

Draft Tenancy Strategy 2024

Summary Document and
Frequently Asked Questions



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Draft Tenancy Strategy 2024

Summary Document and Frequently Asked Questions

This document summarises the draft Tenancy Strategy and provides brief answers to some frequently asked questions.

1. Strategies and policies

This table shows how the Tenancy Strategy sits alongside our other housing-related strategies and policies:

Strategies and Policies				Explanation
Council Plan				Sets out an ambitious agenda to become the best Council for a borough that is greener, safer and fairer
Housing Strategy				Sets out our strategic housing vision and commitments and supports the delivery of the Council Plan
Housing Allocation Scheme	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy	Tenancy Strategy	Key Worker & Intermediate Rent Housing Policy	Housing-related strategies and policies sitting under the Housing Strategy
Grenfell Rehousing Policy	Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy & Placement Policy	RBKC Tenancy Policy	Key Worker & Intermediate Rent Tenancy Policy	
Grenfell Settled Home Policy	Private Rented Sector Offer & Final Accommodation Offer Policy			
Wider Grenfell Rehousing Policy				
Lancaster West Estate & Bramley House Local Lettings Plan				

2. Why do we need a Tenancy Strategy?

The Localism Act 2011 requires Councils in England to publish a Tenancy Strategy setting out the matters which social housing providers in its borough should consider when writing their own policies on:

- The types of tenancies they grant
- The circumstances in which they will grant a particular type of tenancy
- Where they grant a tenancy for certain terms, the lengths of the terms
- The circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy when an existing tenancy comes to an end.

Social housing providers includes the Council as well as housing associations/private registered providers. This Strategy therefore applies to the Council and the other social housing providers in the borough. The current Tenancy Strategy was published in 2013 and needs to be refreshed.

3. What is the difference between a Tenancy Strategy, a Tenancy Policy and a tenancy agreement?

The Tenancy Strategy sets out our expectations for social housing providers in the borough when setting their own Tenancy Policy – including when they will grant certain types of tenancies and how they will decide to grant another tenancy when an existing one ends.

A social housing provider's own Tenancy Policy must have regard to the Council's Tenancy Strategy and set out the above considerations.

A tenancy agreement is a contract between a tenant and their landlord, which sets out certain rights and responsibilities.

4. What are the key priorities in the draft Tenancy Strategy?

Priority 1: Lifetime tenancies are the preferred option in the borough

- The Council has committed to granting tenants lifetime tenancies rather than fixed-term tenancies – fixed-term tenancies are typically for five years, although they can be for a minimum of two years in exceptional circumstances.
- We encourage social housing providers to grant lifetime tenancies rather than fixed-term tenancies because we believe that lifetime tenancies provide a home for life, and the security and peace of mind we know that residents want.

Priority 2: Residents are supported to live in their homes for as long as it remains suitable

- Social housing providers should arrange for support to be provided to tenants where appropriate (including vulnerable households) to help them sustain their tenancies.
- Social housing providers should make the best use of the housing stock in the borough and help tenants to move to an alternative home in a planned way if their current home becomes unsuitable for them, or if they wish to move to free-up an in-demand home.
- The Council has created the post of Registered Provider Relationship Manager and established the Registered Provider Strategic Group to strengthen its

relationship with social housing providers in the borough – so that good quality housing and services are provided to our residents.

Priority 3: Social housing providers take a proactive approach to preventing homelessness where they decide to end a tenancy

- Social housing providers should have clear policies and procedures in place for reviewing a tenant's circumstances prior to their fixed-term or starter tenancy coming to an end – and for assessing whether the tenant will be offered a further tenancy.
- Where a social housing provider decides to end a tenancy, they must take a proactive approach to preventing homelessness – they should support the tenant to access the help they need to prevent a crisis situation.

Priority 4: Residents understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to their tenancy, appeals and complaints

- We believe that residents should be able to clearly understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to their tenancy agreements – and how to appeal certain decisions and make formal complaints.
- Whilst the vast majority of tenants do not commit tenancy fraud, we encourage social housing providers to take action to prevent and tackle tenancy fraud where this does occasionally happen so that homes can be let to those who genuinely need them.

5. How will the Tenancy Strategy be delivered and monitored?

The Strategy will be delivered and monitored in partnership with social housing providers in the borough. The Registered Provider Strategic Group will ensure that this Strategy is being implemented and will monitor compliance with it.

6. How can I have my say on the draft Tenancy Strategy?

The Council is carrying out a formal six week consultation on the draft Tenancy Strategy. We welcome feedback and comments on the draft Strategy, which we will consider before the Strategy is finalised. There is an online survey which can be completed.

Details of the consultation and survey can be found on our Consultation and Engagement Hub: consult.rbkc.gov.uk.