



## **Tenancy Management Policy**

<b>Date submitted to Operations Committee:</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b>
<b>Policy to take effect from:</b>	<b>June 2018</b>
<b>To be reviewed:</b>	<b>June 2021</b>
<b>Version No.</b>	<b>1.1</b>

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### **Introduction**

This policy sets out the type of tenancies granted by EPIC and our overall approach to tenancy management.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- To create and sustain successful tenancies.
- To clearly set out how we manage newly-created tenancies.
- To ensure that customers are clear about their role in making their tenancy a success.
- To comply with the 'Tenancy Standard' published by our regulator.

### **Policy Statement**

Our approach is based on empowering people to make choices that result in successful tenancies. Sometimes this will mean the customer will be supported by other agencies to achieve a successful tenancy. Where external support is not appropriate, we will agree a series of steps with customers to provide the best prospect of tenancy success. These steps will be formalised in a Tenancy Management Plan which is agreed between EPIC and the customer, and monitored through tenancy review visits.

### **Type of Tenancy Agreements that EPIC Grant**

Most new EPIC tenants are granted an *Assured Shorthold Periodic Tenancy*, sometimes referred to as a probationary tenancy. After 12 months, in accordance with our Assured Shorthold Tenancy Conversion Procedure, we will either:

- Convert the tenancy to a full *Assured Periodic Tenancy*
- Extend the tenancy for a period of up to 18 months. Where a probationary period is extended, we will give clear reasons in writing to the tenant which set out the steps that they must take to be granted a full Assured Tenancy. There is a right of appeal against any decision to extend a probationary tenancy.
- End the tenancy by subsequently serving a 'Section 21 Notice'. Again, the tenant will be given the right of appealing the decision. Where appropriate, we will provide guidance to the tenant on alternative housing options should we proceed to repossess the property.

Existing EPIC tenants who are transferring from one EPIC property to another will receive the same type of tenancy as they enjoy at their current property. In most circumstances this will be an Assured Periodic tenancy. In exceptional circumstances, where an Assured

Shorthold Tenant is permitted to transfer to another EPIC property, they will be granted a new Assured Shorthold Periodic Tenancy. This tenancy will be reviewed after 12 months in the same way as set out for new tenants above.

### **Fixed Term Tenancies**

We will use *Assured Shorthold Fixed-Term Tenancies* for new tenants participating in the Rent to Buy Scheme. Initially tenants will enter into an Assured Shorthold Fixed-Term Tenancy for a period of 18 months. Subject to satisfactory conduct, tenants will be offered a further 3½ year fixed-term tenancy to take them up to the intended 5-year purchase date. Further details are contained in the Rent to Buy Policy.

### **Supported Tenants**

EPIC has an agreement with Brighter Futures whereby they act as Managing Agents for designated EPIC housing units. These properties are classed as supported accommodation for which EPIC grants an Assured Shorthold Periodic tenancy, setting out the responsibilities of EPIC as landlord, the Managing Agent and the tenant.

### **Succession Rights**

Succession describes a legal right to 'succeed' to the tenancy on the death of the named tenant(s). Our approach to succession rights is set out in our Assignment, Mutual Exchange and Succession Policy. This policy contains a section explaining the circumstances in which a new tenancy may be granted to a member of a tenant's household, at EPIC's discretion and where they do not automatically qualify for succession rights.

### **Tenancy Management Plans**

A Tenancy Management Plan is an action or series of actions agreed between EPIC and a new customer to help ensure a successful and sustainable tenancy. A Tenancy Management Plan must always be in place for a tenant who has been housed following a successful appeal under our Housing Appeals procedure. For other customers, the officer undertaking the home visit as part of our allocations process will decide whether a Tenancy Management Plan is required based on the information obtained from the application process and any identified risks of tenancy failure.

### **Creating a Tenancy Management Plan**

Where a customer is identified as requiring a Tenancy Management Plan, the initial tenancy visit will be conducted by their Housing Officer within 1 month of the tenancy commencement date.

Following the initial visit the Housing Officer will prepare a Tenancy Management Plan setting out what EPIC, any other support provider, and the tenant will do to try and ensure a successful tenancy. The customer (and support provider, where appropriate) will be provided with a copy of the actions that they need to undertake as part of the Tenancy Management Plan. The Tenancy Management Plan template to be used is appended to this policy.

The exact contents of a Tenancy Management Plan will differ based on the specific circumstances of each customer, but could include:

- Increased frequency of Housing Officer visits to check on tenancy conduct or welfare.
- A commitment by the tenant to actively engage with a third-party support provider to help with tenancy sustainability.
- Steps to be taken to reduce debt.

All actions agreed should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound).

The Tenancy Management Plan will be signed off as complete once EPIC and the tenant have undertaken the agreed actions and the Housing Officer is satisfied that the risk of tenancy failure has been minimised as far as is practicable.

### **Equality and Diversity Statement**

We want all our customers to have successful and sustainable tenancies. We recognise that some of our customers may need some extra support and encouragement to achieve this objective. We do not directly provide support packages for customers. However, through a mixture of pre-tenancy activities (such as the 'Getting to Know You' programme), specialist support organisations and our Housing Officers setting out practical steps that customers can take, we endeavour to provide a framework that promotes and rewards successful tenancies. We will ensure that each Tenancy Management Plan is tailored to a customer's circumstances and that the actions set out are fair, proportionate and achievable.

### **Monitoring and Reporting**

The Tenancy Management Monitor accessed from our intranet, records which customers are in receipt of a Tenancy Management Plan, the date that the next tenancy management visit is due and brief details of progress against the plan. Any further detailed notes relating to the Tenancy Management Plan and the plan itself will be recorded on the customer's file.

### **Responsibilities**

Officers who conduct home visits are responsible for identifying whether a Tenancy Management Plan is required to help ensure a successful tenancy. Officers make their assessment based on whether there are any risk factors present that may otherwise lead to tenancy failure.

The customer's Housing Officer is responsible for ensuring that actions agreed by EPIC as part of the plan are undertaken and for monitoring that the customer has undertaken any actions that they have agreed to.

The Housing Team Leader is responsible for conducting random checks to ensure Tenancy Management Plans are created, are of sufficient quality, closed at an appropriate point and to measure over time whether they are effective.

### **Review Mechanism**

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

## Tenancy Management Plan (v1.1)

Tenant(s) Name:	Address:	Date:	
Housing Officer:			
What are the risks of tenancy failure identified from the Allocations process:			
What other agencies are involved (agency, name of contact, phone numbers):			
What are the specific actions that EPIC needs to undertake to create the conditions for tenancy success?			
<b><u>What is the action?</u></b>	<b><u>Who is going to do it?</u></b>	<b><u>When is it to be done by?</u></b>	<b><u>Date completed</u></b>
Frequency of visits during shorthold period (subject to progress – circle as appropriate) Monthly / Bi-Monthly / Quarterly / Six Monthly			

What are the specific actions that the customer agrees to undertake as part of the plan?

<b><u>What is the action?</u></b>	<b><u>When is it to be done by?</u></b>	<b><u>Date completed</u></b>

**At the end of the Tenancy Management Plan**

Have all of EPIC's and the customer's actions been completed? **Yes / No**

If no what problems have been experienced?

Are there any further actions required beyond the Tenancy Management Plan period to successfully maintain the tenancy? **Yes / No**

If yes what are these actions, who is going to undertake them and how will they be monitored?

Date Tenancy Management Plan closed:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_