

Briefing Note

Housing Tenancy Types, Rent Levels and Unit Types

1 Types of Tenure

1.1 Council Tenancies

Introductory tenancy

New council tenants are offered an introductory tenancy. This is for 12 months and is like a 'trial' period.

The tenant automatically becomes a secure or flexible tenant after 12 months, unless the council has either:

- started action to evict
- extended the introductory tenancy for a further 6 months

There are limits to what a tenant can do with an introductory tenancy, for example they can't:

- make major improvements to the property
- swap the property with another council tenant
- apply to buy the property through the [Right to Buy scheme](#)

Secure tenancy

A secure tenant can normally live in the property for the rest of their life, as long as they don't break the conditions of the tenancy.

They can:

- rent out rooms - but can't sub-let the whole property
- buy the property through the [Right to Buy](#) scheme
- [swap home with another council or housing association tenant](#) - with the council's permission
- transfer the tenancy to someone else in some circumstances
- make improvements to the home - permission is needed from the council for some types of work

Flexible tenancy

A flexible tenant has a tenancy for a fixed period. This is usually for at least 5 years, though in some cases it may be between 2 and 5 years.

At the end of the fixed period the council may decide to:

- offer another fixed-term tenancy
- offer a secure tenancy
- not renew the tenancy

The Council will explain the reasons if we decide not to renew a tenancy and give the tenant a chance to challenge the decision.

A flexible tenant can:

- rent out rooms - but can't sub-let the whole property
- buy the property through the [Right to Buy](#) scheme
- [swap homes with another council or housing association tenant](#) - with the council's permission
- transfer the tenancy to someone else in some circumstances

1.2 Housing Association Tenancies

Starter tenancy

New housing association tenants may be offered a starter tenancy. These usually last 12 months and are like a 'trial' period.

A tenant becomes an assured or fixed term tenant after 12 months, unless the housing association has either:

- started action to evict
- extended the starter tenancy

Assured and fixed-term tenancies

At the end of the starter tenancy the tenant will be offered either:

- an assured tenancy - meaning they can normally live in your property for the rest of their life
- a fixed-term tenancy - usually lasting for at least 5 years (the landlord will decide whether it's renewed)

Rights may include:

- [buying the home](#)
- having repairs
- swapping homes with another council or housing association tenant

2 Rent Levels

This is surprisingly quite a complex area made more difficult with what the actual definition of affordable housing is.

LBE Social Rent

Councils usually charge social rents. These are low rents (i.e. lower than typical housing association rents and market rents).

In LB Enfield the weekly social rent level is as follows for 2018/19:

1b £86.45 2b £95.55 3b £119.93 4b £127.41

LBE Affordable Rent

LB Enfield has also agreed a policy of charging new build properties at a higher affordable rent as follows:

1b £158.40 2b 192.06 3b £208.89 4b £223.74

This is current policy may be reviewed in light of GLA policy on rent (see below)

Housing Association Rents

With the Housing Act 1988 housing associations were able to start charging affordable rents, which replaced the old fair rents. These can be charged up to 80% of market rents and deemed to be affordable (however this more associated with what is termed intermediate housing). Within Enfield the housing associations charge a range of rents so there is no one level applicable to a particular size of property.

Tenants can only receive housing benefit or Local Housing Allowance up to a particular level. Any shortfall between rent and LHA has to be covered by the tenant from other sources e.g. their own income or Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

A number of housing associations are now currently rethinking their rental policies, having increased their affordable rents quite significantly over recent years to include lower levels than present.

This may be in part due to the GLA insisting that scheme funded through its grant programme be let at what they call London Affordable Rent (LAR).

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4bed
80% of Market	£188.80	£241.60	£283.20	
LHA	£200	£255	£315	£389
LAR	£150.03	£158.84	£167.67	£176.49

3 Property Types and Mix

The starting point for this will be the Council's DMD which sets out requirements for the split between private (60%) and affordable housing (40%). Within the affordable housing provision a further split between rent and intermediate types is 70% - 30%.

From a pure housing needs point of view affordable rented accommodation whether social or affordable rent is better than intermediate housing.

In terms of properties themselves these should meet the London Plan sizes. However not all property types are given in the London Plan e.g. 3b6p but in terms of meeting housing needs and giving more flexibility in allocations a 3b6p is better than a 3b5p. In short all bedrooms are usually better to be 2p than 1p but it is recognised that a mix of units is needed.

Developers can sometimes be reluctant to provide larger units, even on large sites. It is important that larger (5b+) units are provided very occasionally to meet particular and specific needs. It is difficult to provide these viably on small sites so large sites will be looked upon as the best place to achieve these.

There is the need for wheelchair adapted and adaptable homes. The involvement of Adult Social Care and Occupational Therapists will be required at a relatively early stage to ensure that properties can be adapted specifically for certain clients.

Other needs groups also need housing and where these are known about the Council will inform developers of what these requirements are to work into the mix e.g. older people's housing.