



Land Disposal Policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to the disposal of small parcels of amenity land, garage sites, allotments and other related assets and is aligned with the Asset Management Policy.

2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 This policy establishes our approach to the disposal of land, garage sites, allotments and other related assets, to ensure any transactions are conducted with transparency, fairness, and align with our strategic objectives.

3.0 Principles

- 3.1 This is policy and its supporting procedures reflect our corporate values of trust, respect, innovate, working together and own it.
- Trust – We will ensure all land disposal decisions are made transparently and fairly, with clear governance and professional valuations
 - Respect – We will respect the needs of our customers and communities by considering their views in disposal decisions and protecting access, amenity, and utility services
 - Innovate – We will take a forward thinking approach to asset management, using land disposals to reduce liabilities and reinvest in future-focused social housing initiatives
 - Work together – We will collaborate across teams and with stakeholders to ensure land disposals are well informed, compliant, and contribute to Plan A
 - Own it – We will take ownership of our decisions and responsibilities, ensuring disposals are managed professionally, ethically, and in line with our standards
- 3.2 This policy supports decisions to sell or otherwise dispose of land where doing so will either generate income or reduce our ongoing maintenance liabilities. It applies to both revenue generating assets (e.g., non-statutory allotments) and non-revenue generating land holdings.
- 3.3 Prior approval must be obtained from the Board or the Executive Director of Finance and Investment before disposing of any social housing assets, including land.

- 3.4 It is in our interest to ensure that any land sold achieves the highest possible financial return, unless the disposal directly enables an activity aligned with one or more strategic Plan A objectives in which case a reduced receipt may be considered.
- 3.5 All proceeds from land disposals will be reinvested into income generating social assets.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 The key terms used in this policy are defined below.

Transfer agreement	An agreement between Sedgefield Borough Council (now incorporated into Durham County Council (DCC)) and Livin dated 30 March 2009 that sets out the conditions for the transfer of stock from the local authority to the housing provider.
Mortgage rescue scheme	The Mortgage Rescue Scheme was a government initiative in England, launched in January 2009, to help homeowners at risk of repossession due to financial difficulties. The scheme targeted vulnerable households, including those with low income, pregnant women, families with dependent children, and individuals with disabilities. It was closed to new applicants in March 2014. The scheme aimed to prevent homelessness by offering two main options. A shared equity route where a RP would provide an equity loan to reduce the homeowner's mortgage repayments, or as in our case Government Mortgage to Rent where the RP would buy the property, clearing the secured debt, and the homeowner would stay in the property as a tenant paying affordable rent.

5.0 Scope

- 5.1 This policy applies to all proposed disposals of land, garages, allotments and other related assets.
- 5.2 All Board members and employees must consider and adhere to this policy when considering decisions on the disposal of assets.

6.0 Contribution to Plan A

- 6.1 This policy supports the Plan A strategic objective of Maintaining Strong Finances and specifically:
 - Objective 22: Maintain financial strength to support the strategic objectives of Plan A while maintaining sufficient financial capacity to deal with a range of scenarios', by reducing our future liabilities to deliver value for money.

7.0 Legislative and regulatory framework

- 7.1 This policy complies with the contractual requirements of the Transfer Agreement and allows for land to be classed as an “exempt disposal” in circumstances where the land is sold to an owner of residential property where the land being sold adjoins the property of the residential owner and is for use ancillary to the residential use of the owner’s property and the value does not exceed the £7,500 (or such greater amount as shall reflect any increase in RPI).

8.0 Policy statements

- 8.1 We will consider selling our land, garage sites, allotments, and other related assets when it helps reduce our maintenance costs/liabilities for us and customers.
- 8.2 We will retain land that could be used for building new homes in the future, including any land needed to access those sites.
- 8.3 We will not sell land or assets if it could harm nearby properties, block access to land we own, or increase our maintenance costs.
- 8.4 We will not sell amenity land if it is not sufficiently close to the purchaser’s home, if it would result in irregular property boundaries, or if the intended use is deemed inappropriate.
- 8.5 We will not sell land or assets if they have utility services or overhead lines (such as gas, water, or electricity) that could cause future maintenance problems or make access difficult.

- 8.6 We will ensure land is sold for its fair market value, based on a professional valuation, unless selling it helps us reduce our future liabilities/maintenance costs.
- 8.7 We will reinvest funds from selling assets into projects that support social housing/local projects.
- 8.8 We will take account of the views of the local community when making decisions regarding the sale or disposal of land.

Disposal of mortgage rescue properties

- 8.9 The Executive Director of Finance and Investment has delegated authority to dispose or retain any mortgage rescue property previously purchased under the now defunct Homes England Mortgage Rescue Scheme that has subsequently become vacant irrespective of the property's location. The Land and Property Valuer will make recommendations to the Executive Director for sale of the property if it:
- Does not have sustainable housing demand
 - Does not continue to make a positive contribution to the business plan
 - Or, if there is no other clear rationale for retention

Disposal of garage sites, allotments and related assets

- 8.10 The Executive Director of Finance and Investment has delegated authority to dispose of garage sites, allotments and related assets if:
- They do not have sustainable demand
 - They do not continue to make a positive contribution to the business plan
 - There is no other clear rationale for retention

9.0 Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Roles and responsibilities under this policy are outlined below.

Board	Approval for the disposal of amenity land over £7,501 as at March 2009 + RPI from that date (currently £14,236 as at September 2025). Approval for the disposal of garage sites, allotments and related assets over a value of £50,001.
Finance and Investment Committee	Approval of Land Disposal Policy
Executive Director of Finance and Investment	Delegated approval for the disposal of amenity land up to a value of £7,500 as at March 2009 + RPI from that date (currently £14,236 as at September 2025). Delegated approval for the disposal of Mortgage Rescue properties. Delegated approval to dispose of garage sites, allotments and related assets up to a value of £50,000.
Head of Development	Oversees the entire policy and associated procedures and ensures the policy is up to date and compliant with relevant standards.
Community Regeneration Manager	For community assets such as allotments and garage, to liaise with interested community groups and Town Councils.
Land and Property Valuer	Responsible for ensuring policy statements are adhered to when undertaking tasks associated with the policy and providing professional recommendations

- 9.2 This policy will be communicated to our customers via our website and to all employees via our intranet. Those responsible for implementing the policy will where required receive appropriate training, advice, and/or guidance.
- 9.3 We will deliver training on this policy and the procedures that support it, through appropriate methods including team briefings and on the job training for those working in the development function.

10.0 Related policies and procedures

- 10.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents

Land disposal procedure	Procedure outlining the process which should be followed when undertaking any land disposal.
Encroachment Procedure	Procedure outlining the process which should be followed when dealing with property encroachment.

11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

- 11.1 Quarterly reports will be presented to the Finance and Investment Committee which provides an update on the disposal of land, garage sites, allotments and related assets up to a value of £50,000.
- 11.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years, unless there is a significant change in legislative or regulatory requirements or guidance.