

BERNESLAI HOMES POLICIES & PLANS



Tenancy Sustainability
Tenants First

GREAT PLACE, GREAT PEOPLE, GREAT COMPANY

Document Control

Title	Tenancy Sustainability
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Subject	This policy aims to set out the process and procedure around Berneslai Homes approach to tenancy sustainability.
Information Asset Owner	Tracey Powers
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Consultation and distribution

Type	Details
Consultation	<i>Kat Allott Stevens Tony Griffiths Berneslai Homes' Senior Management Team Tenants Voice Panel</i>
Distribution	<i>All staff</i>

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1. Introduction

Our vision is creating great homes and communities with the people of Barnsley.

Berneslai Homes recognises that tenants living within its communities have a wide range of different housing and support needs. This policy will detail how Berneslai Homes will help meet the support needs of its eligible tenants either directly as a landlord, or indirectly through referrals to other support agencies. Making sure, where possible, that these tenants are not disadvantaged in accessing services and can remain living in their homes.

The policy sets out our vision, aims and objectives to address and promote tenancy sustainment in Tenants First and across Berneslai Homes.

2. Policy Aim

Our Tenants First Service is our front-line service offering tenancy sustainability to tenants and housing applicants. We support tenants who are deemed to have multiple and complex needs, spanning health and social issues.

This policy aims to set out and provide a consistent overview of our delivery on tenancy sustainment:

- Providing the necessary information, advice, and support for tenants and housing applicants to be able to maintain their tenancies.
- Promoting and enabling tenancy sustainment by ensuring we identify those tenants who may need extra support to manage a tenancy and how to access support.
- Providing tenants with support to ensure that they can maintain a tenancy long term, meeting their responsibilities as a tenant.

We will meet the aims of this policy by:

- Proactively identifying groups most at risk of tenancy failure and provide tailored support to these customers.
- Developing and supporting initiatives aimed at increasing the level of tenancy sustainment based on our understanding of the reasons for tenancy failure.

- Ensuring tenancy sustainment data is collected consistently and reported via the agreed monitoring framework.
- Providing low level support at an early stage.
- Providing a more intensive approach for those tenants with multiple and complex needs.
- Providing targeted approach by specialist teams.
- Ensuring a long and successful tenancy where tenants can enjoy where they live.
- Reducing the costs of failed tenancies.
- Preventing homelessness.
- Improving tenant satisfaction by listening to and acting on tenants and customers views.

3. Legislative Duties and Regulatory Framework

Berneslai Homes will comply with all relevant legislation and associated regulations, including:

- The Housing Act 2004
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Welfare Reform Act 2012
- Equalities Act 2010 up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 21 May 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date.
- Mental Health Act The Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended, most recently by the Mental Health Act 2007)
- Safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults: working together to safeguard children act and adult Children 2018, for adults Care Act 2014
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Rehabilitation of offenders Act 1974
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and Code of Practice

4. Establishing when support is needed

Berneslai Homes have introduced a “step up” form (process) to use internally for staff. This is aimed at providing a seamless service between different service areas.

The form is used for one tenant(single/family) from one service area to another.

Low level support journeys usually start with the Neighbourhood Officers identifying tenants who may be struggling to manage their tenancy for a number of reasons. The Neighbourhood Teams open support cases and work at addressing issues by providing low level support. They will ensure that all relevant referrals are made to relevant supporting agencies so the tenant and or family is receiving the support.

If the Neighbourhood Officer feels that the support is not working or see no improvements, they use the “step up” form to refer on to Tenants First.

The step-up form is triaged by a named officer within Tenants First Service and is directed to the most appropriate team within that service to offer a more intensive support package to the tenant.

Tenants First then lead the support. A lead officer will work persistently and consistently and offer that tenant up to a daily visit, or weekly visit dependant on “need”.

A package of support is put in place after comprehensive assessments, and support plans and agreed goals are committed to.

If all support goal areas have been achieved, the “step-up” form is used to step down to the Neighbourhood Team for a period of sustainability.

If we are unable to reach a successful outcome the “step-up” form is used to refer on to the ASB Team who then progress the case for enforcement where necessary.

Partners/External agencies can complete the below “contact us” form to request further information or complete the referral form in the next section below.

<https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/support-for-tenants/tenants-first/>

[Contact Us Form](#)

5. Different types of support

The type of support that we provide is dependent on the individual needs of the tenant. Tenants First provide intervention to:

- Support tenants with finances, budgeting, income maximisation and hardship funds.
- Support tenants to furnish their home through our furnished tenancy scheme.
- Support tenants/families who have multiple and complex needs by offering a dedicated support worker to help reduce their problems.
- Support tenants to address their mental health issues which are impacting on how they manage their tenancy.
- Support tenants to find new skills through training and employment.
- Support tenants to become tenancy ready

6. How to refer, step up and contact Tenants First Service

The following can be used for internal colleagues when referring to Tenants Firsts teams Family Intervention/Mental Health Housing Related Support/Housing Coach.

Internally Berneslai Homes staff can refer to our service by using a step-up form.

The form needs to be sent by e mail to: tenantsfirstservice@berneslaihomes.co.uk

Our office number is 01226 787181

[Step Up Form Intranet](#)

External referrals can be sent into us by using the attached referral form, and e mailing this to: tenantsfirstservice@berneslaihomes.co.uk



Request for Service -
Fl.docx

- **Tenancy Support**

Support tenants with finances, budgeting, income maximisation and hardship funds.

Referrals to our service for Tenancy Support can be sent direct to tenantsupportservice@berneslaihomes.co.uk The attached referral needs to be used.



Tenant Support
Referral Form with Co

- **Work and Skills**

Support tenants to find new skills through training and employment

Referrals to our Achieve programme can be sent direct to Worksandskills@berneslaihomes.co.uk on the attached referral



ESF Registration
Form.docx

- **Furnished Tenancy**

Support tenants to furnish their home through our furnished tenancy scheme

All furnished tenancy queries are sent direct to our tenantsfirstservice@berneslaihomes.co.uk and the referral form for this:



Berneslai Homes
Furnished Tenancy Re

Internally, we have a dedicated Tenants First Page containing all this information.

For all **Hardship Fund Applications** there is an online e-form for customers and staff to complete, which can be found on the our website at: <https://www.berneslaihomes.co.uk/support-for-tenants/cost-of-living-support/>

7. Equality Statement

We will ensure equal and fair access to our services; we will do this by taking into consideration the individual needs of our tenants, their family or other persons living with them.

We will ensure that individual needs are considered throughout the process and make reasonable adjustments where necessary. We will treat people fairly and with dignity and respect.

8. Appeals, Reviews, Complaints

Appeals

A tenant does have the right to appeal a decision in terms of Tenants First eligibility and the offer of support.

Review

There is no right to a legal review. However we will review any decisions we make and you can do this by contact our Tenants First Service on our contact us form on our webpage.

Complaints

A tenant can make a complaint where they believe that we have failed to follow the terms of this policy. These complaints will be handled under our Your Comments Count Policy.

[Contact Us On Our Webpage](#)

9. Related Documents



Tenants First
Leaflet.pdf