# Allocations Policy.

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This document can be made available in Welsh, other languages, and formats on request. Please contact the Customer Experience Hub via hello@hedyn.wales.

# Contents

## Introduction

This policy sets out the principles we use to allocate our rented homes, the eligibility criteria and other relevant information.

It aims ensure we make effective use of our homes to meet housing need, working in partnership with Newport, Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Powys local authorities.

## Scope

This policy applies to existing, potential and future residents as well as colleagues. It covers:

- Social housing
- Affordable housing
- Shared Ownership
- Rent 2 Own
- Intermediate rent
- Market rent
- Extra Care scheme accommodation
- Schemes designated for residents 55 and over
- Schemes designated for residents 40 and over

## Key definitions

The following table outlines the key definitions that relate to the understanding and interpretation of this policy.

| Term | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Affordable Rent** | An affordable model of renting, giving more options for people with housing needs that aren't met by the private housing market. People pay less than the local market rent, but homes are not supported by the social housing grant. |

| Term | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| **Social Rent** | Homes let at an affordable rent for people with housing needs that aren't met by the private housing market |
| **Shared Ownership** | Homes part-owned and part-rented. People make mortgage repayments on the part they own, and rent payments to the housing association. They have the option to purchase outright at any point during occupation. |
| **Rent 2 Own** | Homes rented at market cost with an option to purchase after two years, with 25% of the rent paid as the deposit |
| **Intermediate Rent** | An affordable rent falling between social and market costs. Homes are rented at no more than 80% of the market rent and supported by the social housing grant |
| **Market Rent** | The cost of homes in the private sector. These homes don't have to fit affordability criteria. |
| **Common Housing Register** | The waiting list that allows people to apply for homes owned by social landlords across local authorities. |
| **Local Lettings Plan** | A local plan for the allocation of homes within an agreed area to support community sustainability, cohesion, and prevent Anti-social behaviour and crime. |
| **Sensitive Let** | A sensitive let is where special consideration needs to be given to the one-time allocation of a particular home. |
| **Nomination** | A nomination is when a local authority can recommend an applicant from the waiting list to be directly matched to a home. |
| **Rural Allocations Policy/Criteria (RAP)** | A policy/criteria that has a local qualification requirement. This helps to ensure households with strong links to rural areas can remain in those communities. |
| **Supported/Specialist & Extra Care Accommodation** | A range of housing options designed with additional help and support needs in mind. |

## Roles and responsibilities

The following table outlines the key contacts to whom this policy applies, including those accountable and responsible for its implementation, as well as those who should be aware of it.

| Role | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| **Hedyn Board** | Overall accountability and responsibility for ensuring that Hedyn meets its legal obligations in relation to housing allocations. |
| **Director of Homes and Communities** | Overall strategic accountability for ensuring the policy is effectively implemented. |
| **Head of Housing (TBC)** | Overall operational responsibility for ensuring the policy is effectively implemented and remains relevant, up to date and made available to its intended stakeholders. This includes performance monitoring, policy review and ensuring delivery of stated training is provided. |
| **Area Housing Manager Commercial Property & Home Ownership Manager (TBC)** | Overall responsibility for delivering the policy and ensuring it meets the resident's needs. |
| **Service Managers across the Operations Directorate (TBC)** | To ensure that responsible teams understand and comply with the policy and help support the needs of the resident. |
| • **Neighbourhood Manager**<br>• **Neighbourhood Housing Officer**<br>• **Community Safety Officer**<br>• **Scheme Manager**<br>• **Commercial Services Manager**<br>• **Business Support Advisor**<br>• **Community Safety Advisor (TBC)** | To understand and comply with the policy and help support the needs of residents. |

| Role | Responsibility |
|---|---|
| **Customer Experience Hub** | To provide advice and signposting regarding any housing options enquiries. To escalate any more detailed queries to the appropriate colleague. |

## Principles

When working with existing, potential and future residents, we will ensure that:

- Our allocations approach is easily understood.
- We allocate homes in a fair, transparent and consistent way.
- Contracts are sustainable to creating thriving and connected communities.
- Residents have the ability to move when circumstances change subject to suitability and availability.
- All statutory and regulatory requirements are complied with.

If applicants who are, or have in the past 12 months been a board member, officer or employee, or a close relative of such a person in accordance with the terms of schedule 1 paragraph 2 wishes to secure Hedyn accommodation, they must declare this and we will obtain approval through: Request for a permitted exemption: Schedule 1 of the Housing Act 1996 – Exemption 3 – housing of employees and their relatives.

Allocations to a young person (aged under 18 years old) may be made in partnership with Social Services and/or with a trustee/guarantor. Any exceptions to this will be approved by the Head of Service (TBC). Handle complaints fairly, consistently and efficiently in an open and honest way.

## Social Housing

All social housing applicants will have their application reviewed with a colleague to sure they are eligible prior to signing a Secure Occupation Contract and all applicants will be expected to pay rent in advance. Our aim is that households requiring adapted homes will be matched to homes that will meet their needs.

We aim to maximise occupancy where possible for our social rented homes in line with size criteria and restrictions alongside the bedroom eligibility criteria set out in each Common Allocations Policy. Where any current residents are under-occupying or are overcrowded in their current home and wish to move, we will offer support.

## Affordable Homes

Hedyn owns and manages several types of affordable homes such as Shared Ownership, Rent 2 Own and intermediate rent.

Homes funded through Social Housing Grant will be allocated to those registered on the applicable Common Housing Register, the Help to Own waiting lists, or any other format agreed with the relevant local authority.

## Shared Ownership

We may build or allocate homes for ‘Shared Ownership’ where Social Housing Grant has been used or where there is a planning requirement. Applicants must be registered on the Common Housing Register or the waiting list held by the respective local authority.

Homes may be advertised or shortlisted on the applicable allocation/Choice Based Letting system, as well as our own-or third-party advertising platforms.

Eligibility criteria for applicants is set by Welsh Government and applicants can purchase an initial share of between 25-75% and then pay rent on the share they do not purchase.

Applicants must be able to purchase the minimum share available, pass the financial assessment and secure a repayment mortgage. Applicants can pay for further shares, usually up to full ownership at any time.

## Rent 2 Own

Hedyn has ‘Rent 2 Own’ homes that may become available to rent. These will be advertised or shortlisted through the applicable Common Housing Register/Choice based letting platform or an agreed waiting list with the relevant local authority. We will also use our own or third party advertising platforms.

Applicants must be registered on the respective allocations system for the local authority area. As these schemes support the purchase of a home for those who do not have sufficient funds for a mortgage deposit, applicants will be offered a

Standard Occupation Contract and pay the market rent. A deposit is required which will be held in a secure government approved tenancy deposit scheme and a month's rent paid in advance.

There is the option of buying the home after two years and at the end of the five year agreement. If the option to buy is taken up, 25% of the rent paid for the period of renting plus 50% of the increase in property value (if any) is provided by Hedyn to be used as a deposit towards the purchase.

## Intermediate Rent

These homes will be advertised on the respective Common Housing Register and/or via the waiting list agreed with the relevant local authority. Hedyn reserves the right to advertise these homes directly using third party platforms. The rent will not exceed 80% of the 'market rent', however there are variations across different local authority areas. A deposit is required and will be held in a secure government approved tenancy deposit scheme. One month's rent will be required in advance and a Standard or Secure Occupation Contract will be offered.

Whilst preference is to maximise occupancy, Hedyn will consider under occupying Intermediate market rent homes subject to an affordability assessment.

## Market Rent

When 'market rent' homes become available, the advertising method will be at our discretion. Applicants do not have to be registered on the applicable Common Housing Register and the rent charged will be set at the market rent at the time of the availability, with allocations made subject to affordability.

A deposit will be required and held in a secure government approved tenancy deposit scheme. A months' rent will be required in advance and a Standard Occupation Contract will be offered.

## Supported/Specialist & Extra care accommodation

Local Authorities have 100% nomination rights for our Extra Care schemes. This is the same for our Supported and Specialist housing homes except where

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board also possess nomination rights. These homes are allocated via multi agency panel meetings.

## Almshouses

Hedyn is the trustee of the Henry Burton, Roger Williams and Queen Victoria Almshouses and will allocate properties at these schemes to those over 55 years old. These properties will be allocated on licenses.

## Accessing our homes

Most Hedyn accommodation can be accessed by all applicants but there are some age restrictions in place and some homes that may be subject to a local letting plan or a sensitive let. This may include:

- 55+ scheme accommodation
- 40+ scheme accommodation
- Extra care accommodation
- Almshouses

## Restrictions on access to our homes

Hedyn may refuse to offer accommodation to applicants for a set period of time. Circumstances for refusal may include:

- Ineligible for Social Housing
- Unable to afford the home.
- Overcrowding or under occupying would become an issue.
- Owes a debt from a former tenancy and failed to adhere to a repayment plan.
- Involved in significant Anti-Social Behaviour and has previously been evicted, or subject to legal proceedings for serious breach of contract.
- Vulnerable applicant with no appropriate support plan or where there is concern over the ability to sustain a tenancy.
- Information on the application is fraudulent or has been withheld.
- The home is adapted, and the applicant does not require the adaptations

- Requires adaptations, and the home cannot be adapted.
- Lacks capacity and no Power of Attorney or Court of Protection Order is in place, and no suitable alternative arrangement can be agreed.
- Involved in criminal activity and therefore unsuitable for an offer in a particular location.
- Made threats of violence towards someone representing Hedyn.
- Deemed a risk to the home or the wider community.

Hedyn may refuse an applicant for housing in some cases and retain the right to use discretion. Any refusals will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Signing an occupation contract may be refused or delayed if the incoming resident does not pay the rent in advance required.

## Rural allocations/Section 106 agreement criteria

Hedyn has some homes that are allocated subject to a rural allocations criteria in the Monmouthshire and Powys Local Authority areas. The aim is to ensure that households with strong links to rural areas are given the opportunity to remain in those communities. We will allocate these homes in line with this criteria, overriding other allocation policies.

## Garage and parking bay rentals

Hedyn has a number of garages and parking bays available to rent on some estates. Anyone who lives in Newport, Torfaen and Monmouthshire can apply, but preference will be given to residents and leaseholders of Hedyn living in the locality where the garage or parking bay is situated. We will only allow a resident to rent up to two garages or two bays at any time.

## Monitoring and review

The owner of this policy is responsible for ensuring the policy remains relevant, up to date and accessible to its intended audience. This policy will be reviewed at least **every three years.**

## Engagement statement

Hedyn is committed to ensuring customers take an active role in decision making and shaping services. This policy has been developed with consideration of customer/resident feedback and insight.

## Equality, diversity & inclusion and data protection

This policy is subject to an ongoing assessment of impact on service delivery to enable us to continue to evolve to meet the needs of all customers and colleagues.

This policy is written in accordance with Hedyn Data Protection Policy and complies with data protection legislation.