. If you don't agree with a decision we've made, we'll consider your concerns in line with our Complaints Resolution Policy. We will not hold any homes vacant pending the outcome of an appeal.

5. Impact Assessments

- 5.1 Equality Impact Assessment – to be agreed by the Executive Director
- 5.2 Data Protection Assessment – to be agreed by the Executive Director

Appendix

Link to Corporate Strategy
This policy helps us to deliver the following aspects of our Corporate Strategy: • Keeping customers safe in our homes is at the heart of the decisions we make. • We work with our key stakeholders and partners to ensure our homes meet local need and increase our impact in our key communities
Definitions
• Us” “We” “Our”: Refers to Moat. • Priority Moves: This is where we help a Moat customer to move to another Moat home as quickly as we can because they need to move urgently and meet the criteria set out in this policy. • Nomination agreements: A signed agreement which says how the local authority and registered providers of social housing must co-operate and work in partnership to help people in housing need and to prevent homelessness.
Linked Policies
This policy links to a number of other Moat policies including: • Tenure Policy • Letting our Homes Policy • Income Collection Policy • Temporary Moves Policy • Anti-Social Behaviour Policy • Domestic Abuse Policy • Change of Circumstances Policy • Mutual Exchange Policy • Renewable Fixed Term Tenancy Management Policy • Housing of Potentially Dangerous Offenders Policy • Rechargeable Repairs Policy • Housing Dangerous Offenders Policy Other relevant documents include: • Individual local authority nomination agreements and Local Lettings plans.
Legislation
• Housing Act 1988 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/50/contents • Localism Act 2011 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/7/chapter/1 • Equality Act 2010 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
Customer Engagement
We have consulted with our Customer Advocates in the formation and approval of this Policy. We have accepted all of their changes, with one exception. This was to move the definitions to the start of the Policy which would require agreement to change the Policy template.