



Trust Housing Association Limited

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Date of Adoption or Last Review:	5 September 2007
Lead Officer:	Housing Policy & Performance Manager
Date of Review:	September 2010
Performance Standard:	GS1.2 - Policies and procedures: We have high-quality written policies and procedures to guide our actions.

Trust Housing Association Ltd

Guest Bedrooms Policy

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Guest Bedrooms Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In the majority of its staffed developments, that is sheltered, very sheltered and supported housing, Trust provides a guest bedroom facility.
- 1.2 It is essential, therefore, to have policy in place to establish the accepted uses of this facility.

2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 The main objectives of the Guest Bedrooms Policy are as follows:
 - To specify the persons permitted to book guest rooms and the circumstances under which they may be used.
 - To clarify the order of priority for guest room bookings.
 - To outline the conditions to which guests using this facility must adhere.

3. Permitted categories for use of guest bedrooms

- 3.1 The following are permitted categories of use of the guest room facility in a development:
 - a) relatives or friends visiting or providing support to a tenant in the development who is ill;
 - b) relatives or friends of a tenant in the development who is recently deceased, while they are making necessary arrangements for clearing the property or attending the funeral or other service;
 - c) relatives or friends of a tenant in the development visiting them socially;
 - d) Trust tenants from other developments for recreational purposes (i.e. holiday or short break);
 - e) tenants of another landlord with whom the Association has a reciprocal arrangement in place for the use of guest room facilities;
 - f) Trust employees or Board members for business purposes;
 - g) Trust employees or Board members for recreational purposes.

- 3.2 Guest bedrooms may also be used as a short term decant solution for a tenant of the development in question, or from another neighbouring Trust development.
- 3.2 The Association may also come to an agreement with another organisation, such as the local council or another local housing provider, for the short term use of the guest room facilities in an emergency situation, for example evacuation due to fire or flooding. In such circumstances, the guest room would be considered to be temporarily out of use for any other purpose.
- 3.3 The Association reserves the right to refuse any booking where it has reasonable cause for concern about the booking, for example previous history of misuse or damage of guest room accommodation.

4. Order of priority for use of guest bedrooms

- 4.1 Priority will always be given to categories a) and b) stated at 3.1, even where a prior booking has been made. In such cases, the prior booking will be cancelled without notice and the person concerned, and the tenant whom they are visiting if applicable, will be notified immediately. Where possible, the Association will endeavour to help them make alternative arrangements, for example in a neighbouring Trust development or with another housing provider with whom a reciprocal arrangement is in place.
- 4.2 Where a person with a prior booking is already occupying the guest room, they will be given 24 hours notice to vacate the room. As per 4.1, the Association would help them source alternatives.
- 4.3 Persons in non-priority categories will be advised at the time of booking of the possibility of their booking being cancelled at short notice, or of their having to vacate the room should it be required in an emergency.
- 4.4 Where there is more than one priority category requiring the use of a guest room in an emergency, the booking will be given to the party who makes the earlier request. In these circumstances, the Association would try to aid the other person(s) make alternative arrangements as per 4.1.
- 4.5 Bookings in non-priority categories will be treated on first come first served basis. However, Trust employees or Board members using the facility for business purposes do so on the understanding that they may be required to cancel their booking should the facility be required for a tenant or a tenant's guest(s). In such cases, they would be given at least 48 hours notice to enable them to make alternative arrangements.

- 4.6 If more than one non-priority booking request is made for special holiday periods, such as Christmas or Easter, the booking will be allocated by means of a ballot or, if the requests come from the same persons each year, on an alternate basis.

5. Conditions of use of guest bedrooms

- 5.1 Only persons listed at Section 3 will be permitted to book a Trust guest bedroom (unless an alternative use is agreed by the Head of Housing Services/Housing Operations Manager in exceptional circumstances). Bookings will be cancelled or refused where this is not the case.
- 5.2 Occupancy of guest bedrooms must not exceed the number of bedspaces available.
- 5.2 Persons under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult when staying in a guest room.
- 5.3 Guests will be required to familiarise themselves with the fire procedures in the development, which will be made available to them on arrival and prominently displayed in the room.
- 5.4 Smoking will not be permitted in guest bedrooms.
- 5.5 Pets will not be permitted in guest bedrooms, except in the case of assistance dogs for disabled persons. However, if a guest is visiting a tenant of the development, their pet would be permitted to stay in that tenant's property, subject to the terms of the Association's Pet Policy.
- 5.6 Guests will be notified that they will be held responsible for any damage caused during their stay, and that they will be required to pay for any damage or breakages. Should such circumstances arise and the guest refuses to do so, appropriate action may be taken to recover costs arising from such damage or negligence. The Association would also reserve the right to refuse any future booking requests from the guest.

6. Booking arrangements

- 6.1 Minimum notice of 24 hours is normally required for booking a guest bedroom, in order to ensure the room can be made ready for use.
- 6.2 Advance bookings can be made at any time, however the Association will reconfirm such bookings four weeks prior to the stay. If advanced bookings

cannot be reconfirmed, then the Association reserves the right to cancel the reservation and book out the room to another guest.

- 6.3 The maximum length of stay would normally be seven nights. Any requests for longer bookings would be considered locally, at the discretion of the Co-ordinator or their delegated representative, taking account of any other demand.
- 6.4 Payment must be made to the member of staff on duty on arrival (or as soon as a member of staff is on duty should a guest arrive outwith duty hours) and a receipt issued.
- 6.5 Keys must normally be collected from staff during office hours, at which point guest room regulations will be explained to the visitor. Where there has been another guest the previous night, keys can only be collected from 12 noon, after the room has been cleaned and laundered.
- 6.6 In very sheltered and supported developments, which are staffed 24 hours, it may be possible to collect keys outwith normal office hours. Arrangements must be agreed locally with staff on duty.
- 6.7 In sheltered developments, keys can normally only be collected week days during duty hours, unless the guest is visiting a tenant of the development, in which case the keys can be left with that tenant. Any other arrangement must be agreed locally with the staff member.
- 6.8 Guest rooms must be vacated by 10:00am at the end of the stay, in order that the room can be cleaned and laundered and made available for use by other guests. The Association reserves the right to charge for another night should a guest fail to vacate the room by this time.

7. Guest facilities

- 7.1 Guest bedrooms will be fully cleaned and stocked for every new booking. Rooms will not be cleaned during a guest's visit; however where periods of more than one week's stay have been agreed, then the guest would be offered this service.
- 7.2 All guest rooms are equipped with bed linen and towels. Beds will be made up with fresh linen prior to each new booking, and fresh towels provided. Fresh towels will be offered to guests staying for longer periods, after three consecutive nights' stay. A change of linen will not be provided as standard during an occupancy; however where periods of more than one week's stay have been agreed, the guest will be offered fresh bed linen after one week.

- 7.3 The majority of guest bedrooms are equipped with en-suite facilities. Guests will be advised at the time of booking where this is not the case.
- 7.4 All guest rooms have tea/coffee making facilities and these will be stocked for visitors' use.
- 7.5 The majority of guest rooms do not have cooking facilities and guests are responsible for making their own catering arrangements.
- 7.6 In developments where there is a meals provision service for tenants, it may be possible for a guest to pay to receive meals. This will normally be possible only where the development has dedicated kitchen staff and would be subject to prior agreement with development staff.
- 7.7 Staff support will only be available to guest room users in the event of an emergency.
- 7.8 Other communal facilities may be available to guests; this must be discussed locally with development staff.

8. Charging for use of guest bedrooms

- 8.1 No charge will be made for bookings made in the priority categories a) and b) stated at 3.1; or for decant use by Trust tenants.
- 8.2 All other bookings will be charged on a per night, single or double occupancy basis. The double occupancy charge will be the equivalent of the single charge plus 50%. This charging structure recognises the fact that there is no real difference in the cost of managing the guest room for one or for two people; but that there are increased servicing costs for two guests.
- 8.3 A seven night stay will be charged at the price for six nights.
- 8.4 The following tariffs will also apply to guest room charges:

Tariff 1 (reduced rate)

- Any Trust tenant (or tenant of another landlord with whom Trust has a reciprocal arrangement);
- Any other permitted guest aged 60 or over. In a double occupancy where only one of the guests is aged 60 or over, tariff 1 will still apply.

Tariff 2 (standard rate)

- Any Trust employee or Board member booking for business or recreational purposes (business use will be reimbursed by the Association);
- Any other permitted guest under the age of 60.

- 8.5 A lesser charge will apply where guests do not have sole use of bathroom facilities.
- 8.6 Special individual charges may be agreed with another organisation for their short term use of a Trust guest bedroom in an emergency, as stated at 3.3.
- 8.7 Charges will be reviewed on an annual basis and details of current charges will be made available at developments and on request from Trust offices.
- 8.8 Income from guest room bookings will be pooled and used as a credit against the Landlord Services charge of those tenants in developments having this facility. This is believed to be a fair and easily managed way of distributing the income, given that the use of guest bedrooms tends to fluctuate at different times in different developments.

9. Application of the policy

- 9.1 The delivery of the policy objectives will be achieved via an accompanying procedure which sets out the processes to be followed by staff when taking guest room bookings.
- 9.2 An information note on guest bedrooms will also be produced for tenants, clarifying the priority given to bookings and the conditions of use.

10. Monitoring

- 10.1 The use of guest bedrooms will be monitored on an annual basis to determine type and frequency of usage. Any feedback received from guests and tenants will be used on an ongoing basis to ensure quality and standards are being maintained and inform future provision.

11. Equal opportunities

- 11.1 In accordance with legislation, in providing housing accommodation and related services the Association will act in a manner which encourages equal

opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements.

- 11.2 In considering booking requests for guest bedrooms, the Association will not knowingly treat any person differently or less favourably on the grounds of race or colour; nationality; disability; gender; marital status; age; sexual orientation; language or social origin; or of other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.
- 11.3 Upon request, the Association will make information regarding its Guest Bedrooms Policy available in alternative formats, such as large print, audio, Braille, and community languages.

12. Policy review

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three yearly basis and more frequently should circumstances require. The review will assess the effectiveness of the policy and accompanying procedure, and identify any changes which may be required.
- 12.2 As part of this policy review, consultation will take place with both staff and tenants to ensure account is taken of operational issues and the opinions of service users.