

# Housing Moves scheme policy framework

November 2012

---

## Contents

1	About this document	2
2	Definitions	3
3	Overview of the scheme	4
4	Contribution of properties	7
5	Equalisation	9
6	Applications and prioritisation	11
7	Bidding for and letting properties	13
8	Housing associations	15
9	Promoting the scheme	16
10	Reporting and monitoring	17
11	Accessibility	18
12	Governance, evaluations, funding and expansion	19
13	Operating the PLM scheme - roles and responsibilities	23
Appendix 1	HCA London Board "high level principles"	24
Appendix 2	Quarterly equalisation process	27
Appendix 3	PLM scheme allocations policy	30
Appendix 4	Equalities impact assessment	34
Appendix 5	Summary of legal position	35
Appendix 6	London Housing Mobility Group terms of reference	36
Appendix 7	GLA allocation policy for East Village lettings	38
Appendix 8	Merger of g15 London Moves and Housing Moves	47

Initial policy framework approved March 2012

Appendix 8 approved April 2012

Appendix 7 approved July 2012

Additional points 5.8 and 5.10 approved November 2012

## **1 About this document**

- 1.1 The Housing Moves scheme is designed to facilitate cross-borough housing mobility for social tenants who wish to move around London.
- 1.2 This document is the policy framework that underpins Housing Moves. It has been developed from
  - policy 1.3H of the Mayor's 2009 London Housing Strategy<sup>1</sup> and policy 1.2M of the Mayor's 2012 draft revised London Housing Strategy<sup>2</sup>;
  - responses received during a formal consultation on the Mayor's plans for a scheme<sup>3</sup>;
  - the "high level principles" for a scheme agreed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) London Board (appendix 1);
  - recommendations agreed by the PLM Steering Group and its successor, the London Housing Mobility Group (LHMG); and,
  - consultation with politicians, officers and other stakeholders across London.
- 1.3 This policy framework is intended to inform the operational policies and procedures of Housing Moves. All partners commit to delivering and participating in Housing Moves according to this document.
- 1.4 The framework describes Housing Moves as it will initially run. There are a number of possible additions and expansions that could potentially be introduced over time. However, no such extensions would be made without extensive consultation with boroughs and a clear mandate from the new London Housing Board. See section 12 for further details.
- 1.5 An initial equalities impact assessment has been carried out and is at Appendix 4. A further equalities impact assessment will be carried out as part of the six month review.
- 1.6 The GLA has received legal advice on Housing Moves as it is proposed in this document. A summary of this advice is at Appendix 5.

---

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.london.gov.uk/publication/london-housing-strategy>.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.london.gov.uk/consultation/revised-london-housing-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.london.gov.uk/consultation/mobility-londons-social-housing-tenants>.

## 2 Definitions

- An **applicant** means a household that wishes to apply for a cross-borough move through Housing Moves. Upon being accepted onto the scheme, an applicant becomes a **registrant**.
- A **borough** means a local housing authority that is participating in Housing Moves by contributing a proportion of its social housing lettings to either its own stock or housing association owned stock.
- A **participating housing association** means a housing association that is contributing properties to Housing Moves that are not subject to local nomination agreements. Most housing associations will also be contributing homes as part of a borough's contribution.
- A **contribution** is the number of homes a borough or participating housing association offer up to Housing Moves.
- The **receiving borough** is the borough in which the Housing Moves home is located.
- The **receiving landlord** is the borough or housing association that is the landlord of the Housing Moves home.
- The **referring borough** is the borough in which the applicant or registrant currently resides.
- The **referring landlord** is the landlord of the home in which the applicant or registrant currently resides.
- The **property** is a social rented home that has been offered up to Housing Moves as part of a borough or housing association contribution.
- A **letting** is when a registrant is let a property through Housing Moves.
- A **shortlist** is a list of all eligible bids received for an advertised property, in order of priority according to the Housing Moves allocations policy.
- The **PLM Steering Group** was mandated by the HCA London Board to lead the development of the Housing Moves. Its membership consisted of: the Greater London Authority (GLA); London Councils; the London Boroughs of Barnet, Greenwich, Kensington & Chelsea, Sutton and Tower Hamlets; and, Peabody (representing the g15 group of housing associations).
- The **PLM Working Group** met regularly during development of Housing Moves and advised the GLA on its recommendations to the Steering Group. It consisted of: the GLA (including the manager of the Housing Moves service); the East London Housing Partnership (ELHP); the West London Housing Partnership (WLHP); the London Boroughs of Brent, Hackney, Lewisham, Wandsworth and Westminster; Southern Housing Group; and, East Thames.
- The **London Housing Mobility Group** is the successor to the PLM Steering Group and has a similar role, but it will be in future report to the new London Housing Board. It also has a wider remit, including Seaside & Country Homes, Choice Based Mobility, strategic sites etc.

### **3 Overview of the scheme**

- 3.1 Housing Moves is a new housing mobility service for London's social tenants. It facilitates cross-borough moves within the social rented sector. Boroughs (and some housing associations) contribute 5% of their lettings into a pan-London pool, and social tenants bid for the pooled properties.
- 3.2 Housing Moves is designed to add value to existing local, sub-regional and regional mobility schemes, yet it also marks a step-change in housing mobility options for tenants. It does this by, for the first time in many years, providing a consistent, fair and transparent way of moving around London.
- 3.3 The scheme has been developed in partnership with boroughs and housing associations – the objective has been to create a non-bureaucratic scheme that minimises workload for landlords and boroughs.
- 3.4 Boroughs will not gain or lose properties overall from the scheme. The number of moves into any borough will, over time, be matched by the number of moves out of that borough.
- 3.5 Housing Moves will prioritise underoccupiers, those in work or training, and those who wish to move to provide care and support to a family member or friend. Most other social tenants are also eligible subject to some basic criteria, e.g. anti-social behaviour and rent arrears history.
- 3.6 In line with established methods of advertising social housing to applicants, Housing Moves will use a web-based choice-based lettings (CBL) system to facilitate lettings. This will be procured, paid for and run by the GLA. Tenants will apply and bid through the public facing part of this system, and landlords will upload properties and verify applicants through the back-office part of this system.
- 3.7 Initially, there will be up to 1,300 properties per year available to Housing Moves.
- 3.8 Housing associations are also encouraged to contribute properties that are not subject to local nomination agreements to the scheme, and it is planned to align Housing Moves with the g15 London Moves scheme.
- 3.9 This policy framework will be reviewed in its entirety after 6 months of operation.
- 3.10 The diagrams overleaf illustrate how the scheme will work in practice. The first shows the process undertaken to achieve a move through Housing Moves. The second shows the process undertaken to advertise properties through Housing Moves.

### Stage 1: Register for the scheme

- (1) Register for the scheme
- (2) Your landlord is notified
- (3) Your details are checked
- (4) Your application is approved

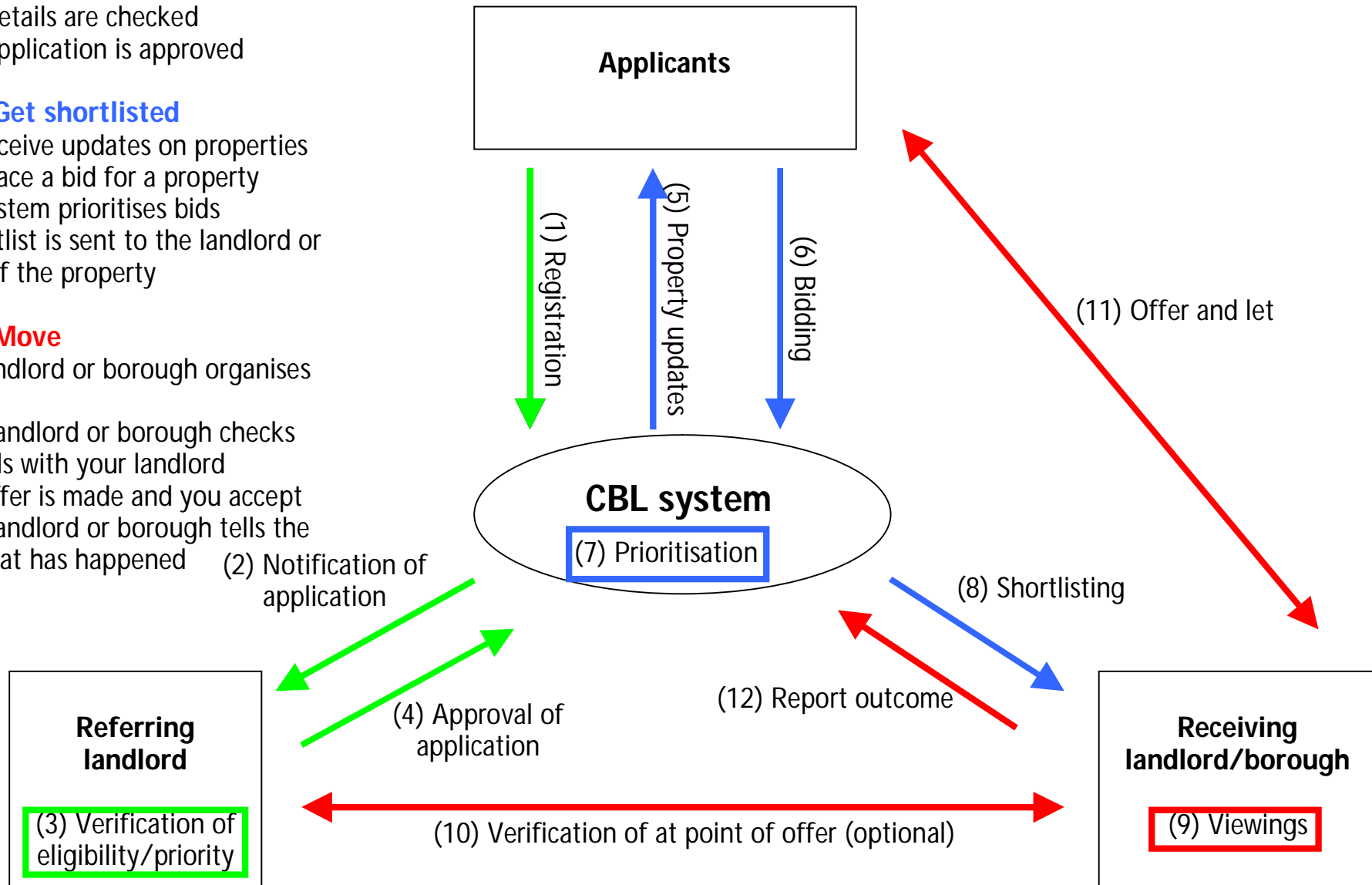
### Stage 2: Get shortlisted

- (5) You receive updates on properties
- (6) You place a bid for a property
- (7) The system prioritises bids
- (8) A shortlist is sent to the landlord or borough of the property

### Stage 3: Move

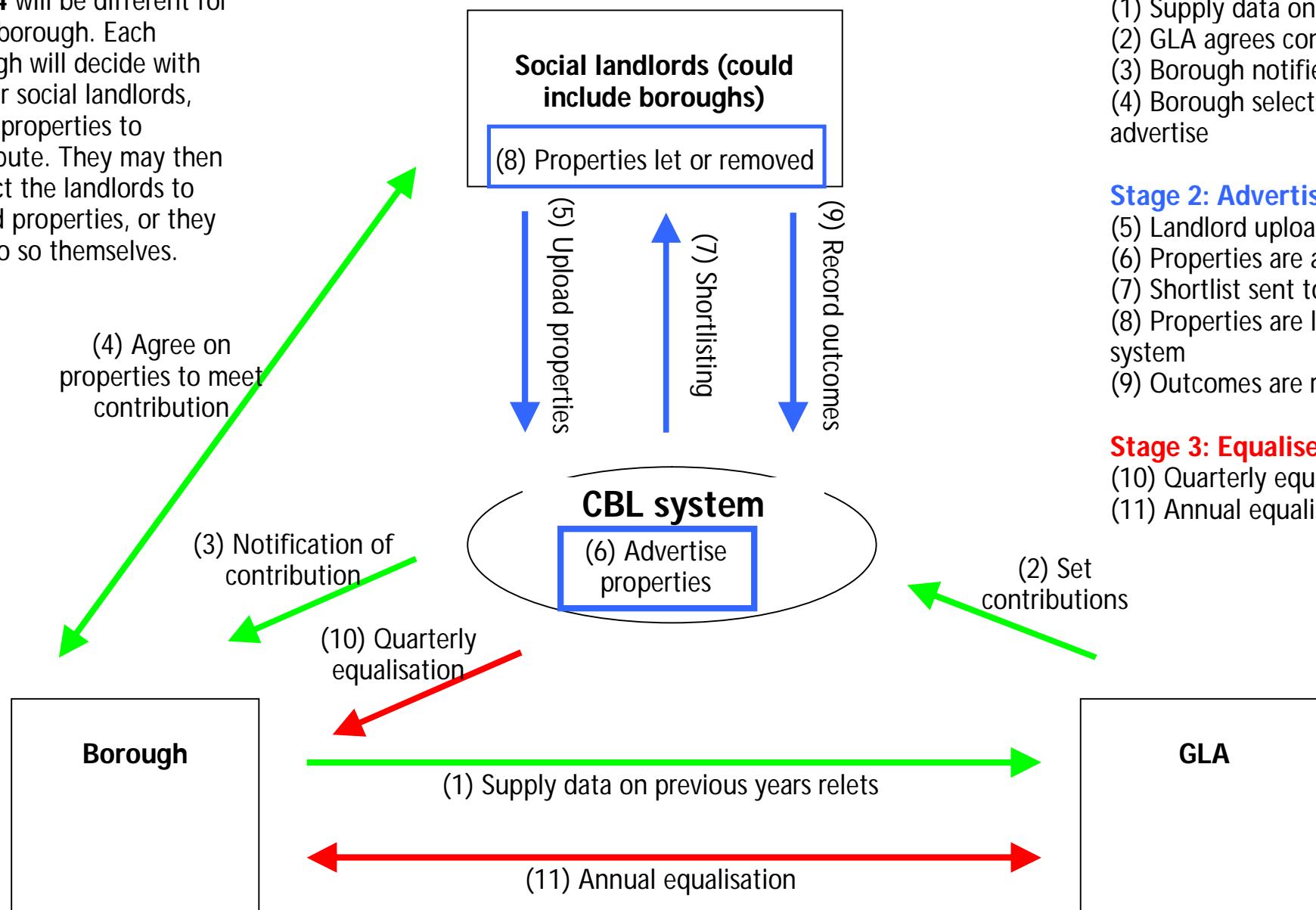
- (9) The landlord or borough organises viewings
- (10) The landlord or borough checks your details with your landlord
- (11) An offer is made and you accept
- (12) The landlord or borough tells the system what has happened

### Moves through the scheme: 12 steps



## Advertising properties through Housing Moves: 11 steps

**Step 4** will be different for every borough. Each borough will decide with partner social landlords, which properties to contribute. They may then instruct the landlords to upload properties, or they may do so themselves.



## 4 Contributing properties

### *Definition of relets*

- 4.1 The scheme will advertise the equivalent of 5% of each borough's relets of social rented homes, each year.
- 4.2 Each borough will make a contribution of properties to the scheme, which will be for a single year, from April to March. The data used to determine a contribution will be taken from the latest available HSSA, CORE and borough data as detailed in the definitions and footnotes below.
- 4.3 Borough relets are defined as borough lets to borough stock<sup>4</sup> minus transfers<sup>5</sup> and successions, plus borough nominations to other social landlord<sup>6</sup> stock<sup>7</sup> minus transfers<sup>8</sup> and successions, over a given year. For boroughs with no stock, relets are borough nominations to social landlord stock minus transfers and successions. Section 8 deals with the contribution by housing associations of properties that are not subject to local nomination agreements with local authorities.
- 4.4 There may at times be untypical circumstances that impact on relets data, with the result that the contribution for the following year is artificially increased or decreased. In order to smooth the contribution of properties over time, the GLA may consider using an average of the previous three years' worth of data, instead of simply using the previous year's data.
- 4.5 For the first year of the scheme (2012-13), the contribution will be reduced to reflect the number of months remaining in the year after which a borough joins.
- 4.6 Boroughs will decide, with their housing association partners, which properties should be offered up to meet their contribution amount.

### *Affordable Rent*

- 4.7 As part of the 2011-15 affordable housing investment programme, some relets in London will be converted to the new Affordable Rent tenure. At this stage, the scale of conversions that will take place in London is unclear, as is the extent to which these conversions can be absorbed by those housing association voids to which boroughs do not have nomination rights, and the extent to which Affordable Rent will restrict or promote mobility. For these reasons, Affordable Rent relets will initially be excluded from the scheme.
- 4.8 However, it is important to ensure that the agreed borough contribution reflects the fact that some of each borough's relets will be converted to Affordable Rent (thus affecting their agreed contribution amount). If the information is available, boroughs will inform the GLA of the projected proportion of relets that will be converted to Affordable Rent in the coming year. This will be netted off of the contribution. If this information is not available at the point of agreeing a contribution, then Affordable Rent relets will be netted off retrospectively.

---

<sup>4</sup> HSSA Section D 9a.

<sup>5</sup> HSSA Section D 4a+8a.

<sup>6</sup> This includes all housing associations, ALMOs and LSVTs.

<sup>7</sup> HSSA Section D 11a.

<sup>8</sup> CORE Housing Association Lettings: Limited to lettings where the source of referral was LA nomination, and previous tenure was LA or HA General Needs.

### *Principles and exclusions*

- 4.9 The scheme is designed to be as flexible as possible. The contribution of relets is “notional”. That is, boroughs can contribute new build homes if they choose to do so, so long as the total number of homes offered up meets their contribution.
- 4.10 The contribution will be broken down by bed size. The contribution will contain the same proportion of 1 bed homes, 2 bed homes and 3 bed homes as the profile of the borough’s entire turnover of relets. To determine the breakdown of contribution by bed size, boroughs will provide data on lettings and nominations by bed size. The percentage of lets that were 1 bed, 2 bed and 3 bed in the previous year<sup>9</sup> will be applied when determining the contribution. The remaining element of the contribution – “other properties” – can be any size the borough chooses. Boroughs are encouraged to contribute 4 bed or larger homes, but there is no expectation to do so. Bedsits are counted as 1 beds.
- 4.11 Boroughs are required to contribute a reasonable proportion of accessible homes to the scheme. However, it is recognised that not all boroughs will be in a position to make their contribution of accessible homes proportionate to the overall lettings – not least because the London Accessible Housing Register (LAHR) is only partially implemented.
- 4.12 The spirit of the scheme is that contributed properties should reflect as far as possible the overall lettings of social rented properties in London. This is in the interest of all partners since, due to the equalisation arrangements (see section 5), residents will only have the chance to move out of a borough if people are also choosing to move into a borough. Initially, there will be no policies on the quality, typology or location of properties contributed by boroughs.
- 4.13 The contribution will be split into four quarters. Within each quarter, boroughs should spread out the contribution of properties to ensure that there is always a supply of properties on the scheme.
- 4.14 If a property is not let then the nomination reverts to the receiving borough or landlord (depending on local nomination agreements).
- 4.15 Some boroughs own or have nomination rights to social rented homes outside of the borough. If this is the case, then 4.12 should be applied: properties contributed should reflect as far as possible the overall lettings of social rented properties, by location.

### *Contributing more than 5%*

- 4.16 Some boroughs may choose to contribute additional homes, i.e. in excess of their agreed contribution amount. There is no cap on the number of homes that can be contributed to the scheme. However, there is an overall cap (equivalent to the 5% figure defined above) on the number of moves in to or out of a borough. See section 5.4 for more details.
- 4.17 There will also be the opportunity for boroughs to contribute homes that are not part of their agreed contribution. For example, boroughs may choose to contribute hard-to-let units. There will be a facility to mark these as “unconditional”, meaning that they are not part of a borough’s agreed contribution and equalisation does not apply.

---

<sup>9</sup> Data from the latest full year or the first three quarters of the previous year, and extrapolated to cover the fourth quarter, will be used.



### *Monitoring and revisions*

- 4.18 The agreed contribution is based on data from previous years and on projections for coming years. Therefore, it is likely that within each year the contribution of homes will not equal exactly 5% of relets for that year. Contribution of homes will be closely monitored throughout the year, and action will be taken to adjust contributions if it is apparent that they are not an accurate reflection.
- 4.19 Specifically, the GLA will use the latest available HSSA data to determine the contribution amount, including unaudited HSSA submissions (submitted in July) and the official published HSSA where they are available. Every time new data is released, we will make a correction by reducing or increasing the contribution amount or allowing more or fewer tenants to move in the current or future year.
- 4.20 There are very few rules governing which properties should be contributed to the scheme, other than the need for contributions to be proportionate by bed size. This is to ensure that boroughs retain as much flexibility as possible as to which properties they contribute. However, the profile of Housing Moves properties and the refusal rates of each borough's properties will be monitored closely. This includes the numbers of studios and sheltered properties that are contributed to the scheme.

### *Commitment to the 5%*

- 4.21 The GLA understands the importance of not exceeding the 5% figure, particularly when it comes to planning for future years. Where necessary, the GLA will work with the boroughs to make one in-year adjustment to contribution amounts to endeavour that the number of properties contributed is not greater than 5% of their relets of social rented homes in that year.

## 5 Equalisation

### *Definition*

- 5.1 The PLM scheme will be reciprocal. That is, no borough will gain or lose from the scheme:

*The total number and bedsize of properties contributed and let by a borough through the scheme should be equal to the total number and bedsize of properties freed up in that borough through the scheme.*

- 5.2 In other words, the scheme should have no net impact on a borough's stock and lettings, irrespective of the total volume of moves to or from that borough. Equalisation is about the outcomes – ie the actual moves that take place – rather than the contribution of properties. It is inevitable that, given a free run, most boroughs would have a net position at the end of a period of time that is a plus or minus. This is where either
- properties are owed by a borough to other boroughs in the Housing Moves scheme - because more households have moved out than in to that borough; or,
  - properties are owed by other boroughs in the Housing Moves scheme to a borough – because more households have moved in to that borough than out of it.
- 5.3 To achieve equalisation, a triple-lock will be put in place:
- a **quarterly equalisation process** will stop large deficits building up in the first place. For each quarter, it will limit moves into a borough to match moves out of the borough from the previous quarter.
  - an **annual equalisation process** will deal with any outstanding deficits by arranging bilateral “swaps” between boroughs who owe and boroughs who are owed.
  - As a last resort to **guarantee equalisation**, a borough will not put any properties in during year two until equalisation is achieved.

### *Overall cap on moves*

- 5.4 There is an overall cap on moves into or out of a borough each quarter. This cap is equal to the contribution amount, as defined in section 4 above. As explained in paragraph 4.18, boroughs are free to contribute properties in addition to their core contribution amount, but the number of these properties that are actually let through the scheme will always be capped at 5%.

### *Quarterly equalisation process*

- 5.5 This will be a transparent and automated process that aims to satisfy all boroughs that they are not gaining or losing from the scheme.
- 5.6 For each borough, the number of homes contributed, and the number of residents that can move out, will be limited to reflect demand data from previous letting history. At the end of each quarter, the system will identify the boroughs where there is a mismatch between the number of properties contributed and the number freed up. Quarterly (as opposed to annual) equalisation is important if the scheme is to avoid very large equalisations taking place at the end of each year – which could mean long periods where no properties are contributed by some boroughs, or no households being able to use the scheme in others.
- 5.7 Where the contribution of properties is higher than the number of properties freed up, the system will automatically limit the number of properties contributed during the following quarter. Where the opposite is the case, the system will automatically limit the number of tenants that can move out from that borough during the following quarter.

- 5.8 However, a small maximum surplus or deficit, proportionate to the level of each borough's contribution amount, will be permitted at any given time. The tolerance level will be equivalent to 10% of each borough's contribution amount for any given bedsize. Having this tolerance built into the equalisation process will enable a much more continuous flow of mobility opportunities for tenants. However, it will in no way undermine the fundamental principle of ensuring a balance of moves in and out of each borough – particularly given the raft of other measures in place to guarantee equalisation.
- 5.9 The equalisation process will be carried out automatically by the CBL system and quarterly equalisation reports will be produced by the GLA for boroughs. The quarterly equalisation process, with examples, is detailed in appendix 2.
- 5.10 The Housing Mobility Team will intervene in-year where they identify large imbalances building up and broker one-off bilateral swaps between boroughs. This policy is currently in place to deal with end of year imbalances but could be implemented throughout the year as necessary.
- 5.11 Housing Moves uses flexible bidding cycles so that there is less of an impact on participating boroughs. However, one of the implications of this is that some bidding cycles will cross over into a new quarter. Where this occurs, and for the purposes of quarterly equalisation, properties will always be counted in the quarter in which bidding closes.

#### *Annual equalisation*

- 5.12 At the end of every fourth quarter – ie at the end of each year – other measures will be taken to address any mismatches not addressed over that year through the quarterly reconciliation process. The aim will be to start each new year at zero.
- 5.13 At this point, there are two options that will be considered. In order of preference they are:
- (i) broker one-off bilateral swaps between boroughs at the end of each year
  - (ii) increase or decrease the following year's contribution of properties for each borough, depending on whether they owe or are owed properties.
- 5.14 One example of how (i) could work is that a borough that is owed properties by other boroughs could nominate households – potentially including homeless households – directly to properties in that borough, until equalised. This would depend on both boroughs and the household(s) in question giving their agreement.
- 5.15 Annual equalisation will be managed by the GLA working with each of the boroughs. The process will be informed by CBL system data and reporting. An annual equalisation report will be produced by the GLA for boroughs.

#### *Guaranteed equalisation*

- 5.16 As an ultimate guarantee, if equalisation has still not occurred after four quarters and the above measures have not worked, boroughs will put no properties into the scheme in the following year, or permit no tenants from a certain borough to bid for properties through the scheme, until equalised. This should be a last resort because it could lead to long periods of time with no contributions from certain boroughs.

#### *Reflecting bed size in equalisation*

- 5.17 Bedsize will be reflected in equalisation from day one in order that the scheme is completely reciprocal. To achieve this, the CBL system will monitor the bed size of properties let in each borough. If this is not matched by the bed size of properties freed up in that borough as a result of moves out by current tenants, then the processes described above will take account of bedsize when specifying future contributions by boroughs.
- 5.18 It is recognised that if a large number of moves are underoccupiers moving into smaller homes, this might have a small impact on equalisation by bedsize. This will be closely monitored and, if it is undermining the principles of equalisation, it will be dealt with during the review of the scheme.

*Other measures to boost demand for the scheme*

- 5.19 All things being equal, variations in demand for individual boroughs will always occur. This is a natural feature of any mobility scheme and there are already well established patterns of mobility in London. However, there are a number of specific factors that may influence demand in the short term. If these are addressed by the scheme then the scale of equalisation that needs to take place may be smaller – which is good for applicants and the scheme:
- If it is clear that very few residents of a particular area are registering for the scheme, the reason may simply be inconsistent or inadequate marketing
  - When bidding for properties, it is important that applicants have all their choices in front of them, and are not restricted by having to select a particular borough. Postcode searches, mapping and links to further information about different parts of London should be provided through the CBL system
  - Targeted promotion of the scheme at certain client groups or through other services. For example, Jobcentre Plus and other employment services could signpost clients to the scheme if a job opportunity is available in another area (see section 9).

## 6 Applications and prioritisation

- 6.1 The application, verification and prioritisation processes will be fully automated, using a public website and a “back office” portal for landlords.

### *Eligibility of applicants*

- 6.2 To be eligible for acceptance on the scheme, the applicant must
- be a current social rented tenant(s) with an assured or a secure tenancy;
  - be resident (irrespective of landlord) in a borough that is contributing properties to the scheme;
  - be the sole tenant or both tenants (if the tenancy is joint);
  - not be on an introductory or starter tenancy;
  - not be the subject of a Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit;
  - have had a clear rent account for the last 12 months, both at the point of application and at the point of letting<sup>10</sup>; and,
  - not have, or be part of a household containing, individuals who have an ongoing record of anti-social behaviour<sup>11</sup>.
- 6.3 Upon applying for the PLM scheme, applicants will be advised that some of these criteria – e.g. those covering rent arrears and ASB – could be assessed differently by different landlords. All applicants will be required to accept the principle that it is always the receiving landlord who ultimately makes a decision about whether to let a property or not.

### *Applying for the Housing Moves scheme*

- 6.4 An eligible applicant will complete a single online application form. It is expected that the majority of applications will be self-referrals, but boroughs, landlords and other agencies are expected to signpost applicants to the scheme if the opportunity arises. An additional option of submitting a fully verified application form will be included in the CBL system, so that those boroughs or landlords who wish to support applicants as part of their housing options service can do so.

### *Verification of application*

- 6.5 Once an applicant completes an application form, the referring landlord will be notified that a resident has applied for the scheme. The landlord will then verify the application. The target for verifying the application is 15 working days. The scope of the verification will include confirmation
- that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria in 6.2;
  - of the applicant’s household and current property details; and,
  - of any details relevant to the allocations policy outlined in appendix 3.
- 6.6 It is necessary to verify this information at the application stage in order to ensure that only those applicants who are eligible for the scheme are actually able to place bids and be placed on shortlists. Also, the scheme must give confidence that the prioritisation given to bids is a true reflection of the registrant’s situation according to the allocations policy. The idea of verifying at the point of application is normal practice across most landlords and other mobility schemes.
- 6.7 The referring landlord will upload verification information to the system.

---

<sup>10</sup> There may be exceptional circumstances where a referring landlord takes the decision to permit the registration of an applicant with some history of rent arrears. In these cases the referring landlord should note their decision on the system and, in all cases, the decision to let a property to that applicant is at the receiving landlord's discretion.

<sup>11</sup> The wording of this criterion is deliberately loose since it is ultimately down to the contributing and receiving landlords to verify, with discretion, an applicant's details and tenancy history.

- 6.8 It is likely that the application form will request information in addition to that outlined above, e.g. on tenant preferences for properties. This information will not be subject to verification by the referring landlord.
- 6.9 Registrants will be automatically prompted, on a regular basis, to update their application details. However, the referring landlord will not be required to provide further verification unless there is a change in information relating to eligibility or prioritisation for the scheme. Any changes to a registrant's situation that are not recorded in their application details will be picked up at the second verification, ie at point of offer (see 7.9 below). If changes are not stated and a registrant's bid is ineligible or based on false information, then this will count as a refusal (see 7.8 below).
- 6.10 To mitigate against an increased workload at the outset of the scheme, the GLA will work closely with referring landlords in the first few months of operation. If it is apparent that a high number of applications are being received from residents of a certain referring landlord, then these applications will be restricted until the backlog has been dealt with.
- 6.11 Referring landlords will have the ability to suspend an application even after it has been approved, e.g. because the referring landlord is aware that the applicant is no longer eligible.

### *Banding*

- 6.12 There will initially be four bands for the scheme:
- Band 1 (the highest) will be for underoccupiers
  - Band 2 will be for registrants who are in employment or in training/education linked to a job offer or employment
  - Band 3 will be for registrants who wish to move to provide care or support
  - Band 4 will be for all other registrants.
- 6.13 Registrants in the highest band will have the highest priority within the scheme. The CBL system will automatically allocate a registrant to one of these bands.
- 6.14 Within each band, a series of filters will be used to prioritise applicants. Date order will be used as the filter of last resort.
- 6.15 If a registrant's situation changes – e.g. they become employed – then, following verification of the information that relates to this change, they will automatically be moved to the relevant band.
- 6.16 Appendix 3 includes a full explanation of the Housing Moves allocations policy.

## **7 Bidding for properties and lettings**

### *Advertising properties*

- 7.1 All Housing Moves homes will be advertised on the Housing Moves website. Receiving landlords will upload property details. The receiving landlord's bedroom standard will apply to properties, and the system will automatically prevent bids for properties where the bidder does not fit with the landlord's bedroom standard.
- 7.2 Properties will be advertised on cycles defined by the receiving landlord. A property must be advertised for a minimum period of 4 days (ie 96 hours) and every property must be advertised during the whole of Friday and Saturday. This is so that registrants who have limited access to the web-based CBL system are able to plan ahead and access the Housing Moves scheme. Friday and Saturday have been chosen because many advertising cycles in London cover these days.
- 7.3 If a property does not receive bids during a single bidding cycle then the receiving landlord is under no obligation to re-advertise through the scheme. The property will count towards the borough's agreed contribution, but it will not count towards equalisation. It is in the interest of boroughs to contribute properties that they think will be desirable to applicants in the scheme, since this is the only way that the borough's own residents will be able to move through the scheme.

### *Bidding*

- 7.4 Registrants will bid for properties via the Housing Moves website. The number of bids at any one time will be limited to 4. This will be reviewed after 6 months. Registrants cannot bid for properties in their own borough.
- 7.5 Registrants who are not active (ie are not placing bids) could technically be suspended from the scheme after a fixed period if it is clear that the database of registrants is getting too large and that this is causing problems to the scheme. In addition, it may be necessary to impose other restrictions, once levels of demand for the scheme are known. However, these measures will not be introduced for the initial six months of the scheme since the supply of properties may not initially be great enough to generate a large volume of moves.

### *Lettings*

- 7.6 The system will match bids to properties in priority order and provide a shortlist of all eligible bids, in order of priority according to the allocations policy. The system will supply information about the shortlisted registrants to the receiving landlord.
- 7.7 Receiving landlords will facilitate the lettings process in their normal way. Receiving landlords will let properties to the highest priority registrants who are eligible, short-listed and accept the property.
- 7.8 If a registrant fails to turn up for a viewing or provide adequate verification of their identity and circumstances, then they are not eligible for the letting. If a registrant fails to turn up to two consecutive viewings without an acceptable reason then they are removed from the scheme and will be able to reapply after six months. Their banding date will start from the date of readmission to the scheme.
- 7.9 If the receiving landlord decides to verify one or more shortlisted registrants, the CBL system will supply the relevant registrant details and the contact details for the referring landlord. Referring landlords will be expected to supply the relevant verification information within two working days (48 hours).

- 7.10 It may be necessary to provide detailed information to registrants who are invited to viewings, since they may not know the area in which the property is located. The CBL system will provide template letters with automatic maps and directions. Landlords should also factor in distance travelled when setting viewing times for Housing Moves properties.

*Voids*

- 7.11 Properties will be vacated as a result of tenants moving through the PLM scheme. Any voids created through the scheme go back to the borough or landlord (to be determined locally). The GLA will monitor the impact of the scheme on void times and information will be incorporated into the review process.



## 8 Housing associations

### *Status of participating housing associations*

- 8.1 Housing associations may contribute properties to the scheme through two routes:
- i) because a borough has nomination rights to the housing association properties (i.e. as part of a local nomination agreement), and the borough chooses to contribute some of these properties to the scheme as part of its 5% contribution; and/or,
  - ii) because a housing association is making an additional contribution to the scheme.
- 8.2 This section deals with (ii), *participating housing associations*, i.e. those who agree to contribute properties to the scheme in addition to those that are contributed by boroughs. This includes the specific G15 contribution (see Appendix 8).
- 8.3 In all cases, housing associations should continue to observe local nomination agreements.
- 8.4 The GLA is working with the g15 to ensure that Housing Moves and London Moves are developed in such a way that the two schemes can in future be combined. The preferred option is to close the g15 scheme and then each housing association participate in Housing Moves by making an additional contribution of properties.
- 8.5 The g15 London moves scheme allocations policy is very similar to the one proposed for the Housing Moves scheme. If the schemes are combined, it is envisaged that the allocations policies would be merged.

## 9 Promoting the scheme

### *Branding and promotion*

- 9.1 Housing Moves will be branded as a Mayor of London scheme.
- 9.2 A marketing and promotion plan is the framework for all pan-London marketing of the scheme. The plan includes templates and promotional materials for use by boroughs and housing associations.
- 9.3 The website will also include an appropriate amount of signposting information, to assist applicants in making choices about moves to particular locations. For example, for information on local schools the website will direct applicants to the relevant local authority website.
- 9.4 The GLA may also consider including information about alternative housing options, e.g. mutual exchange, Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) and Seaside & Country Homes.

### *Encouraging underoccupier moves*

- 9.5 The scheme is targeted at underoccupying social tenants who wish to downsize to smaller properties. There are number of ways that the scheme will seek to promote these opportunities to underoccupying households:
  - many landlords have lists of underoccupiers, and many landlords can identify tenants on their transfer lists who wish to move to another borough. A letter could be sent to each of these tenants from the Mayor of London, informing them of the scheme.
  - the GLA will work with the existing London CBL providers to bulk message tenants who are identified as underoccupiers.
  - advertisements in newspapers and tenant leaflets.
  - when landlords verify applications for mutual exchange, a letter could be sent to the applicant about the Housing Moves scheme.

### *Encouraging moves for employment/training*

- 9.6 The scheme will also be targeted at tenants who wish to move for employment reasons, e.g. to be closer to their place of work. It is also expected that the prospect of a move through the scheme will act as an incentive for non-working tenants to seek to access employment. As with underoccupier moves, there are a number of routes through which these tenants will be targeted:
  - Jobcentre Plus and other employment services will be engaged in order to provide signposting information on the scheme website and to signpost clients to the scheme if a suitable job opportunity requires a move to another area
  - link the scheme to other housing options tools, e.g. the Housing Employment Connections (HECs) service, or the housing options Wizard
  - provision of a job search function (this could use the Jobcentre Plus database).

## **10 Reporting and monitoring**

- 10.1 Reporting of applications and bidding patterns will come direct from the CBL system. Landlords will update the CBL system with details of viewings, offers and lets. Reported outcomes will be used by the GLA to
- determine levels of demand to move in and out of each borough, feeding into the quarterly and annual equalisation processes outlined above
  - address inconsistent trends which may be a result of a failure of part of the system to facilitate moves
  - produce monthly or quarterly reports of outcomes from the scheme
  - produce annual in-depth reports looking at the overall patterns of pan-London mobility arising as a result of the scheme
- 10.2 The scheme will include an reporting tool that can be used by any borough or landlord. Because of this, the GLA will only provide quarterly and annual reports. All data security and protection rules and regulations will be applied.
- 10.3 Applicants will also be provided with feedback on patterns of demand. This will take the form of regular emails to applicants (which may also include a list of properties that meet their preferences).

## **11 Accessibility**

- 11.1 The scheme will be largely web-based. This means that considering the accessibility of the scheme is particularly important.
- 11.2 In general, it is incumbent on boroughs and housing associations to put in place mechanisms to enable applicants to access the scheme who do not have the means to do so independently. There are a number of services available locally, where tenants can be assisted to access housing schemes. This includes language and translation services. The website will signpost applicants to these services (boroughs should supply details of local services to the GLA).
- 11.3 In addition, the CBL system and the GLA will provide the following:
- detailed and bespoke user guides for the scheme. These will be available on the web, and for the GLA, boroughs, landlords and applicants to print off
  - facilitation of participation using texting, touch tone telephone and potentially interactive television (currently being rolled out for some adult social care clients)
  - at least two days upon which all properties are advertised on the CBL system. This will give some certainty to applicants who do not have regular access to the internet
  - the facility for boroughs and landlords to submit fully verified application forms and to undertake bidding on behalf of tenants/residents.
- 11.4 The website itself will adhere to all the GLA's strict accessibility guidelines. It will also provide downloadable guides in easy read format, and summaries in key languages.

## **12 Governance, evaluations, funding and expansion**

### *London Housing Mobility Group*

- 12.1 Day to day management of the Housing Moves scheme will rest with the GLA (see section 13). The London Housing Mobility Group (LHMG) – the successor to the PLM Steering Group – will govern policy and strategy, evaluations and reviews, and funding. The terms of reference and membership for the Group are at appendix 5.

### *Expansion of Housing Moves*

- 12.2 There are a number of ideas for expanding the Housing Moves scheme. These were all suggested by boroughs during the consultation on the scheme, and by the PLM Steering Group and Working Groups, and the possibility of some or all of them being adopted may be explored in future.
- 12.3 The adoption of any of these would be subject to discussion and recommendations by the London Housing Mobility Group, and sign off and decision by the London Housing Board. If a decision involves contributing more properties to the scheme, then it will be subject to consultation with boroughs and other partners.
- 12.4 The first expansion decision is likely to be on Affordable Rent relets.

### *Evaluation and review*

- 12.5 An initial review of the scheme will take place after six months of operation. The scheme will still be relatively new at this stage so the review will be focused on the processes and the systems and whether they are working as anticipated. The choices and behaviour of applicants will also be covered in this review. The 6 month review will be updated after 12 months and will also look at the value for money of the scheme and options for future changes.
- 12.6 A full evaluation of the whole project will take place at the end of the two years of operation (probably May 2014). This will cover all aspects of the scheme.

### *Funding*

- 12.7 The GLA retains monies from DCLG, NHF and the Housing Corporation (now the HCA), that were originally designated for the aborted Capital Moves project. This funding will be used to procure, implement and run the Housing Moves scheme for its first two years (unless any future expansions to the scheme require significant additional funding). The GLA will also fund reviews and evaluations undertaken during the first two years.
- 12.8 The London Housing Mobility Group will be tasked with assessing options for longer-term funding.

## 13 Roles and responsibilities

### *Summary*

- 13.1 The **GLA** should do the following:
- (i) retain overall management of the scheme. This will focus on ensuring that the scheme is delivered according to this policy framework
  - (ii) manage press, communications and London-wide marketing and promotion
  - (iii) manage governance, strategic policy and 6 month and annual reviews
  - (iv) provide a policy/brokerage support service to landlords and boroughs
  - (v) provide a web-based support service to applicants (but not a telephone or email service)
  - (vi) manage the contract with the CBL provider, which will deliver and operate the CBL system that underpins the scheme. This will include
    - hosting and operating the CBL system;
    - providing a technical support service to boroughs, landlords and the GLA; and,
    - providing reporting and monitoring services.
- 13.2 **Boroughs** are providing a service for their residents by participating in the scheme. They are also committing a valuable resource (their contribution of properties) to a pan-London service. As such, boroughs should do the following:
- (i) play a key role in all aspects of policy relating to the scheme, in partnership with the GLA and through the new London Housing Mobility Group that sits under the London Housing Board
  - (ii) participate in the scheme according to this policy framework, including cooperation with the GLA in setting contribution levels and equalisation
  - (iii) work with partner social landlords to ensure that all landlords are aware of and participating in the scheme
  - (iv) provide a customer support service to residents, underpinned by the web-based CBL system
  - (v) promote the scheme locally.
- 13.3 **Social landlords** (including stock-owning boroughs) will keep the scheme moving on a day-to-day basis, by uploading properties, verifying applicants, and letting properties. Social landlords should do the following:
- (i) contribute properties in line with this policy framework and local nomination agreements/allocations schemes
  - (ii) support the application, bidding and letting process, e.g. by verifying applications
  - (iii) work with the CBL provider to overcome any day-to-day issues
  - (iv) provide a customer support service to residents, underpinned by the web-based CBL system
  - (v) promote the scheme locally.

### *Delivery functions*

- 13.4 There are 6 main functions involved in operating the scheme. These are:
- strategic policy, governance and stakeholder management
  - operating the core scheme according to this policy framework
  - supporting boroughs and landlords
  - supporting applicants (including dealing with complaints and appeals)
  - press, publicity, marketing and communications
  - systems and contracts management.

### *Strategy, governance and stakeholder management*

- 13.5 The scheme encompasses London boroughs, housing associations and the GLA, and will doubtless be of interest to or affect a range of other groups and organisations. It is also an important scheme in policy terms, reflecting a range of local, regional and national policy drivers and subject to a great deal of scrutiny at every level. There are also a range of proposals to change or expand the scheme in future.
- 13.6 The GLA will generally lead work on these kinds of issues. One of the roles of the London Housing Mobility Group will be to oversee the scheme; this will include issues such as strategy and policy changes.

### *Operating the core scheme*

- 13.7 The core scheme will be delivered by social landlords. This includes stock-owning boroughs, housing associations that are contributing properties to which boroughs have nomination rights, or housing associations that are contribution properties that they themselves have control over. It includes:
- uploading properties
  - verifying applications
  - letting properties
  - feeding back on outcomes.
- 13.8 In addition, the GLA will work with boroughs and landlords to ensure that contributions are set and quarterly/annual equalisation happen as they are supposed to. There will also be some monitoring requirements for boroughs and landlords, and some reporting requirements for the CBL provider and the GLA.
- 13.9 To underpin the operation of the core scheme, a handbook will be produced for use by the GLA, boroughs and landlords and will include a summary of all policies, processes and procedures.

### *Support for landlords and boroughs*

- 13.10 It is inevitable that issues will arise with a scheme such as this one. This is especially so during the first six months as the scheme finds its feet. There are four main areas where support may need to be provided to landlords or boroughs.
- 13.11 Firstly, **technical** issues may arise in relation to the CBL system. In this instance, all enquiries should go straight to the CBL provider who will be contracted to resolve them. If the GLA receives technical queries, then these will also be referred to the CBL provider. A service level agreement is in place to govern the technical support service to be provided by the CBL supplier and this will be shared with all boroughs and social landlords.
- 13.12 Secondly, there will be **operational** issues that may require brokerage or a casework approach to resolve. For example, a referring landlord may be delaying the letting process by refusing to provide verification information to a receiving landlord. Or, the contribution amount for a particular quarter may be unworkable for a landlord because of reasons out of their control. In these examples, the landlord or borough should contact the GLA, who would then seek to resolve the issue. If this is not possible, then the issue would be escalated to the London Housing Mobility Group.
- 13.13 Thirdly, boroughs and landlords will raise **policy** issues. These will be both in the broader strategic policy respect (e.g. expanding the scheme), and in terms of the specific policies in this policy framework. In both instances, the GLA mobility team will address these issues and if necessary escalate them to the London Housing Mobility Group.

- 13.14 Finally, the GLA may receive **requests for information**, e.g. monitoring information or reports. The GLA mobility team will either:
- provide the information
  - direct the enquiry to the CBL provider
  - direct them to how they can draw down the information themselves.

#### *Applicant support*

- 13.15 The scheme has been designed so that applicants can self-refer, submit applications online, and bid online. However, it is inevitable that some applicants will require support and assistance for a whole variety of reasons.
- 13.16 The website itself will include user guides and FAQs, which will cover how to use the service and how the service operates. If the applicant still requires assistance or support, then they should contact their landlord in the first instance. It is expected that landlords will then resolve the issue in whatever way necessary. This may require contact with another landlord, the CBL provider or the GLA.
- 13.17 It is not appropriate that the GLA deals directly with applicants, and all such enquiries will be directed to the relevant landlord. The only exceptions are when the enquiry
- relates to the GLA's provision of the CBL system; or,
  - requires a Mayoral response, in which case it will enter the GLA's existing system for dealing with Mayoral correspondence.
- 13.18 Complaints should be dealt with by the organisation responsible for the issue. In most cases:
- the referring landlord will deal with complaints regarding verification at point of application
  - the receiving or referring landlord will deal with complaints regarding verification at point of shortlisting/viewing/letting (depending on the issue)
  - boroughs will deal with any complaints relating to their decision to participate in the scheme, the properties they have chosen to contribute etc.
  - the GLA (or its CBL provider) will deal with any complaints that relate to the system, this policy framework (including the allocations policy) and Mayoral policy in general.
- 13.19 It is proposed that, as part of the dispute resolution/brokerage service to be provided to boroughs and landlords by the GLA, there will be the opportunity to escalate customer complaints to the GLA who may be able to provide a definitive response to the customer.
- 13.20 If an applicant wishes to appeal a specific decision, then the landlord's own appeal procedure must be used, and the applicant may then choose to appeal to the ombudsman. It is not appropriate to escalate appeals of decisions to the GLA as it has no legal authority to overturn a decision and is not responsible for decisions made by boroughs and landlords.

#### *Press, publicity, communications and marketing*

- 13.21 In general, the GLA will co-ordinate press and communications associated with the scheme. The GLA will also undertake direct marketing and publicity, and provide materials and support for boroughs/landlords to undertake this work locally. See section 9 for more information.

#### *Systems and contracts monitoring*

- 13.22 The GLA will be the client of the CBL provider. Therefore, the GLA will retain responsibility for monitoring contracts and system administration.



## **Appendix 1: HCA London Board “high level principles”**

The Housing Moves scheme is based on a set of “high level principles” agreed by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) London Board. These were agreed following a consultation on the Mayor’s proposals for a pan-London mobility (PLM) scheme.<sup>12</sup>

The principles are that the Housing Moves scheme should be

- based on a contribution of relets to existing social homes;
- this proportion should be “notional”. That is, boroughs can choose to contribute new build or general relets as they see fit, but that the calculation of homes to be contributed should be determined by a borough’s predicted number of relets rather than new build;
- the pan-London mobility scheme should be reciprocal, with each borough and RSL contributing an equivalent to 10% relets to the scheme, but with actual moves capped at 5% per borough/RSL;
- boroughs/RSLs should have as much flexibility as possible as to the actual homes they contribute, as long as the number of homes contributed is equivalent to 10% of relets, and that the mix of homes is proportionate to their overall relets of 1, 2 and 3 bed homes, and accessible homes;
- the scheme should be integrated or aligned with the London Accessible Housing Register and the g15 mobility pilot, and become operational during 2011/12; and,
- Affordable Rent homes will be excluded from the scheme from the outset.

The PLM Steering Group have since agreed that the contribution of relets should be 5%, rather than 10%. This decision was made in response to concerns that the 10%/5% principle was overly complicated. This will be reviewed by the London Housing Mobility Group when the scheme is up and running.

---

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.london.gov.uk/consultation/mobility-londons-social-housing-tenants>

## Appendix 2: Quarterly equalisation process

- 1.1 In each quarter of every year, every borough will know their contribution of properties. This number serves two purposes:
  - *maximum* number of moves in – i.e. the number of properties that should be contributed by a particular borough
  - *maximum* number of moves out – i.e. the number of tenants of a particular borough that can move out through the scheme.
- 1.2 These two figures are derived from the annual contribution of properties – 5% of relets – that will be agreed with each borough at the beginning of a year.
- 1.3 In each quarter the *actual* number of moves in or out will differ based on demand, but will always be limited to the *maximum* number of moves as described above.
- 1.4 Equalisation needs to occur when the *actual* number of moves in to the borough is different from the *actual* number of moves out of the borough. For example, if 8 people move into a borough but only 4 people move out, then that borough's net position is -4. That is, the borough is owed 4 properties by the PLM scheme. If this continues for four quarters then the cumulative position will be -16.
- 1.5 To stop this from happening, the CBL system will measure the *actual* number of moves in and out of each borough. Based on this information, it will alter the *maximum* number of moves allowed in or out of a borough to reflect the *actual* number of moves from the previous quarter.
- 1.6 However, a small maximum surplus or deficit, proportionate to the level of each borough's contribution amount, will be permitted at any given time. The tolerance level will be equivalent to 10% of each borough's contribution amount for any given bedsize.

## Appendix 3: Housing Moves scheme allocations policy

### 1 Overview

- 1.1 The Housing Moves scheme is not an allocations scheme. Instead, each borough will need to agree – in their own allocations scheme – to allocate up to 5% of their properties according to a pan-London policy. The Housing Moves allocations policy is illustrated below:

	<b>Band 1</b>	<b>Band 2</b>	<b>Band 3</b>	<b>Band 4</b>
	Willing to downsize	Member of household in employment, or in training/education linked to employment	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	All other eligible bids
<b>Priority filter 1</b>	Number of bedrooms freed up	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	N/A	N/A
<b>Priority filter 2</b>	Member of household in employment, or in training/ education linked to employment	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Priority filter 3</b>	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Priority filter 4</b>	Date of application to the PLM scheme	Date of allocation to band	Date of allocation to band	Date of application to PLM scheme

- 1.2 Each applicant is placed in the band that meets their circumstances. The highest band (band 1) affords applicants the highest priority. Within each band, applicants are prioritised using up to three priority filters.

### 2 Willing to downsize (band 1 and priority filter 1)

- 2.1 Reducing the levels of underoccupation in the social rented sector is an important priority for the Mayor, boroughs, housing associations and government. Applicants who are willing to downsize will be afforded the highest priority in the scheme.
- 2.2 Applicants will be asked for their current household and property size at the point of application. This will be verified by the referring landlord. At the point of bidding, the size of the property in question would be taken into account when prioritising bids. If an applicant is willing to downsize into a smaller property, then that applicant would be placed in band 1. If the applicant then bids for a property that is not a “downsize”, they will be moved to another band for that bid. As with other applicants, those willing to downsize would be prevented from placing bids for properties that would result in them becoming overcrowded.

2.3 The net number of bedrooms freed up as a result of the move would also be taken into account during prioritisation. An applicant who is downsizing by two bedrooms is prioritised over an applicant who is downsizing by one bedroom.

2.4 If downsizing, registrants would be permitted a maximum of one extra bedroom above their assessed need. This is in line with many other schemes and policies across the capital.

### **3 In work or training/education with a job offer (band 2/priority 2)**

3.1 The scheme should be a mechanism for reducing levels of worklessness in the social housing sector, a key priority of the Mayor, boroughs and government. It should also support households who are in employment but who need to move in order to sustain it. To do this, band 2 will be for applicants who

- have recently taken up a new job
- are in education or training linked to a job offer, e.g. an apprenticeship
- need to move to sustain their existing employment, e.g. to reduce travel time and costs, or because of work relocation.

3.2 This band could potentially help tenants access better employment. It could also link with existing employment support projects such as those provided by social landlords and boroughs. It would also encourage and assist tenants to enrol on training schemes that result in a job, e.g. apprenticeships.

3.3 At the point of application, applicants would be required to state their reasons for moving and provide the relevant references and documentation. This would then need to be verified by the referring landlord. The definition of "employment" is a minimum of 16 hours work per week and a minimum length of time in employment of six months. The priority would apply if the applicant or any member of the applicant's household was working. An applicant would state their employment status and give details of their employer at the point of application. They would also provide evidence of their employment, ie payslips. This would be verified by their current landlord, who would probably need to telephone the employer.

### **4 Moving to provide care or support (band 3)**

4.1 There has been increasing focus on the link between housing mobility and other policy areas such as health and social care. This issue has become more important as health and social care budgets will be squeezed over the coming years – many local authorities are looking to restrict the thresholds at which care and support is provided. For this reason, the scheme will prioritise those tenants who wish to move to provide care and support to a relative.

4.2 Applicants would state their reason for wishing to move through the scheme as part of the application process and provide evidence of receipt of carers allowance or a letter or care plan from the local authority responsible for the service user. However, ultimately it should be down to the referring landlord to satisfy themselves that the applicant does need to move because of their caring responsibilities – sometimes a different form of evidence may be appropriate to prove this.

4.3 The additional priority given to these applicants would not be restricted by geography, recognising that London's transport system makes any judgements about distance very subjective.

## **5 Date order (priority filter 3)**

- 5.1 When all other priority filters have been applied, applicants will be prioritised according to the date upon which they entered the relevant band. For band 4 applicants, the date of application to the scheme will be used.

## Appendix 4: Equalities impact assessment

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Mayor of London, boroughs and housing associations have a duty to promote equality in all of their operations, policies and services. The Equality Act 2010 proscribes a new duty to promote equality, with the following three aims:
- (i) Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct which is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010
  - (ii) Advancing equality of opportunity
    - the PLM scheme should contribute to the removal of disadvantages suffered by people who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
    - the PLM scheme should take steps to meet the needs of people who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who don't have that characteristic
  - (iii) Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who don't have that characteristic, by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 1.2 The relevant aims for the PLM scheme are (i) and (ii).
- 1.3 Added to this, tenants in social housing face disadvantages unique to their tenure but not necessarily unique to a protected characteristic group. The PLM scheme also aims to address these disadvantages.

### 2 Protected characteristics

- 2.1 The following table indicates whether each of the protected characteristics is relevant to the PLM scheme, and summarises the evidence why. Based on this, the sections below address each relevant protected characteristic group.

Protected characteristic	Relevant?	In what particular way? Evidence to back this up?
Age (older people)	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One in three older people in Greater London are estimated to be living below the UK poverty line.<sup>13</sup></li><li>• Fuel poverty is concentrated among vulnerable households, including older people.<sup>14</sup></li><li>• Many older people struggle with care and support costs, partly due to reliance on a state system that is rolling back its eligibility.<sup>15</sup></li></ul>
Disability	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many disabled people live in unsuitable homes that prevent them living independent and dignified lives.<sup>16</sup></li><li>• Nearly a fifth of wheelchair user households in London have an unmet need for suitable</li></ul>

<sup>13</sup> GLA, *State of Equality report*, (2008).

<sup>14</sup> GLA, *Housing in London*, (2010).

<sup>15</sup> Dilnot Commission report to government: *Fairer Care Funding* (2011).

<sup>16</sup> GLA, *Housing in London*, (2010).

		housing, but many of these households do not get wheelchair accessible affordable homes. <sup>17</sup>
Gender reassignment	<b>N</b>	
Pregnancy and maternity	<b>N</b>	
Race	<b>Y</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black people made up 33.6 per cent (4,316) of homeless acceptances, but only 10.9 per cent of London's population; Asian people made up 12.4 per cent (1,594) of acceptances and 12.1 per cent of the population and mixed race Londoners were 4.1 per cent (524) of the homeless and 3.2 per cent of London's population.<sup>18</sup></li> <li>Black and minority ethnic (BME) people are disproportionately likely to occupy social housing, and less likely to access work once in social housing.</li> </ul>
Religion or belief	<b>N</b>	
Sex	<b>N</b>	
Sexual orientation	<b>N</b>	
Marriage or civil partnership (in relation to unlawful discrimination only)	<b>N</b>	

### 3 Tackling disadvantage

- 3.1 A GLA summary of evidence concludes that social tenants are significantly less mobile than their counterparts in other tenures, and that this is due to barriers to movement rather than any lack of aspiration to move.<sup>19</sup>
- 3.2 Some of the key evidence in the note includes:
- nationally, 18% tenants indicate that they would like to move in the next two years, a third of whom have definite plans to do so.<sup>20</sup> However, nationally only about 5% of social sector households actually move within the social sector every year.<sup>21</sup>
  - as a comparison, around 23% of private renters move within their tenure each year.<sup>22</sup>
  - looking at the previous location of social tenant movers shows that 10% (Council tenants) and 19% (housing association tenants) previously lived in another London borough, demonstrating that there is demand for cross-borough mobility for tenants, and that Council tenants are more restricted than housing association tenants in achieving cross-borough mobility.<sup>23</sup>
  - past London schemes – and the fact that most mobility schemes originated in London – demonstrate consistent demand for moves in London.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> GLA, *Housing in London*, (2010). Source: Habingteg, London South Bank University.

<sup>18</sup> State of Equality in London report (2008);

<sup>19</sup> GLA, *Demand for housing mobility in London's social housing sector*, (2011).

<sup>20</sup> TSA, *Existing Tenants Survey 2008: Tenant mobility and aspirations* (2009).

<sup>21</sup> HCA, *Mobility and social housing*, (June 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> GLA/ALG, *London & sub-regional strategy Support studies project* (August 2005).

<sup>24</sup> For example, the Greater London Mobility Scheme generated over 2,000 moves per year during the 1980s; the Inter Borough Nomination Scheme (IBNS) generated over 1,000 moves during the 1970s and 80s.

- one study shows that 60,000 London tenants could be interested in moving through a London scheme. Another study found that, of London's social tenants who wish to move, 13% wish to move to another London district.<sup>25</sup>
- almost all tenants seem to support the idea of cross-borough mobility being open to them. Around 86% of people in one survey supported the idea of cross-borough lettings<sup>26</sup>

- 3.3 The scheme will significantly increase the opportunities for social tenants to move to other boroughs in the capital, meeting much of the demand that is evident from information and surveys on existing, past and potential future moves, and removing a key disadvantage (lack of mobility) faced by social tenants. This disadvantage is particularly stark for Council tenants, who are half as likely to move between boroughs as their housing association neighbours.<sup>27</sup>
- 3.4 Social housing contains a relatively high proportion of workless households. Almost half of the households in London's social housing are workless, compared to less than a fifth in the private rented sector and just seven per cent of owner occupiers.<sup>28</sup> The PLM scheme will prioritise working households, thus providing an incentive to workless households to find work even if the job is located a long way from their current home.
- 3.5 Social housing also contains a relatively higher proportion of children in poverty. Children in social housing are roughly three times more likely to live in poverty than those in owner occupied homes. Similarly, those living in rented accommodation are much more likely to be in fuel poverty. Improving the chances for tenants to move in order to be closer to work, family or friends, or in a more affordable home (i.e. by downsizing) are all opportunities to address these issues.<sup>29</sup>
- 3.6 The PLM scheme will prioritise tenants who wish to downsize into smaller homes. This could have a significant positive impact on income deprivation and levels of fuel poverty for older people who are more likely to underoccupy their homes and are more likely to be in fuel poverty. Many older people also struggle to afford the costs of social care or support, and some are isolated from family members or friends. Older people will benefit from the scheme since tenants who wish to move to provide care or support to family members or friends – who will often be elderly – are prioritised.
- 3.7 The PLM scheme offers a housing mobility service to BME tenants who are currently particularly restricted in their choice of home due to their concentration in the social housing sector.
- 3.8 The PLM scheme will link with the London Accessible Housing Register (LAHR), which aims to promote a better use of accessible housing for those who need it. Disabled tenants who require accessible housing will be able to refine their searches for accommodation that may not be in abundance in their own borough.

## 4 Meeting the needs of applicants

- 4.1 The PLM scheme needs to be as accessible as possible in order that all tenants can benefit from the opportunities that it provides. This is particularly important in social housing, which is home to higher proportions of tenants who may face barriers to accessing mainstream services.

<sup>25</sup> Affinity Sutton, *Mobility matters: exploring mobility aspirations and options for social housing residents* (November 2009); Human City/Circle Anglia, *Counting Costs: The economic and social impact of reduced mobility in social housing* (July 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Auxo Limited, North London sub-region: Cross-Partner Lettings Study, (August 2010).

<sup>27</sup> GLA, *Housing in London 2010*, (2010).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.



- 4.2 The scheme will be web-based and there will be little contact with GLA or borough officers on a day-to-day basis. This means that measures need to put in place to ensure that the service is accessible to those tenants who are not capable of using, or do not have access to, the web, or who require face to face contact (e.g. because English is not a first or strong language). Section 11 above addresses these issues.
- 4.3 A key part of the monitoring, reporting and reviewing of the scheme (section 10) will be the equalities impact aspect. At application stage, applicants will be asked for their details including the seven protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010. This data will remain anonymous, and will be used to ensure that the measures put in place to promote accessibility are effective.

## Appendix 5: Summary of legal position

### 1 Background

- 1.1 This note is a summary of the key points for boroughs to consider as they prepare to participate in the pan-London mobility (PLM) scheme. The full legal advice was received by the Greater London Authority (GLA) from Jan Luba QC and is attached as appendix 2b.
- 1.2 The contents of this note and the attached legal advice are intended to provide an assessment of the legality of the PLM scheme, how it fits with the statutory allocations framework and the measures in the Localism Bill, and the legal requirements for boroughs to participate in the PLM scheme. **This advice was given to the GLA and as such does not constitute and is no substitute for legal advice about the specific legal implications of the PLM for each participating borough.** Accordingly, boroughs may wish to obtain their own legal opinion about the issues raised in this note.

### 2 Legal status of the PLM scheme

- 2.1 On the issue of allocation schemes, the GLA was advised that under the Policy Framework as it stands, some PLM scheme lettings would be governed by the statutory allocations framework. Boroughs have a duty under the Housing Act 1996 to ensure that their allocation scheme is framed to give “reasonable preference” to specified categories of persons. However, allocating some social lettings through the PLM scheme to people within the statutory allocation framework but without “reasonable preference” would not necessarily prevent boroughs from fulfilling this duty. This is because “reasonable preference” does not mean a reasonable preference in respect of every house available for letting, and under the Housing Act 1996 boroughs are permitted to ring-fence or remove particular properties from the ordinary run of the allocations scheme, even if those properties are allocated to persons without reasonable preference.
- 2.2 The GLA was also advised that it would be lawful for boroughs to allocate 5% of their housing stock (or their nominations to other housing providers’ stock) to be exclusively available to PLM scheme registrants, based on a number of factors including the following:
  - the vast majority (up to 95%) of lettings would still go to reasonable preference category tenants;<sup>30</sup>
  - equalisation arrangements mean that there should still be the same number of lettings available to new tenants;
  - in the *Ahmad v Newham* case, the court considered that the allocation of 5% of housing to non-priority in-borough applicants was lawful; and
  - some of the PLM registrants would be in reasonable preference categories anyway.

### 3 Borough participation in PLM scheme

- 3.1 The GLA was advised that boroughs and social landlords should note that the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing, published by the Tenant Services Authority, maintains a specific requirement for all social landlords to participate in mobility schemes where they are available. Clause 134 of the Localism Bill also contains a duty for boroughs to have regard to the London Housing Strategy (which contains a policy in respect of sub-regional mobility) when preparing or modifying their allocation schemes.

---

<sup>30</sup> However, boroughs already allocating a proportion of properties to non-reasonable preference category tenants would need to make an assessment of whether reasonable preference was given overall by their allocation scheme.

- 3.2 As some lettings under the PLM scheme will fall within the statutory allocations framework, it is necessary for boroughs to make provision for PLM within their allocations schemes. The following text was provided as a suggestion. Please note that this is only a suggestion – it is down to each borough to decide on the exact wording.

*"The Council participates in pan-London mobility (PLM) arrangements and accordingly up to five per cent of the properties that become available to the Council for re-letting or nomination each year will be made available to transferring tenants from other boroughs under those arrangements. For more details of the PLM arrangements see [reference].*

*The decision as to which of our vacancies will be put forward to the operators of PLM for applicants from other boroughs will be made by [identify person or process].*

*The ultimate decision as to which PLM registrant will be let the property will be made by [identify person and process].*

*As a result of our participation in PLM, existing tenants of this Council can make transfer applications through PLM to be considered for vacancies in other London local authority areas."*

- 3.3 The GLA was advised that if the Localism Bill was enacted as drafted, some of the lettings through the PLM scheme would still be governed by the statutory allocation framework (albeit fewer than under the current regime). Borough allocation schemes would still, therefore, need to make provision for the PLM scheme.
- 3.4 Boroughs are required to undertake a consultation with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and Private Registered Providers (PRPs) when changes to their allocation scheme constitute a major change of policy. The GLA was advised that whether or not PLM constitutes a "major change of policy" will depend on whether a borough already allocates or makes available some of its housing to out-of-borough applicants. If it does, then PLM may simply be a variation in numbers from existing policy. If it doesn't then the GLA was advised that participating in the PLM scheme would be a "major change of policy". Each borough will need to make its own assessment in this regard; however, it would be good practice for all participating boroughs to consult about the proposed scheme.
- 3.4 Boroughs will also need to make their own assessment of the level of consultation required. In doing so, boroughs should bear in mind factors such as their own consultation policies, any legitimate expectation created by previous consultations held about changes to their allocation scheme (for example, in terms of parties consulted and length of consultation) and the extent that the PLM scheme constitutes a change of policy.<sup>31</sup>
- 3.5 Each borough will also need to assess individually whether it has complied with the equality duty under section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

---

<sup>31</sup> Please note that the factors to bear in mind in respect of consultation were not part of the advice received from Jan Luba QC.

## **Appendix 6: London Housing Mobility Group terms of reference**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 In his initial proposals for a revised London Housing Strategy, the Mayor of London sets out his commitment to enhance choice and mobility in the capital's social rented sector, with the long term vision of affording a similar freedom to choose where they live to social tenants as is enjoyed by Londoners living in market housing. Increasing the levels of choice and mobility in the social rented sector will lead to opportunities to reduce levels of underoccupation and overcrowding, reward and incentivise those who are working or wish to do so, and help people live closer to their family and friends.
- 1.2 The Mayor is leading a number of projects to achieve these aims, including the pan-London mobility scheme and Seaside and Country Homes.

### **2 Purpose**

- 2.1 The London Housing Mobility Group brings together the GLA, London Councils, London boroughs and the housing association sector, and its purpose is to:
  - deliver the Mayor's aim of enhancing mobility and choice in London's social rented sector
  - retain strategic oversight of projects and services put in place to meet this aim including governing any proposed expansions or alterations of these projects and services
  - identify gaps in provision and resources, and seek to resolve these.
- 2.2 Specifically, the Group will be responsible for providing governance for the pan-London mobility scheme according to the agreed policy framework. It will also be responsible for developing mechanisms to ensure the long term sustainability of Seaside and Country Homes.

### **3 Structure**

- 3.1 The Group will direct its own activities. The Group's meetings will be chaired by Richard Blakeway, the Mayor's housing advisor. The vice chair will be a borough representative and will be elected by the Group at its first meeting.
- 3.2 The Group will report to the HCA London Board until March 2012, and its successor London Housing Board after that date. It will initially be supported by the Pan-London mobility Working Group, a group of borough and housing association officers that advise the GLA on the development of the pan-London mobility scheme.
- 3.3 It is proposed that where necessary any actions agreed by the Group that cannot be developed and/or implemented by existing structures will be taken forward by issue-focused working groups. The frequency, membership and duration of such groups will be determined by the individual/organisation leading on an action as agreed by the Group.

### **4 Membership**

- 4.1 The membership of the Group is made up of representatives from the GLA, boroughs, sub-regional partnerships and housing associations in London who bring knowledge and expertise about housing mobility, deliver mobility services, and are committed to the Group's aims:

	No.
Greater London Authority - Mayor's Office	1
Greater London Authority - officers	2
London boroughs (one from each of the five sub-regions)	5
Sub-regional housing partnerships	1
London Councils	1
g15	1
Housing associations (non g15)	1
National Housing Federation	1

4.2 London Councils will be asked to confirm London borough membership. The National Housing Federation will be asked to confirm housing association membership. The sub-regional housing partnership co-ordinators group will be asked to confirm their representative. The existing pan-London mobility Steering Group membership will continue until any changes are confirmed by these organisations.

4.3 It is expected that the members will be at senior level, able to attend on a regular basis and the GLA should be notified about any substitutions.

4.4 Changes or additions to membership should be proposed to and agreed by the Chair.

## **5 Secretariat**

5.1 The GLA will provide a secretariat service to the Group. All meetings will be minuted. Papers will be sent out at least five days in advance of the meeting.

## **6 Frequency and location of meetings**

6.1 The Group will meet bi-monthly until summer 2012. Thereafter, the frequency of meetings will be reviewed. All meetings will take place at City Hall.

## Appendix 7: GLA allocation policy for East Village lettings

### 1 Background

#### Introduction to East Village

- 1.1 The East Village is a large and high profile new housing scheme located on the Olympic Park in Stratford, East London, and built to provide accommodation for the 2012 Olympians and Paralympians. In 2013, East Village will fulfil its legacy purpose, being transformed into 2,818 new homes for Londoners, with a school academy and a range of community facilities, all set within acres of landscaped open space.
- 1.2 East Village is a high profile development that provides homes in a range of tenures, housing types and sizes. Around half of the homes – 1,379 – will be affordable, with 675 offered as social rented. The remainder of the affordable homes will be available through the Mayor's FIRST STEPS scheme as intermediate rent (356), shared ownership (269) and shared equity (79).
- 1.3 For more information on East Village, visit [www.eastvillagelondon.co.uk](http://www.eastvillagelondon.co.uk).

#### Relevant organisations and agreements

- 1.4 The **Greater London Authority** (GLA) is the author of this document and a nominating authority<sup>32</sup> for a proportion of the East Village homes. It also runs the Housing Moves scheme<sup>33</sup> – the scheme through which some of the East Village lettings will be made available.
- 1.5 **Triathlon Homes** is the affordable housing provider ("the housing provider"), and is a consortium between social housing providers Southern Housing and East Thames Group and developer First Base. Triathlon Homes owns and will manage all of the East Village homes. It will also be a nominating authority for a proportion of the social rented homes.
- 1.6 The **London Borough of Newham** is the borough in which all of the East Village properties are located ("the host borough") and is the nominating authority for a large proportion of the social rented homes.
- 1.7 The other **London boroughs** will also have the opportunity to benefit from the East Village social rented homes. The East London boroughs<sup>34</sup> and the City of London are nominating authorities. The boroughs in South West, South East, West and North London<sup>35</sup> are not nominating authorities but their residents will have the opportunity to move to East Village through the GLA's Housing Moves scheme.
- 1.8 The **East London Housing Partnership** (ELHP) is a partnership of the East London boroughs, all of which are nominating authorities for proportions of the East Village social rented homes. ELHP represents the East London boroughs on housing matters, and is responsible for agreeing a coordinated approach for all nominating authorities to work with the housing provider.

---

<sup>32</sup> In this document, a nominating authority means an organisation that has the right to nominate persons to live in a vacant social-rented property. 'Nomination rights' are conferred in nomination agreements.

<sup>33</sup> For more details about Housing Moves see [www.HousingMoves.org](http://www.HousingMoves.org)

<sup>34</sup> The East London boroughs are: Barking & Dagenham, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

<sup>35</sup> The South East boroughs are Bexley, Bromley, Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark. The South West boroughs are Croydon, Kingston-upon-Thames, Lambeth, Merton, Richmond-upon-Thames, Sutton and Wandsworth. The West London Boroughs are Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow and Kensington & Chelsea. The North London boroughs are Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Islington, Haringey and Westminster.

- 1.9 **Clearing House** is the name given to the management of London's Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) properties, which are used as accommodation for ex-rough sleepers. Some Clearing House tenants will have the opportunity to move to the East Village through the GLA's East Village lettings.
- 1.10 There are a range of agreements and protocols that are related to this document. They include:
- the East Village Lettings Strategy, which sets out six objectives for the East Village affordable housing: creating a mixed and balanced community, recognising the housing need of those in work or work ready, providing an opportunity for pan-London moves, meeting housing need, offering customer choice, and minimising anti-social behaviour (ASB)<sup>36</sup>
  - a Nominations Agreement between the housing provider, the host borough and the GLA, which confirms the GLA's position as a nominating authority<sup>37</sup>
  - a Nominations Protocol, which sets out the process that all nominating authorities must follow when making nominations to vacant East Village social rented homes.<sup>38</sup>

#### Role of this document

- 1.11 This document sets out the allocations policy for the East Village lettings to which the GLA has nomination rights.
- 1.12 This document should be read in conjunction with the Housing Moves policy framework<sup>39</sup> which will also apply to GLA nominations to East Village lettings. Where the two documents conflict or overlap, the policies and procedures outlined in this document will apply.
- 1.13 Section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 ('the GLA Act') sets out the principal purposes of the GLA and provides the GLA with the power to do anything which it considers will further any one or more of those principle purposes (subject to certain exceptions). The GLA considers that the policies and procedures set out in this document promote social development within Greater London by freeing up under occupied properties, tackling overcrowding and providing housing for the homeless and people providing care or support to others; they also promote economic development and wealth creation by targeting new housing at the economically active, encouraging and contributing to a culture of economic activity. As such, the GLA considers that the policies and procedures set out in this document fall within the general powers of the GLA.

## 2 GLA East Village properties

#### Profile of nomination rights

- 2.1 The GLA has nomination rights in perpetuity to 68 social rented properties at East Village. These nomination rights fulfil the commitment in the East Village Lettings Strategy to make 10% of the social rented homes in East Village available for the GLA to allocate on a 'pan-London' basis.
- 2.2 The profile of units to which the GLA has nomination rights is as follows:<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> The East Village lettings strategy was produced by the housing provider and has since been endorsed by the Mayor of London and the Mayor of Newham.

<sup>37</sup> The Nominations Agreement was authorised by the Mayor in [MD995](#).

<sup>38</sup> The Nominations Protocol is coordinated by ELHP.

<sup>39</sup> Available here: <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/housing/housing-need/mobility/pan-london-mobility>

<sup>40</sup> The number and unit size of the social rented homes to be allocated by the GLA is set out in the Nominations Agreement.

**Table 1: Profile of GLA East Village properties**

	Not wheelchair adapted	Wheelchair adapted	Total
<b>1bed 2persons</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2bed 3persons</b>	25	2	27
<b>2bed 4persons</b>	2	0	2
<b>2bed TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3bed 5persons</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4bed 5persons</b>	0	1	1
<b>4bed 6persons</b>	14	1	15
<b>4bed TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>68</b>

#### Apportionment of GLA properties

- 2.3 The GLA will apportion most of the East Village properties – that is to say, the two, three and four bed units – between sub-regions to ensure that tenants in all parts of London have the opportunity to benefit from these homes. This will mean that each vacant East Village property will be ring-fenced for applicants from a specific sub-region in perpetuity.
- 2.4 The Housing Needs Index<sup>41</sup> (HNI) is used to determine a minimum number of East Village properties to be made available to each sub-region. Boroughs in the East London sub-region are excluded from this calculation because they have their own nomination rights to East Village properties. However, East London residents may still be able to move to GLA East Village properties as a result of the cascade mechanism described in section 4 below.
- 2.5 Applying HNI in this way gives the apportionment set out in Table 2.

**Table 2: Sub-regional apportionment of 2-4 bed East Village properties**

Sub-region	HNI <sup>42</sup>	Re-based to exclude east London	2bed	3bed	4bed	TOTAL
East	0.32	0				
South East	0.12	0.18	5	3	3	11
South West	0.13	0.19	5	3	3	11
West	0.20	0.29	9	5	5	19
North	0.23	0.34	10	5	5	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>61</b>

- 2.6 The following rules and principles will also apply when apportioning 2, 3 and 4 bed properties:
- only residents of boroughs participating in Housing Moves will be eligible to apply for the East Village properties
  - if there are not enough applicants from a particular sub-region (i.e. less than five per property), additional nominees will be put forward from other sub-regions

<sup>41</sup> HNI uses a range of indicators to give a housing need score to each borough in London. This is currently used in sub-regional nomination protocols for the distribution of nominations to new social rented and Affordable Rented homes.

<sup>42</sup> 2007/8 re-based Housing Needs Index (HNI).



- following the initial letting, East Village properties will be ‘tagged’ to ensure that each sub-region receives its fair share of all subsequent nominations when the properties become vacant.

- 2.7 The East Village properties are outside of any borough or housing association contribution to Housing Moves. As such, they do not count towards equalisation.<sup>43</sup>
- 2.8 The GLA will allocate the seven one bed units to Clearing House tenants residing in RSI properties who have assured (lifetime) tenancies.<sup>44</sup> See section 5 for more details on the East Village properties that will go to Clearing House tenants.

### **3 Who can move to a 2, 3 or 4 bed East Village property?**

- 3.1 In order to be nominated to an East Village property by the GLA, applicants must have applied for and been accepted on the Housing Moves scheme, and meet the additional eligibility criteria for the East Village properties as set out below.
- 3.2 In line with the objectives of the East Village Lettings Strategy, a significant proportion of the East Village properties must go to people who are economically active or unable to work. This means that all applicant households must include at least one member who is in work or training (see exceptions in 3.3 below). The definition of in work or training is the same as the Housing Moves definition:

*The definition of “in work” is a minimum of 16 hours work per week and a minimum length of time in employment of six months (not necessarily with the same employer). The definition of “training” is in education or training linked to a job offer, e.g. an apprenticeship.*<sup>45</sup>

- 3.3 The only exceptions to this are when the household members are not of working age, or when all working age members of the household are unable to work. ‘Unable to work’ includes those who are permanently sick or disabled and in receipt of benefits to that effect. As with the Housing Moves scheme, all eligibility criteria must be assessed and verified by the applicant’s landlord.
- 3.4 For clarity, social tenants who are living in boroughs that are not currently contributing properties to Housing Moves will *not* be eligible to apply for Housing Moves and therefore will not have access to East Village properties. An exception to this is where there is a confirmed start date in writing for that borough’s participation in Housing Moves and where the borough has agreed to allow their residents to apply for Housing Moves prior to them beginning to contribute properties to the scheme.
- 3.5 Newham residents are not eligible to apply for any GLA East Village properties. If Newham residents would like to apply to move to the East Village, they can do so by joining London Borough of Newham’s housing register or the housing provider’s housing register. Residents of other East London boroughs are very unlikely to be put forward for a GLA East Village property (see section 4 below) but are not prevented from applying. East Londoners will be encouraged to apply through their own borough housing registers.
- 3.6 Table 3 summarises the eligibility criteria that apply to GLA East Village properties.

<sup>43</sup> See the Housing Moves policy framework for more details of equalisation.

<sup>44</sup> The current practice is to provide short term (2 year) tenancies to Clearing House tenants rather than assured tenancies so that the tenants can move onto alternative homes after 2 years, thereby vacating properties for other rough sleepers to reside in.

<sup>45</sup> See appendix 3 of the Housing Moves Policy Framework for definition.

**Table 3: GLA East Village eligibility criteria for 2, 3 and 4 bed properties**

Source	Eligibility criteria	Assessment
Housing Moves eligibility criteria  (see section 6 of Housing Moves policy framework for full definition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>current social rented tenant(s) with assured or secure tenancy</li> <li>resident in a borough that is participating in Housing Moves</li> <li>accepted on the Housing Moves scheme</li> <li>sole tenant or, if tenancy is joint, both tenants</li> <li>not on a starter or introductory tenancy</li> <li>not subject to a Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit</li> <li>a clear rent account for the last 12 months at point of application and letting</li> <li>not have or be part of, a household containing individuals who have, an ongoing record of ASB.</li> </ul>	By applicant's landlord as part of verification process.
Specific East Village eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least one household member in work or training unless household members are not of working age or all working age members of the household are unable to work.</li> </ul>	By applicant's landlord as part of verification process.

- 3.7 Those applicants who meet the eligibility criteria will be added to a waiting list and prioritised according the East Village prioritisation policy. This is shown in table 4 below.

**Table 4: Prioritisation for the 2, 3 and 4 bed GLA East Village properties**

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4
	Willing to downsize	Overcrowded	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	All other eligible applicants
<b>Priority filter 1</b>	Number of bedrooms freed up	Degree of overcrowding	N/A	N/A
<b>Priority filter 2</b>	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	Member of household providing care or support to family member/friend	N/A	N/A
<b>Priority filter 3</b>	Date of application to Housing Moves scheme	Date of application to Housing Moves scheme	Date of application to Housing Moves scheme	Date of application to Housing Moves scheme

- 3.8 Bands 1, 3 and 4 are very similar to the bands contained in the Housing Moves prioritisation table.<sup>46</sup> Band 2 (overcrowded) has been added to reflect the fact that many of the East Village properties are 3 and 4 bed units, and will therefore contribute to the Mayor's aim of significantly reducing the levels of overcrowding in London's social rented sector. The definition of overcrowding is a home

<sup>46</sup> See appendix 3 of the Housing Moves policy framework.

lacking one bedroom or more according to the national bedroom standard. The degree of overcrowding is measured according to the number of bedrooms lacking.

3.9 Londoners who are not eligible or prioritised for GLA East Village properties may still have an opportunity to move to East Village, but into private rented homes or low cost home ownership. See [www.eastvillagelondon.co.uk](http://www.eastvillagelondon.co.uk).

#### 4 What is the process for letting 2, 3 and 4 bed EV properties?

- 4.1 For the initial lettings of the 2, 3 and 4 bed East Village properties to which the GLA has nomination rights, each letting or batch of lettings will in the first instance be set aside for nominees of one specific sub-region. The sub-region concerned will be known as the **first tier sub-region**.
- 4.2 If there is not enough demand from residents of the first tier sub-region to provide a full list of nominees, the nomination list will be topped up with nominees from all of the other sub-regions except East London. These sub-regions will be known as **second tier sub-regions**. However, nominees from the second tier sub-regions will always receive lower priority than those from the first tier sub-region. All of these first lettings of East Village properties will count towards the relevant first tier sub-region's allocation of initial nominations, even if the letting is made to a resident from a second tier sub-region.<sup>47</sup>
- 4.3 In order to make this approach work in practice, we propose to alternate lettings or batches<sup>48</sup> of lettings between first tier sub-regions – i.e. the first batch will be assigned to North London, the second batch to West London etc. This makes the administration of nominations more straightforward and provides a degree of certainty about which sub-region will benefit from each East Village property.
- 4.4 An open waiting list will be maintained for initial lets of each of the unit size/bed space property types. Applicants will add themselves to the waiting list by expressing an interest on the Housing Moves website. Applicants on the waiting list will be prioritised as set out in section 3 above. Each time a letting or batch of lettings is made available, the GLA will provide a list of up to five nominees per letting – the nominations list – to the housing provider.
- 4.5 Once the GLA has provided the housing provider with a nominations list, the process set out in the East Village nominations protocol will apply. The lettings process is entirely the responsibility of the housing provider and being nominated by the GLA does not in any way guarantee a move to East Village. However, the housing provider will always let the property to the nominee with the highest priority who accepts the property.
- 4.6 Once all of the initial lets have been made, the housing provider will provide Housing Moves with a list of addresses for the East Village properties to which the GLA has nomination rights in perpetuity. At this stage, the two, three and four bed properties will be allocated to the sub-regions according to table 2 above. Each time an East Village property becomes available, it will be advertised on the Housing Moves website and it will only be available to applicants within the relevant sub-region.
- 4.7 If there is not enough demand for relets from residents of the relevant sub-region, applicants from other sub-regions (including East London but excluding Newham) will be able to place bids through Housing Moves.

---

<sup>47</sup> This is because we will not know who the property is let to for eight months following the pre allocation.

<sup>48</sup> A 'batch' of lettings is when the housing provider requests nominations for more than one property at the same time.

## 5 Clearing House and the one bed East Village properties

- 5.1 The one bed East Village properties will be made available to certain Clearing House tenants. To be eligible, prospective applicants must meet the eligibility criteria set out in table 5. An application form will be provided by the GLA and, once the applicant has completed it, should be returned to the GLA using a freepost stamped addressed envelope.

**Table 5: GLA East Village eligibility criteria – one bed properties**

Eligibility criteria	Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• current social rented RSI tenant(s) with an assured/secure tenancy</li> <li>• be a 'closed' (rather than 'open') Clearing House case<sup>49</sup></li> <li>• be resident in a London borough except Newham</li> <li>• sole tenant or both tenants (if the tenancy is joint)</li> <li>• not on a starter or introductory tenancy</li> <li>• not subject to a Notice of Seeking Possession or Notice to Quit</li> <li>• a clear rent account for the last 12 months at point of application and letting</li> <li>• not have, or be part of a household containing individuals who have, an ongoing record of ASB</li> <li>• at least one household member in work or training unless household members are not of working age or all working age members of the household are unable to work.</li> </ul>	All to be assessed and verified by the tenant's current landlord, when requested by the GLA.

- 5.2 Once an application is accepted, applicants will be placed on a waiting list managed by the GLA and will be prioritised according to the criteria set out in table 6 below. The boroughs in each of the bands are set out in annex 1.

**Table 6: Prioritisation for the one bed GLA East Village properties**

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
	Applicant is currently resident in a borough where the waiting list to current stock ratio is more than 4.	Applicant is currently resident in a borough where the waiting list to current stock ratio is between 1 and 4.	Applicant is currently resident in a borough where the waiting list to current stock ratio is less than 1.
<b>Priority filter 1</b>	Place of work or training is in London Boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest or Hackney.		
<b>Priority filter 2</b>	Date of commencement of the applicant's first RSI tenancy.		

- 5.3 The GLA will provide a list of up to five nominees to the housing provider in priority order. The letting will always be made to the highest priority nominee that is accepted by the housing provider. If there are not enough Clearing House applicants then the letting(s) will be advertised through the Housing Moves scheme. As with the two, three and four bed properties, the lettings process itself is entirely the responsibility of the housing provider.
- 5.4 A waiting list will be maintained so that when GLA one-bed East Village properties become vacant again, they can also be made available to Clearing House tenants. Any lets to ordinary Housing Moves applicant will revert to Clearing House when they become available again.

<sup>49</sup> 'Open' cases mean that client still requires tenancy sustainment support, which would not be available if they moved to the East Village. 'Closed' cases no longer require tenancy sustainment support.

## 6 Complaints and appeals

- If your complaint is about the **policies in this document** or the way that the GLA has **handled your application**, you should complete the GLA's [online complaints form](#). A copy of the GLA's complaints process is available on [our website](#).
- If your complaint is about the way that **Triathlon Homes** (the housing provider) has dealt with your application, you should contact them directly.
- If you would like to **appeal a decision** made by either your landlord or Triathlon Homes, you should contact them directly.

## Annex 1: Borough banding for Clearing House prioritisation table

Banding	Borough	Waiting List	Current Stock	Ratio
Band A	Hackney	32	351	11.0
Band A	Brent	20	203	10.2
Band A	Tower Hamlets	36	331	9.2
Band A	Southwark	51	397	7.8
Band A	Lambeth	46	340	7.4
Band A	Waltham Forest	19	127	6.7
Band A	Haringey	22	106	4.8
Band A	Islington	52	249	4.8
Band A	Lewisham	28	124	4.4
Band A	Hammersmith & Fulham	55	232	4.2
Band B	Camden	56	205	3.7
Band B	Enfield	13	41	3.2
Band B	Hounslow	18	53	2.9
Band B	Wandsworth	37	105	2.8
Band B	Ealing	33	92	2.8
Band B	Westminster	75	183	2.4
Band B	Kensington & Chelsea	68	161	2.4
Band B	Hillingdon	10	23	2.3
Band B	Barnet	18	41	2.3
Band B	Greenwich	31	52	1.7
Band C	Bexley	12	10	0.8
Band C	Croydon	13	9	0.7
Band C	Bromley	14	9	0.6
Band C	Harrow	13	7	0.5
Band C	Richmond	25	10	0.4
Band C	Merton	14	5	0.4
Band C	Barking & Dagenham	11	0	0.0
Band C	Kingston	4	0	0.0
Band C	Redbridge	3	0	0.0
Band C	Sutton	3	0	0.0
Band C	Havering	2	0	0.0
Band C	City	2*	0	0.0

## **Appendix 8 Merger of g15 London Moves and Housing Moves**

### **1 Closure of g15 London Moves**

- 1.1 In May 2011, the g15 group of London's largest housing associations launched a new mobility scheme, called g15 London Moves. The initiative was originally envisaged as an economic mobility scheme for g15 housing association tenants. As at the close of the scheme, there had been 58 moves through the scheme and 760 live applications. Bidding activity had increased in each month of the scheme's operation.
- 1.2 One of the main purposes of London Moves was to act as a precursor to a potential GLA mobility scheme. In February 2012, the g15 decided to formally end their pilot scheme on 31 March 2012. The decision was taken in light of the imminent launch of Housing Moves, the Mayor of London's pan-London mobility scheme.
- 1.3 g15 landlords are likely to be involved in Housing Moves through their local nomination agreement with boroughs. However, in addition to this, the g15 landlords wish to
  - enable g15 London Moves applicants to be added to the Housing Moves scheme, without them having to fill out a new application form;
  - make an additional contribution of properties to the Housing Moves scheme, over and above those properties that are contributed through nomination agreements with local authorities; and,
  - retain an "identity" within the Housing Moves scheme and ensure that their tenants benefit from it.

### **2 g15 London Moves applicants**

- 2.1 All g15 London Moves applicants were notified of the planned closure of the scheme. They were asked if they wished their data to be transferred to the Housing Moves scheme. The practical process of transferring applicants was led by a small working group, which included representatives from the GLA, the g15 and Home Connections Ltd. (the IT provider for both schemes).
- 2.2 All transferring g15 applicants were given a new application date that mirrored the launch date of Housing Moves. This was to ensure that g15 applicants were not given an unfair advantage over new applicants, who may have been ineligible to join the g15 London Moves scheme.
- 2.3 The policies that determine the priority given to bids are encapsulated in the main body of this Policy Framework. These policies apply to all transferring g15 applicants.
- 2.4 Those g15 tenants who were not registered with London Moves but who choose to register for Housing Moves will apply to the scheme in the same way as any other applicant.
- 2.5 g15 applicants who live in boroughs who are not yet participating in Housing Moves will be unable to bid for properties through the GLA's scheme.

### **3 g15 landlord "additional" contribution to Housing Moves**

- 3.1 The g15 group of landlords will make an additional contribution of properties to the Housing Moves scheme, over and above those contributed as local authority nominations. 190 properties will be contributed during 2012/13 (this will be pro rata to reflect the actual start date of Housing Moves). g15 landlords commit to provide properties that in a variety of locations and from a mix of unit sizes, and wherever possible they will endeavour to contribute properties that reflect applicant preferences.

- 3.2 Properties that make up the additional contribution will continue to be taken from g15 landlord “true voids”, i.e. those properties that are not subject to local nomination agreements or are subject but to which the housing association has the nomination right. These properties do not count towards any other agreements, including those stemming from sub-regional nomination protocols.
- 3.3 The g15 landlords will make their additional contribution through a single “subportal” on the Housing Moves IT system. g15 additional properties will be marketed as such through the Housing Moves website, so that applicants are aware of the contribution.
- 3.4 Those g15 landlords who wish to make a further contribution to Housing Moves (i.e. over and above their contributions through borough nomination agreements and their g15 contribution) can do so through the g15 subportal on the Housing Moves system.

## 4 Equalisation

- 4.1 Equalisation is an agreement between boroughs, in their role as local housing authorities, whereby the Housing Moves scheme will match the number of moves into their properties (or properties that they would nominate to) with the number of their residents who move out of the borough. The properties that make up the g15 additional contribution would not otherwise be available to boroughs, so their contribution to Housing Moves would not affect the ability of boroughs to meet local housing need. This means that the g15 additional contribution can be exempted from equalisation.
- 4.2 The practical impact of this is that, when a g15 additional property is let through Housing Moves, neither the property nor the applicant who moves into that property count towards equalisation. The entire transaction occurs outside of equalisation.
- 4.3 This arrangement has some results that may not at first glance appear intuitive.

*i. Most housing association tenants and properties will continue to be subject to equalisation.* Two housing association properties in a single borough could be let through the Housing Moves scheme on the same day. However, if one of the housing association properties was part of the g15 additional contribution, and the other was part of the borough’s contribution, only the latter would count towards equalisation.

*ii. No distinction is made between g15 tenants and non-g15 tenants, irrespective of who contributed the property to which they are bidding for or moving to.* A council tenant could move to a housing association property. If the housing association property was part of the g15 additional contribution, then the move *in* to the borough where the property was located would not be counted towards equalisation, and the move *out* of the borough where the council tenant lives, would also not be counted towards equalisation. Effectively, the borough where the council tenant lives has gained a “free” move out, even though their resident was a council tenant rather than a g15 tenant.

*iii. g15 additional properties are not counted towards equalisation, so none of the caps that normally apply because of equalisation will be enforced.* Because of the caps imposed through equalisation, there may be a case where residents of a certain borough are not permitted to move through the scheme because that borough’s quota for that quarter has already been met. However, these residents *will* be able to move to properties that are part of the g15 additional contribution.

- 4.4 Some potential scenarios and their impact on equalisation are included as appendix 1.

## 5 Monitoring and reporting



- 5.1 The Housing Moves IT system is set up in such a way that gaining access to data and reports should be very straightforward. As long as they have the right permissions, borough and housing association staff will be able to access the system, run reports, and download data to their desktops.
- 5.2 However, given the additional contribution that the g15 landlords are making to the Housing Moves scheme, it is appropriate that the GLA should provide additional reports to the g15, which cover the outcomes from the scheme in relation to their additional contribution properties and their tenants. It is proposed that the GLA provides a quarterly report to the g15, which covers the following:
- the number and details of their properties that have been contributed to and let through the scheme, by landlord, location, bedsize, date, and the borough of residence and landlord for the applicant who moved in
  - the number and details of their tenants that have applied for and been let properties through the scheme, by landlord, borough, bedsize, date, and the borough and landlord of the property that they have moved to.

## **6 Governance**

- 6.1 The g15 group of housing associations nominates a representative to sit on the Mayor's London Housing Mobility Group (LHMG), which governs the management and development of Housing Moves and other mobility initiatives. It is proposed that this arrangement continues.

## **7 Other housing associations**

- 7.1 This arrangement does not affect the position of other (non-g15) housing associations vis-à-vis the Housing Moves scheme. Their tenants will be eligible to apply for the scheme and will be allocated to the relevant borough subportal. Their properties may be advertised and let through the scheme by boroughs, as a result of local nomination agreements.
- 7.2 The GLA is looking at a technical solution that would allow non-g15 landlords to contribute additional priorities, ie over and above those contributed as a result of local nominations agreements.