

**DARTFORD**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**MANGEMENT  
TRANSFER POLICY**

Update April 2013

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## 1. Introduction

The Council's Allocations Policy 2013 prioritises housing management transfers where:

*'the social landlord requires the tenant to move or the tenant needs to move due to violence, harassment, intimidation, or threats of violence likely to be carried out, or where major works to the property are required'*

Management transfers (MT) are available to Dartford Borough Council tenants and, at the request of a housing association, to housing association tenants.

This policy provides information on management transfers and highlights the service that can be expected by those who apply for a transfer.

## 2. Strategic Context

2.1. This Management Transfer Policy fulfils two aims of Dartford Borough Council's Corporate Plan, by ensuring an effective, efficient, proactive and high performing frontline housing Landlord service and ensuring that local people are able to obtain housing in Dartford. Management transfers also play a crucial role in other Dartford Borough Council strategies and policies. A summary of this is shown below:



### 2.2. The Domestic Abuse Housing Strategy 2008

The vision of the strategy is that:

*'No one should live in a home where they fear domestic abuse. Victims of domestic abuse will be aware of services that can help; and will be supported as they choose to leave abusive relationships.'*

The strategy highlights a number of ways in which victims of domestic abuse can be protected. In extreme cases, where tenants are suffering from domestic abuse and cannot stay in their own homes, management transfers may be used to move them into safe accommodation.

### **2.3. Homelessness Strategy 2012**

The overarching aim of the strategy is to prevent homelessness. A person is defined as homeless if they have no accommodation to occupy but also if they have accommodation but are unable to live there due to violence or threats of violence.

Management transfers prevent homelessness by removing tenants from areas where they may face domestic abuse and by providing tenants who may have fled their home due to violence, with a permanent address.

### **2.4. Allocations Policy 2013**

The Policy gives the highest priority to applicants who need to move under a management transfer (Band A).

### **2.5. Community Safety Plan**

The Community Safety Plan outlines a number of priority areas which aim to make Dartford and Gravesham safer places to live. One of the priorities is to reduce violent crime, including sexual offences, and repeat incidents of domestic abuse. Where other methods may be ineffective in tackling such crime, management transfers can help to reduce the risk of further violence, either to a family or an individual, therefore helping to lower the number of reported violent crimes.

## **3. Access to Management Transfers**

- 3.1. Requests for a management transfer should be made to a Housing Officer. Applicants are required to complete an Initial Inquiry Form which is available in a number of languages on request. Applicants may nominate a friend, relative or advocacy worker from an appropriate agency to apply on their behalf or they can contact the Housing Options and Advice Section of the Council where a Housing Advisor will be pleased to assist in making an application.
- 3.2. Applicants will need to supply contact details from an independent agency, such as Social Services, Disability Team, Elderly Care, Police (above the rank of constable), Domestic Abuse Unit or a Hospital Consultant. Agencies will be contacted to provide supporting evidence for the management transfer. In some cases the Housing Officer will need to apply for a Police disclosure.
- 3.3. All information shared will comply with guidelines set by the Kent and Medway Information Exchange Protocol, which stipulates that information shared must be proportionate, relevant, accurate, up to date, the minimum necessary and only used for the specific purpose for which it is being shared. Information will not be shared where disclosure would prejudice ongoing proceedings or sensitive cases unless there is an overriding public safety requirement to do so.

#### **4. How a Management Transfer decision is made**

- 4.1. Once an application form has been submitted and the evidence has been verified by the disclosure or appropriate agency, a panel of senior officers, including the relevant Senior Housing Officer and the Housing Manager will decide upon the action to be taken and will consider the full implications of the transfer ensuring that the applicant's needs are taken into account.
- 4.2. The panel will make every effort to resolve the situation without having to move the applicant, and may use a range of legal remedies, such as Exclusion Orders, Possession Proceedings and all its available powers to deal with anti-social behaviour. If a management transfer is the only option the Housing Manager and the Head of Housing will authorise the transfer.

#### **5. Access to temporary accommodation**

- 5.1. In extreme cases where it is dangerous for the applicant to remain in their current home whilst they wait for a management transfer, temporary accommodation may be offered. This will only be permitted with the authorisation of a Senior Housing Officer, or in their absence, the Housing Manager as sanctioned by the Head of Housing.
- 5.2. Whilst in temporary accommodation, the applicant's situation will be reviewed weekly to ensure that they either bid for, or are made aware of properties they are eligible to bid for.
- 5.3. Throughout the management transfer process the Housing Team will work with the relevant agencies to help ensure the safety of the victim.

#### **6. Obtaining a Management Transfer**

- 6.1. Tenants will be notified in writing whether or not a management transfer has been agreed. Once a management transfer has been agreed, then the applicant is able to bid for a property using Kent Homechoice.
- 6.2. At the same time as the applicant is bidding for a property, the Council will also actively seek accommodation outside of the Allocations Policy. Therefore management transfer applicants can be housed by either:
  - a) Expressing a successful interest in a property, or
  - b) The Council making a direct offer of accommodation.
- 6.3. The Council will only make **one** direct offer of accommodation, including bidding through Kent Homechoice. This is to ensure that a household's urgent housing needs are met as quickly as possible.

- 6.4. Applicants will only be able to bid for properties that meet their housing need. If applicants are vacating a larger property for a smaller one, they may benefit from the Downsize for Cash Scheme.
- 6.5. If an applicant has fled the property they are still responsible for the tenancy, including upkeep and payment of rent up until the time the tenancy is legally ended.
- 6.6. Applicants can choose to end the tenancy once they have received notification of the Management Transfer. If a tenant chooses to do this they must pay the utility bills (up to the time they leave the property), and are responsible for the storage of possessions in the intermediary period between releasing the tenancy and taking up a new one.