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Shared Ownership Sales Policy

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Executive Lead *(Owner)*:	Martyn Jones – Executive Director of Development & Regeneration			
Policy Author*:*	Shaheen Inam – Head of Sales & Aftercare			
Strategic alignment:	N/A - the policy fulfils a regulatory and operational requirement.			
Review frequency:	**Every 3 years**	☒	**Other (state period)**	
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Date policy approved:	July 2026			
Policy approved by:	Executive Board			
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IMPACT ASSESSMENTS				
Equality Impact Assessment				
Completed? ☐	**No**	☐	**Yes**	☒
	If not required, state reason:			
Resident Impact Assessment				
1) Is this one of the agreed policies requiring resident consultation? Please refer to:	**Yes**	☒	**No**	☐
2) If yes, please confirm resident consultation has taken place	☒	***Briefly detail changes arising from resident feedback:*** The policy has been strengthened to provide clearer explanations of key processes and decision-making principles; improve transparency around costs and ongoing financial commitments; and place greater emphasis on sustainable home ownership, informed decision-making and support.		

APPROVAL - To show transparency and accountability, specify whether policies have been approved by the Board/Executive/Committee. Clear approval lines strengthen governance, ensuring assurance and accountability.				
Approval journey:	**Executive Team**	**Committee**		**Board**
		Yes	**Committee name(s)**	
	☒	☐	*Add name, otherwise state N/A*	☐

Which Regulatory Standard does this Policy support?	**Economic**		
	Governance & Viability	**Rent**	**Value for Money**
	☒	☐	☒
	Consumer		

	Neighbourhood & Community	Safety & Quality	Tenancy	Transparency, Influence & Accountability
	☐	☐	☐	☒
Associated legislation	Housing Act 1985, 1988 Renters Rights Act 2025 Leasehold Reform Act 1967 Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022 Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 Homes England Capital Funding Guide			
Associated procedures	New Build Sales Officer's Role Re-assignment Staircasing Simultaneously Staircase & Sell 100% Right to Acquire Right Buy Right to Shared Ownership Tenant Home Purchase Scheme			
Where is this policy to be published?	**Website**	**Intranet**	**Both**	
	☐	☐	☒	

Shared Ownership Policy

1. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to delivering a fair, transparent and compliant approach to Shared Ownership sales, resales, and staircasing sales activities. Shared Ownership homes will be allocated and managed in line with applicable Homes England (HE) requirements, funding obligations, nomination agreements and affordability principles, whilst ensuring Shared Owners receive clear information and support throughout their home ownership journey.

2. Objectives, desired outcomes and strategic alignment

- The intended outcomes of this policy are to:
  - support fair and transparent access to Shared Ownership opportunities;
  - ensure affordability and sustainability principles are applied consistently, helping purchasers and Shared Owners to own a share that is affordable both at the point of sale and over the longer term;
  - provide purchasers and Shared Owners with clear, timely and accessible information throughout the transaction, enabling them to understand their options, costs, rights and responsibilities and make informed decisions;
  - deliver a consistent and supportive customer experience across new build sales, resales and staircasing;
  - support compliance with applicable HE requirements, nomination agreements and lease obligations; and
  - ensure appropriate oversight, controls and consistent decision-making for key Shared Ownership transactions.

3. Scope

- This policy applies to all Shared Ownership sales activity undertaken by the organisation, including new build sales, resales and staircasing transactions. This policy does not apply to market sale activity.
- Compliance with this policy is required by all colleagues and third parties involved in Shared Ownership activity, including estate agents and other appointed representatives.
- This policy applies from the point a Shared Ownership home is released for marketing and throughout activities relating to the allocation, sale, resale and staircasing of Shared Ownership homes.

4. Policy Principles

New Build Shared Ownership Sales

- New Build Shared Ownership homes will be sold using a fair, transparent and consistent approach. The relevant requirements within the HE Capital Funding Guide (CFG), any local authority requirements, organisational affordability (surplus requirements noted below) and eligibility criteria will apply.
- Where local connection requirements, nomination agreements or other prioritisation criteria apply, these will be clearly communicated within marketing information.
- Purchasers will be required to complete an affordability assessment with a nominated Qualified Advisor. The affordability assessment will consider household income, expenditure and financial commitments and will determine a percentage share of the property that is affordable and sustainable for the purchaser.
- Purchasers will be required to satisfy all eligibility criteria, HE's funding criteria, identity verification and Anti-Money Laundering requirements. Information and documentation will be requested to support applications and confirm compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.
- New Build Shared Ownership homes will be sold using a valuation obtained by the organisation from an appropriately qualified RICS registered valuer.
- Reservation fees, timescales and requirements will be clearly communicated to purchasers, including any terms and conditions. Purchasers will have a 14- calendar-day cooling-off period from the date of reservation, during which they may cancel their reservation and receive a refund of the reservation fee.
- Purchases using a mortgage will be required to obtain an appropriate mortgage product and provide details of their mortgage arrangements for approval before the sale can complete. Mortgage arrangements must be suitable for Shared Ownership requirements.
- Shared Ownership homes will be sold using the appropriate HE Shared Ownership lease, taking account of the planning obligations, funding arrangements, legal requirements and any other scheme-specific considerations applicable to the development.
- Prospective Shared Ownership purchasers will be provided with timely, clear and transparent information about the Shared Ownership scheme, the home being purchased, relevant costs and ongoing financial commitments, and key rights and responsibilities associated with Shared Ownership. Purchasers will also be required to obtain appropriate independent financial and legal advice where relevant, supporting informed decision-making before committing to a purchase.

Allocation - First Come First Served

- New Build Shared Ownership homes will be offered on a first come first served basis, supporting a fair and transparent approach by applying the same defined requirements consistently to eligible purchasers. Exceptions may apply where priority requirements arise from local authority criteria, Armed Forces priority categories, planning obligations, nomination agreements, funding requirements or other scheme-specific requirements.
- Where local priority criteria or other specific prioritisation requirements apply, these will be clearly communicated within scheme specific marketing information. Where more than one purchaser qualifies under any applicable prioritisation criteria, the home will be offered on a first come, first served basis.
- Purchasers must meet the relevant eligibility, affordability and funding requirements before being considered under the first come, first served approach. For the purpose of determining priority, first come, first served will be established at the point a purchaser has completed both of the following requirements:
    - successfully completed an initial affordability assessment with a nominated Qualified Advisor; and
    - completed and submitted the required application.
- Priority will be determined using the later date and time of these completed activities, as this represents the point at which the purchaser has fully met the initial application requirements. Viewing a property does not secure or affect a purchaser's position under the first come first served approach.
- To minimise unnecessary inconvenience and avoid unnecessary effort for purchasers, a 1:1 plot-to-applicant ratio will be operated, meaning a property will only be provisionally offered to one purchaser at a time. A provisional offer does not constitute a formal reservation of a property and does not guarantee that a sale will proceed.
- Once a property has been provisionally offered, purchasers will be required to progress the next stages of the sales process within the timescales communicated to them. Where delays arise outside the purchaser's reasonable control, the individual circumstances will be considered before a provisional offer is withdrawn.
- Where a purchaser withdraws from the process, no longer meets the relevant requirements or, without reasonable explanation, does not progress within the required timescales, the provisional offer may be withdrawn and the property offered to the next eligible purchaser in the first come first served allocation list.

Staircasing

- Shared Owners may apply to purchase additional shares in their home through a process known as staircasing. This increases the percentage of the home they own and, where permitted, can provide a route towards full home ownership. Staircasing will be subject to the terms of the Shared Ownership lease and any applicable planning, funding or legal requirements.

- Where applicable under the terms of the Shared Ownership lease, Shared Owners may have access to alternative staircasing options, including the purchase of smaller incremental shares. Such transactions will be managed in accordance with the lease requirements and any applicable funding requirements.
- Where a valuation is required, Shared Owners will be responsible for obtaining an independent valuation from an appropriately qualified RICS registered valuer, the appointment of which is subject to agreement by the organisation. The valuation will be used to determine the market value of the home and the value of the share being sold. Valuations will be obtained and applied in accordance with the terms of the Shared Ownership lease, any applicable HE’s CFG requirements and relevant RICS requirements. Any improvements, alterations or additions to the property will be considered in line with the lease and any relevant valuation guidance.
- Where staircasing involves mortgage lending or additional borrowing, Shared Owners may be required to demonstrate that the transaction remains affordable and sustainable. Shared Owners wishing to staircase will be required to provide the necessary documentation in order to satisfy Anti Money Laundering requirements.
- Shared Owners will be responsible for costs associated with the staircasing transaction. This may include valuation fees, legal costs, administration fees and other transaction costs. Clear and transparent information about the organisation’s applicable fees, charges and payment responsibilities will be provided before Shared Owners commit to the transaction and will be published on our website.
- Where additional shares are purchased, rent will reduce in line with the remaining share retained by the organisation.
- There is no provision for reverse staircasing as a standard. Requests will only be considered in exceptional circumstances where a Shared Owner is experiencing severe financial hardship, all other reasonable options have been exhausted, and the resulting housing costs are assessed as affordable and sustainable. All requests will be reviewed by the Executive Director of Development and Regeneration.

Resales

- Shared Owners wishing to sell their home will be required to follow the resale requirements set out in their lease. This will usually include a nomination period, during which the organisation has the opportunity to nominate a purchaser before the home can be marketed for sale on the open market. The length of the nomination period and any specific requirements will be determined by the terms of the lease and any applicable legal or funding requirements.

- During the nomination period, Shared Owners will be responsible for marketing the property through an estate agent. SettleParadigm may suggest estate agents with experience of Shared Ownership sales; however, Shared Owners may appoint an estate agent of their choice.
- Where a purchaser is not secured during the nomination period, the Shared Owner may be permitted to market and sell their share on the open market, subject to the terms of the lease. Where permitted by the lease and any applicable funding requirements, the home may also be sold outright through simultaneous staircasing, where the Shared Owner purchases additional shares at the same time as the property is sold.
- Where a valuation is required, Shared Owners will be responsible for obtaining an independent valuation from an appropriately qualified RICS registered valuer, the appointment of which is subject to agreement by the organisation. The valuation will be used to determine the market value of the home and the value of the share being sold. Valuations will be obtained and applied in accordance with the terms of the Shared Ownership lease, any applicable HE's CFG requirements and relevant RICS requirements. Any improvements, alterations or additions to the property will be considered in line with the lease and any relevant valuation guidance.
- Shared Owners will be responsible for costs associated with the resale transaction. This may include, but is not limited to, valuation fees, the organisation's legal costs, administration fees, estate agency, and any leasehold information costs (information packs required as part of the sale process). Clear and transparent information about the organisation's applicable fees, charges and payment responsibilities will be provided before Shared Owners commit to the transaction and throughout the resale process and will be published on our website.
- Prospective purchasers will be required to satisfy the relevant criteria, eligibility, affordability, including surplus income requirements and funding requirements at the time of the transaction.
- Prospective purchasers will be required to purchase at least the percentage share owned by the selling Shared Owner. Where permitted under the lease and funding requirements, simultaneous staircasing (purchasing additional shares at the same time as buying the home) will be considered subject to affordability and eligibility requirements.
- The organisation will work with Shared Owners, prospective purchasers and relevant third parties to support effective communication and help minimise avoidable delays throughout the resale process.
- Following completion of the sale, the incoming Shared Owner will assume responsibility for the rights, obligations and terms contained within the Shared Ownership lease.

Surplus Income

- Sustainable home ownership is a key principle of Shared Ownership. Affordability assessments will consider not only whether a purchaser can afford a home at the point of application, but also whether the home is likely to remain affordable throughout the purchaser's home ownership journey.

- For all new shared ownership applications, affordability assessments will be undertaken by a nominated Qualified Advisor using a two-stage affordability approach. The assessment will consider household income, expenditure, known financial commitments and other relevant individual circumstances that may affect affordability.
- Affordability assessments will be based on income that can be appropriately verified and evidenced at the time of assessment. Regular additional income or confirmed future income may be considered where it can be evidenced and assessed as reliable and sustainable. Income or benefits that cannot be evidenced or confirmed will not be taken into account when determining affordability.
- As part of the affordability assessment, purchasers will be expected to demonstrate that they have sufficient disposable income remaining after housing costs and committed expenditure have been considered. Budget planning and any known or reasonably foreseeable changes in household circumstances or housing costs may also be considered where these could affect long-term affordability.
- Purchasers will be required to retain a minimum monthly surplus income equivalent to 10% of net household income, following consideration of mortgage payments, rent, service charges and other financial commitments. This requirement is intended to support financial resilience and help ensure sufficient disposable income remains after housing and committed costs have been taken into account.
- Purchasers will have the opportunity to correct inaccurate information or provide relevant additional evidence where this may materially affect an affordability assessment, before a final decision is made. Where a purchaser does not meet the affordability and surplus income requirements, the application will be declined.

Adverse Credit

- Shared Ownership applications from purchasers with adverse credit, such as missed payments, defaults, County Court Judgments or other significant credit issues, will be considered individually and will not be automatically declined solely because of past credit difficulties. Applications will be assessed fairly and consistently, taking account of long-term affordability and sustainability.
- Purchasers with adverse credit may still be considered where they are able to secure an appropriate mortgage product and satisfy the relevant affordability requirements. Assessments will consider the purchaser's current financial position and ability to sustain home ownership.

- Adverse credit assessments will consider the nature, severity and recency of any financial issues alongside the purchaser's current circumstances, any relevant factors that contributed to the financial difficulty, and their overall affordability position.
- Where a purchaser is unable to obtain a mortgage due to adverse credit and the standard cash purchase criteria do not apply, the application will not normally be considered. In exceptional circumstances, discretion may be exercised where there is a clear rationale and evidence of financial recovery and positive financial behaviour following the adverse credit event. This may include repayment or active management of outstanding debts, maintaining agreed payment arrangements, a sustained period of responsible financial management, and relevant changes in personal or financial circumstances. Any exception will require approval from a minimum of two of the following: Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and/or Executive Director of Development and Regeneration.

Cash Buyer – All new Shared Owners application

- Cash purchasers will be considered for Shared Ownership homes where permitted under applicable HE requirements. Cash purchase arrangements will not normally be considered where access to mortgage lending is restricted due to adverse credit history, except in exceptional circumstances as set out in the Adverse Credit section of this policy.
- Circumstances where cash purchase arrangements will be considered include, but are not limited to, religious beliefs which prevent the use of conventional mortgage products, age-related restrictions, long-term disability, caring responsibilities or other circumstances where purchasers are unable to access mortgage lending.
- Cash purchasers will remain subject to the relevant eligibility and affordability requirements and must demonstrate that they can sustainably afford the ongoing costs associated with Shared Ownership, including rent, service charges and other financial commitments. Cash purchasers will also be required to satisfy applicable Anti-Money Laundering, identity verification and source-of-funds requirements.
- Where a cash purchase request falls outside standard requirements, consideration will be given in exceptional circumstances where there is a clear rationale, and appropriate approval has been obtained in accordance with delegated authority arrangements.

5. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- The organisation is committed to ensuring that no purchaser or Shared Owner is unfairly disadvantaged through the application of this policy. Decisions relating to Shared Ownership eligibility, affordability, allocations and transactions will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with equality, diversity and inclusion principles.

  We will:

- Apply this policy consistently and ensure decisions are based on objective eligibility, affordability, funding and allocation requirements rather than personal characteristics or factors unrelated to the policy requirements.
- Ensure no purchaser or Shared Owner receives less favourable treatment because of any protected characteristic in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Make reasonable adjustments where required to support purchaser and Shared Owners with identified needs and remove barriers to accessing services. This may include support with applications, alternative communication methods, accessible documents, interpreter support, flexible appointments or support for purchasers and Shared Owners who may experience barriers using digital services.
- Ensure information and communications are clear, accessible and use plain language wherever possible. Alternative formats and communication support will be provided where reasonably required, taking account of individual communication, accessibility and language needs.
- Recognise that purchasers and Shared Owners may experience differing barriers to accessing home ownership due to disability, financial vulnerability, wider socioeconomic factors or individual circumstances and ensure decisions are made fairly and consistently in line with policy and funding requirements.
- Recognise that some purchasers and Shared Owners may require alternative approaches to accessing home ownership, including circumstances where religious beliefs affect access to conventional mortgage products, where permitted within applicable funding and policy requirements.
- Monitor Shared Owners profiling information, application outcomes and customer feedback to identify any unintended bias, barriers or disproportionate impacts and take action where appropriate.
- Continue to improve Shared Ownership profiling information and data quality to support inclusive service delivery and better understand whether any groups are disproportionately impacted by the application of this policy.
- Comply with the Equality Act 2010 and all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
- Purchasers and Shared Owners who believe they have been treated unfairly through the application of this policy, or that their accessibility needs have not been appropriately considered, may raise their concerns through the organisation’s complaints process.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Executive Board

- Reviewing and approving this policy and any material amendments.

Executive Director of Development & Regeneration

- Strategic oversight of this policy as the policy owner. Ensuring a review is conducted every 3 years, or sooner where there is a material change in legislation, regulation, funding requirements or operational need.

Director of Development Delivery

- Responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively operationally and that the policy continues to align with organisational and regulatory requirements.

Head of Sales & Aftercare

- Operational ownership of the policy, including oversight of compliance, monitoring outcomes, supporting consistent application of the policy and ensuring operational procedures align with policy requirements. Responsible for monitoring relevant legislative and regulatory changes and ensuring the policy and associated processes remain up to date and compliant.

Team Managers (New Build Sales Manager & Residential Sales Manager)

- Managers are responsible for supporting consistent application of the policy and ensuring any exceptions are appropriately approved and recorded.

New Build Sales Officer/ Sales & Marketing Officer/Residential Sales Officers

- Delivering Shared Ownership sales activities in accordance with this policy, supporting purchasers and shared owners through the sales process, completing required checks and assessments, maintaining accurate records and escalating any exceptions or concerns where required.

7. Compliance/ Key Performance Measures

- Compliance with this policy will be supported through appropriate management oversight, procedures, approval controls, delegated authority arrangements and audit activity. Shared Ownership transactions will be managed in accordance with applicable legislation, HE requirements, funding conditions, lease obligations and internal process requirements.
- The effectiveness and application of the policy will be monitored through:
    - sales performance and transaction trends, including completions, reservations, forecast performance and void stock
    - customer feedback, satisfaction, complaints and escalations, to identify service improvements, barriers or unintended impacts
    - affordability, eligibility and allocation outcomes, including exceptions and escalated cases, to support fair and consistent decision-making
    - Shared Owner's profiling information and application outcomes, where appropriate, to identify potential unintended bias or disproportionate impacts;
    - compliance and assurance activity, including management reviews, audit findings, policy exceptions and significant risks or control issues; and

    - relevant changes to legislation, regulation, HE requirements and operational practice.

  Relevant performance, compliance and risk information will be reported through established management and governance processes.
- The policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner where there is a material change in legislation, regulation, funding requirements or operational practice.

8. Related Policies, Procedures and Key Documents

- Anti Money Laundering Policy
- Rent Setting Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Ground Rent Policy
- New Build Sales Officer's Role Procedures
- Re-assignment Procedures
- Staircasing Procedures
- Simultaneously Staircase & Sell 100% Procedures
- Right to Acquire Procedures
- Right to Buy Procedures
- Right to Shared Ownership Procedures

9. Version Control

Version control			
Date	**Version**	**Approved By**	**Details of Amendments**
July 2026	V1	Executive Board	New integrated Policy