

Sustaining tenancies

Helping residents live well in their homes





Supporting residents to stay in their homes

Tenancy sustainability is about helping residents live well in their homes and manage their rent payments.

Effective tenancy sustainment also drives up resident satisfaction and maximises rental income, which housing associations can reinvest in building more new homes and improving our services.

This statement sets out the range of ways that G15 members support our residents. G15 housing associations have different approaches to tenancy sustainment and some may not do everything set out here. But one thing we all have in common is that eviction is always an absolute last resort.

Understanding and supporting residents

Before residents move into their new home, G15 members aim to understand the challenges they may face and support them. We do this by identifying shortfalls in income, vulnerabilities and work prospects, making referrals

to relevant services including welfare advice, employment and statutory services when needed.

Once a resident moves into their new home, we continue to take a proactive and compassionate approach in helping them at the first sign they might be struggling. Specialist teams, either in-house or through partner organisations, provide support and advice to anyone at risk of losing their home.

Eviction is always a last resort

The G15 believe that eviction is always an absolute last resort. Despite the challenge of the introduction of Universal Credit, the proactive approaches taken across the G15 have generally seen a reduction in evictions.

But there are cases where we, or a partner organisation, have been unable to work with a resident who is struggling. Rent arrears may have built up or other problems such as anti-social behaviour, mean we sometimes have to take steps to end the tenancy. We make sure all avenues have been explored with the resident first,

and there are various safeguards in place across G15 members, including court prevention visits, case conferences and strict governance arrangements where any step to begin proceedings is challenged by senior leaders in the housing association.

Our tenancy sustainment action plan

Here's a summary of some of the main actions G15 members take to support our residents to sustain their tenancies:



Carry out **affordability checks** for all potential new tenants before we offer them a home

Perform **early assessments** on all new tenants so early referral can be made to the relevant department/support service

Send **Universal Credit letters** to all new claimants stating the amount they must pay and inviting them for interview

Direct **payments towards arrears** where the tenant is in receipt of full housing benefit (not on Universal Credit)

Help get unemployed **tenants into work**



Refer cases to **specialist teams** or external agencies for support and advice



Conduct **court prevention** visits

Tackling the key issues

In addition to our approach to tenancy sustainment, G15 members are also fully committed to working with local councils to develop other positive housing solutions.

We will do all we can to tackle homelessness by:

- Reviewing our lettings and nominations information for better and more transparent recording, including the recording of tenancy start dates.
- Reviewing the implementation of a standard policy on affordability checks, deposits and rents in advance. Housing associations don't generally reject council nominees who fail the checks, can't pay a deposit where required or rent in advance.
- Providing support and ensuring tenancy

sustainment measures are easily accessible, including income maximisation, training and employment opportunities.

- Endorsing the principles of the Homeless Reduction Act and taking steps to reduce evictions and prevent homelessness.

We'll deal with complaints positively by:

- Continuously reviewing our approach to improving communication and expressions of dissatisfaction from residents.
- Having a dedicated complaints service for dealing with councillor enquiries.

We'll ensure our homes are safe and in a good state of repair by:

- Reducing the number of

disrepair cases and ensuring their prompt resolution.

- Ensuring health and safety, and especially fire safety compliance is of the highest standard.

Building new affordable homes for future generations by:

- Continuing to work with councils to increase the delivery and volume of genuinely affordable homes.



The G15 is the group of London's largest housing associations.

We're the collective voice of some of the leading organisations in the housing sector.

Our members house one in ten Londoners and are the largest providers of affordable homes in the capital. We build a quarter of all London's new homes and own or manage more than 600,000 homes.

Housing associations were set up to support people in housing need and this remains at the heart of everything we do today.

We're independent, charitable organisations and all the money we make is reinvested in building more affordable homes and delivering services for our residents.

Each G15 member is different, but we're all striving towards the same goal - to help solve the capital's housing crisis and improve the lives of Londoners.

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catalyst

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