



# Allocations Policy

<b>Overview:</b>	This policy sets out our approach on how we will deal with rehousing applications and allocate our homes.
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## 1. Introduction/ policy statement

This policy sets out how Eldonian Community Based Housing Association, (ECHBA), will allocate and let its properties. Through the implementation of this policy ECHBA aims to make the best use of its housing stock, meet local housing need, create sustainable communities and support making Eldonian Village a better place to live.

The policy recognises ECHBA's statutory and regulatory responsibilities as a Registered Provider in assisting the Local Authority in the discharge of their duties under the housing acts detailed below.sc

This policy sets out ECHBA's approach to identifying new tenants for available general needs and sheltered homes. We offer homes to people who fall within our charitable aims as detailed in our rules.

## 2. Policy detail & definitions

### 2.1 How we will allocate our homes

ECHBA will work in partnership with Liverpool City Council, (LCC), to support them in discharging their statutory duties in relation to the allocation of social housing homes in their area. To do this ECHBA will make available 50% of its available empty properties via Property Pool Plus.

Liverpool City Council is a member of Property Pool Plus (PPP). PPP is the register for social and affordable homes across the region of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, and Wirral. PPP allows applicants who are registered to express an interest in social and affordable homes available to rent.

Each local Authority adheres to the legal requirements of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended), and therefore meets all statutory requirements relating to eligibility and qualification for social housing. The PPP common allocations policy is framed to provide reasonable preference to those in housing need. ECHBA's participation in PPP for 50% of its lets ensures that those with housing need have priority access to a proportion of its homes.

Properties advertised via PPP will be allocated according to the PPP Sub Regional Choice Based Lettings Common Allocations policy with ECHBA retaining the final decision as to whether to grant a tenancy.

ECHBA homes let outside PPP, will be let under a **Local Lettings Plan** which will be agreed with and published by PPP and ECHBA. The Plan will be reviewed when this Policy is reviewed, or under request from the LCC.

## **2.2 Access to housing**

Access to housing is open to all people over the age of 18 with the exception of:

- Households excluded by law from holding a tenancy, (i.e. right to rent).
- Applicants who, either as a tenant of ECHBA or tenant of another landlord, have previously acted in a manner which would have seriously breached the terms of the ECHBA tenancy agreement (e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, criminal activity).

ECHBA will not refuse to re-house ex-offenders but will seek to re-house them appropriately with advice and assistance from probation services and other support agencies.

ECHBA will comply with current legislation when making these decisions.

It should be noted that whilst ECHBA's waiting list is open to all we will when we allocate our homes always seek to make best use of our housing stock by matching the type of property to the most appropriate applicant on our waiting list. By this we mean that we would not look to let family accommodation to single people without children. We would also not look to either under occupy or overcrowd our homes as part of our allocation process. This may mean that dependent upon your circumstances and family type we might not have suitable accommodation to meet your needs and time on the list alone will therefore not guarantee you rehousing with ECHBA.

## **2.3 Housing advice**

ECHBA will ensure that tenants wishing to move are able to access clear and relevant advice about their housing options including support with registering on PPP.

## **2.4 Pre-tenancy assessments**

ECHBA is committed to ensuring that it does not contribute towards placing people in financial hardship and indebtedness. Therefore, as a responsible landlord, we will only let properties to people who are able to demonstrate that they can afford them through an affordability assessment. In turn, this will help develop sustainable tenancies and communities.

ECHBA will carry out pre-tenancy assessments of all applicants, (i.e. at offer stage), to ensure they will be able to sustain the tenancy and to identify any support needs they might have.

Where the pre-tenancy assessment shows that an applicant will not be able to sustainably afford the tenancy (either due to the level of household income or due to the financial capability of the customers), it will work with the applicant to improve their situation, but ultimately reserve the right not to allocate the property to them.

Where the pre-tenancy assessment shows an applicant will not be able sustain the tenancy due to other support needs, ECHBA will not allocate the property to them. ECHBA may work with the applicant to improve their situation through sign posting to pre-tenancy courses and welfare support.

## **2.5 Voids**

When ECHBA becomes aware of a termination of tenancy or an empty property, it will promptly inspect the property and issue repairs for works to bring the property up to a **lettable standard**, which meets decency and health and safety requirements.

Where possible and practicable, properties will be pre-inspected and repairs will be completed during the four-week notice period, or less. If this is not possible all works will be completed within the agreed timescales.

New tenancies will start as soon as possible after the previous tenancy has ended, with 'direct lets' when possible.

ECHBA will carry out sign-up meetings to ensure that tenants understand their rights and responsibilities as a ECHBA tenant.

ECHBA will take up references before offering accommodation to identify applicants who, have as a tenant of another landlord acted in a manner which would have seriously breached the terms of the tenancy agreement (e.g. rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, criminal activity).

ECHBA will consider failure to provide references as equal to providing unsatisfactory references for the purpose of deciding whether to grant a tenancy.

ECHBA will consider the provision of false information in references equal to obtaining the tenancy by deception and would seek to recover possession through the County Court.

## **2.6 Adapted properties**

In seeking to make best use of stock, where a property is suitable for use by customers with a disability, whether by design or adaptation, ECHBA will seek to allocate this to a household needing that specialised accommodation.

ECHBA will also seek to meet the housing needs of people with disabilities by adapting properties as required on a case-by-case basis and will work with the local authority in any recycling of adaptations in homes which become vacant.

## **2.7 Tenancy mobility**

ECHBA recognises that the housing needs of a household may change over time and the accommodation originally provided may no longer be suitable (e.g. because it is too large or too small).

A tenant's ability to move to more suitable accommodation will be dependent on the availability of suitable properties and a history of meeting the conditions of tenancy.

## **2.8 Transfers**

Existing ECHBA customers who are in housing need can register on PPP and express an interest in any available property. Applicants will be assessed in the same way as a waiting list applicant. Their application will be determined according to their individual need.

Existing ECHBA customers can also apply direct to ECHBA and can be considered for a transfer as part of the **Local Lettings Plan**. All offers to transfer will be subject to a property inspection, having a clear rent account and a good tenancy history. If the property does not pass a pre-transfer inspection the tenant will be expected to remedy any identified issues and will not normally qualify for transfer until they have been completed.

## **2.9 Lettings to employees, former employees, board members and their relatives**

In addition to meeting the requirements of this policy all lets to employees, Board members and their relatives, will meet the requirements and checks set out in the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance.

## **2.10 Hard to let Properties**

Although ECHBA does not expect to have hard to let properties if a property becomes hard to let due to a lack of demand, ECHBA will look at other options other than PPP and our own waiting list, such as Rightmove, Zoopla, estate agencies etc. These options will only be considered once a property has been advertised through PPP and our own waiting list has been exhausted and has not been let.

## **3. Access and communication**

ECHBA is committed to ensuring that our services are accessible to everyone. We will seek alternative methods of access and service delivery where barriers perceived or real may exist that make it difficult for people to use our services.

#### 4. Associated documents

Whilst the following is not exhaustive, the requirements laid out have been considered when formulating this policy and all staff will refer to the documents listed for further clarification or seek legal advice where necessary:

Associated legislation, regulation, and external standards
Housing Act 1985 & 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011)
Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England
Property Pool Plus common allocations policy
Localism Act 2011
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
Anti-social behaviour Act 2014
Immigration Act 2014 & 2016
Welfare Reform Act 2012
Equality Act 2010
RSH Regulatory framework
Human Rights Act 1998
Children's Act 1989

Associated ECHBA documents / guidance
Local Lettings Plan
Starter Tenancy policy
Tenancy Management policy
Decant policy
Mutual Exchange policy
Anti-Social behaviour policy

## 5. Equality, diversity, and human rights

ECHBA is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duties with positive regard for the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation.

We also recognise that some people experience disadvantage due to their socioeconomic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice. ECHBA will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation.

## 6. Quality management

We will benchmark our performance measures with other organisations as appropriate.

Performance on allocations will be monitored by the senior management team and performance will be reported Quarterly to ECHBA board.

Performance Indicators	
LETT01	Tenancy Turnover %
LETT02	No of relets
LETT03	Average relet time, (GN& HFOP), days
LETT04	Average relet time, (GN), days
LETT05	Average relet time, (HFOP), days
LETT06	Void rent loss £
LETT07	Void rent loss as a % of rent debit
LETT08	Properties vacant and available to let %
LETT09	Average void cost £
LETT10	Satisfaction with allocations process %



## **7.0 Local Lettings Plan**

Applications will be prioritised, based on date order (oldest eligible application first).

There are circumstances when additional time will be added to make the application older, for example a local connection, community contribution, unsatisfactory living conditions, including overcrowding, homelessness, spare rooms, a requirement for ground floor accommodation, fleeing violence and medical conditions.

### **7.1 Living in a ECHBA home**

ECHBA offer a variety of homes on the Eldonian village.

It is important that you apply for homes that you are eligible for, to ensure that we can find the right home for you. Our team have a detailed knowledge of all our homes if you would like to discuss your requirements with them.

50% of lettings are made directly by ECHBA, under this local letting plan. Here we provide clarity on how ECHBA will deal with direct lettings and the application process.

ECHBA will use our direct lets firstly, to manage and support current ECHBA tenants to right size their home, or to move them for other management reasons first (if applicable). This will release their home for letting under this local letting plan.

The remaining 50% of homes are let by ECHBA, through Property Pool Plus, in partnership with the Liverpool City Council **as part of our nomination's agreement.**

ECHBA has always made allocation decisions based on a desire to build sustainable communities and want to continue to build and maintain a healthy community. We are particularly interested in applicants who share this value and want to give something back to make this community a success.

We want to maintain a sustainable neighbourhood and tenancies and make best use of our housing stock.

### **7.2 Our homes and your eligibility to live in our home**

When you apply for our homes, we always seek to make best use of our housing stock by matching the type of property to the most appropriate applicant on our waiting list. By this we mean that we would not look to let family accommodation to single people without children. We would also not look to either under occupy or overcrowd our homes as part of our allocation process.

### 7.3 How we prioritise applications to reside in our homes

We prioritise applications using the **date** that you apply.

There are circumstances when we add some additional **time** to your application date. This is because your need for a new home could be greater than someone else's who applied on the same day as you.

The boxes below tells you when we will add time to your application date. When we do this, it means that your application date will change in a positive way, helping you to move in to your new home quicker. Only one additional date enhancement will be awarded which will be based on the applicant's highest level of need as identified below.

<b>6 months added If:</b>	<b>9 months added When you:</b>	<b>12 mths added If you have:</b>	<b>18 mths added If you:</b>
Your current housing conditions are unsatisfactory	Are Statutory Homeless – granted by the local authority	If you live or work within L3 & L5 postcodes.	Currently live in an ECHBA property either as a tenant or a household member. For at minimum of 12 consecutive months and provide 2 of the following
There are welfare/hardship issues	You or someone living with you, has Life at Risk status - granted by the Police	Share current/proposed experience as a community volunteer.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bank Statement</li> <li>2. Council tax bill</li> <li>3. Driving licence</li> <li>4. Mobile phone bill</li> <li>5. Universal credit statement / account.</li> <li>6. TV licence</li> </ol>
You are overcrowded by 1 bedroom in your rented home	Are an armed force leaver		
Your relationship has broken down	Have rooms spare in your rented home, (i.e. underoccupying)		
Your medical needs require you to move.	Are overcrowded by 2 + bedrooms in your rented home		
	Are subject to regeneration works, so you must move		
	Have very immediate medical needs to move		

## **7.4 Eligibility for offenders or ex-offenders, or those with previous history of anti-social behaviour**

ECHBA will carry out investigations with partners and agencies on applicants who have a previous history relating to those applicants with convictions, enforcement action, sanctions & formal complaints for domestic abuse, hate crime and harassment.

The application will be reviewed every 12 months. If there is a shown likelihood or probability there has been involvement in incidents, the application will be cancelled and will not be reinstated.

Previous criminal convictions will not prevent the applicant from joining the housing waiting list unless the conviction was for unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them non-qualifying to be our tenant.

ECHBA will reserve the right to withhold any offer of accommodation if the applicant or household has an offending history of any of the following:

- Gang related activity
- Gun related activity
- Illicit drug-related activity
- Any offence serious enough to pose a high risk to our neighbourhood/community stability
- Failure to comply with neighbourliness in a previous home, resulting in anti-social behaviour (ASB) complaints, including a known association with individuals or households who have a history of involvement in such activities
- Do not pass an affordability check
- Have not managed a previous tenancy well
- Anyone in the household who has a history of being targeted by individuals and who might become a victim of negative ASB or coerced into such behaviour.
- Any conviction in relation to Child Sex Offences
- Any convictions in relation to domestic violence

## **7.5 Acceptance onto ECHBA Housing Waiting list**

Once you have been added to our waiting list, we will write to you confirming your application date and your application number.

When we have a home that is right for you, we will contact you by telephone in the first instance.

So it's important you keep us updated should any of your contact details change. This will mean that you won't miss out on your potential new home. If your circumstances change after you have applied, make sure you tell us. It is important you do so as some changes could affect your application. By talking to us we can help and give you the best advice possible.

We are delighted that you have chosen Eldonian Village as the place to make your

home.

## **7.6 Applying for a Home**

The following guide is intended to help you through the application process for your new home.

If you need any help, please call the ECHBA team on 0151 207 3406

You will need to complete the **Apply for a Home Form attached**, with details of everyone in your household.

You must ensure that every box on the form is completed. In some cases, we may ask you to fill in extra forms such as a Medical Assessment Form or Criminal Convictions Form. If there is any part of the form that you need help or assistance with, we are here to help.

You can hand in your completed form and supporting documents, (see below), to the office, or post to:

Eldonian Community Based Housing Association,  
Tony McGann Centre,  
Eldonian Village,  
Liverpool,  
L3 6LG



Community Based Housing Association  
*promoting sustainable communities*

**APPLY FOR A HOME FORM**

**About You and who will be moving with You:**

Title	Surname	First Name	Date of Birth	Sex	Relationship to You	National Insurance Number

**Your Current Address:**

<b>Address:</b>				
<b>Date You Moved In:</b>				
<b>Preferred Contact Number:</b>			<b>Alternative Number/Email:</b>	
<b>Type of home?</b>	<b>House</b>	<b>Flat</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Who owns your current home?</b>				
<b>How many people are in your home now – adults and children who will move with you?</b>				
<b>What is the reason for wishing to move home?</b>				
<b>If the joint applicant's current address is different than the above, please provide details:</b>				

**Who You currently live with?**

Please give details of anyone living with you at present who will **not** be moving with you.

Title	Surname	First Name	Date of Birth	Gender	Relationship to You

**More about You**

Please tick

<p>Is anybody on your application expecting a baby?</p> <p>If yes, please insert due date below:</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Are the children listed living with you permanently?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Have you or the joint applicant ever owned or currently own your own home?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Have you ever applied for an ECHBA home before?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Have you or the joint applicant ever had an Order for Possession on your own home or been evicted?</p> <p>If yes, please provide details below:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Have you or anyone listed received any criminal convictions, court orders or been the subject of a complaint, anti-social behaviour order or injunction?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>
<p>Are you a UK citizen?</p>	<p>Yes/No</p>

Are you or anyone in your household subject to immigration control?	Yes/No
<p>Do you consider yourself or anyone in your household to have any health, disability, welfare, or other special needs which are affected by your accommodation?</p> <p>If your answer is yes, please give us details below:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	Yes/No
Have you previously held your own tenancy?	Yes/No
<p>Are you or anyone related to an ECHBA employee or board member?</p> <p>If your answer is yes, please give us details below:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	Yes/No

**Tell us why you want a new home**

Please tick the statement(s) which best describe why you need re-housing:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Need a smaller home                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Landlord selling home         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overcrowded or under-occupied       | <input type="checkbox"/> Affordability                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Independence                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Eviction order / repossession |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relationship breakdown              | <input type="checkbox"/> Victim of crime or harassment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Living apart from family            | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving the armed forces      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asked to leave by friends or family |  |

Other (Please specify)

.....

.....

.....

.....

Tell us a bit more about your circumstances here:

.....

.....

.....

.....

How many bedrooms do you think you need?

.....

**What type of home would you like to live in?**

Please check your eligibility before you answer this question

House	
Bungalow	
Flat	



If you are an existing ECHBA tenant, are you looking to move to a bigger/smaller home or move to a different area?

If so, one of the quickest ways to move is to swap with someone else, this is called a mutual exchange.

Would you like to register on the mutual ECBH scheme? Yes/No

### About your money

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>You</b>	<b>Joint Applicant</b>
Full time (30+ hours per week)	Yes/No	Yes/No
Part time (16+ hours per week)	Yes/No	Yes/No
Retired	Yes/No	Yes/No
Not seeking work	Yes/No	Yes/No
Full time student	Yes/No	Yes/No
Job seeker	Yes/No	Yes/No
Unable to work due to long term sickness or disability	Yes/No	Yes/No
<b>Do you receive any welfare benefits?</b>	Yes/No	Yes/No

## Equal Opportunities

ECHBA is committed to providing equal opportunity for all. We value diversity in people and recognise the unique contribution everyone makes. We need to collect accurate data to understand how far we are achieving our goal for unique opportunity and diversity. To help us do this and for no other reason, we ask you to complete this section.

What is your ethnic group?	You	Joint Applicant
White British		
White Irish		
White Polish		
Any other White background		
Black British		
Black Caribbean		
Black African		
Black Somalian		
Black Nigerian		
Any other Black background		
Mixed White & Black Caribbean		
Mixed White & Black African		
Mixed White & Asian		
Any other mixed background		
Asian British		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
Yemen		
Any other Asian background		
Gypsy		
Traveller		
Arab		
Any other ethnic group		
Other		
Prefer not to say		

	You Yes/No	Joint Applicant Yes/No
Is your gender the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?		

Sexual Orientation	You	Joint Applicant
Heterosexual		
Homosexual		
Bisexual		
Prefer not to say		

Religion	You	Joint Applicant
No religion		
Christian (All denominations)		
Greek Orthodox		

Jehovah's Witness		
Jewish		
Mormon		
Sikh		
Other (please specify)		
Prefer not to say		

**Your History**

We need to know where you have lived for the past five years. If you have not lived at your current address for at least two years, please provide details of any previous addresses.

**Address 1**

.....  
 .....

Date moved in.....

Date moved out.....

**Address 2**

.....  
 .....

Date moved in.....

Date moved out.....

**Address 3**

.....  
 .....  
 .....

Date moved in.....

Date moved out.....

**Information required for your housing application:**

You will need to bring supporting documents with you when you hand in your application form to us. You only need to provide one each of the documents below, for example one proof of identification, one proof of current address etc. You should provide the information for yourself and the joint applicant.

**Proof of identification** – this could be one of the following:

- Birth certificate
- Passport
- Driver’s licence

**Proof of current address** – (all must be dated within the last 3 months), this could be one of the following:

- Bank statement
- Utility bill
- Official letter

**Proof of National Insurance Number** – this could be one of the following:

- National insurance card
- Payslip
- P45/P60

**Proof of children moving with you** – this could be one of the following:

- Child benefit
- Child tax credits

Providing us with this information with your form means we can register your application form more quickly. Depending on your responses above, we may need to speak to you to obtain further information.

**Declaration & Data Protection**

As far as I know the answers given on this form are true. I understand that if I or anyone acting on my behalf has given false information you can reject my application and I may lose any tenancy granted. I understand that all the information I have given will be held on ECHBA IT systems and that I need to tell you immediately if there is any change in my circumstances. I understand that by signing this declaration I am giving ECHBA permission to contact my previous landlords and relevant agencies including local authorities, registered providers, Department of Works & Pensions, the Home Office, Police, Probation and Social Services.

**Data Protection Act**

ECHBA will treat the information you have given us on your housing application in accordance with the Data Protection laws. We may share the information with other landlords or ask for references from your previous landlords. It is important that the information you give us is accurate.

We may contact other partner organisations such as local authorities, registered providers, Department of Works & Pensions, the Home Office, Police, Probation and Social Services to verify information you have provided. The information you have provided will be validated and shared with other departments and partners of ECHBA to prevent and detect fraud and to establish validity of the applicant based upon the household make up and letting criteria.

We may use the information that you have given on this form for research and analysis.

Your Signature ..... Date.....

Joint Signature .....Date .....