



Home Ownership Policy

Who's this for?	Residents and Colleagues
Document status	Final
Date created	June 2012
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To be reviewed	August 2026
Policy Owner	Head of Sales and Marketing
Other related documents	Arrears procedure ASB policy Complaints policy Damp & Mould Policy Repairs policy Shared ownership sales policy Shared ownership resales policy Vulnerable customers policy

1. Policy statement

Our Purpose

To give residents a firm foundation on which to build their lives.

Our 2030 Vision

A safe, comfortable, and affordable home for every household.

residents.

settle owns and manages different types of Home Ownership properties and recognises its responsibility as a registered provider, as a freeholder and a head lessee. This policy sets out settle's responsibilities towards service charge paying freeholders, leaseholders and shared owners to ensure that there is a consistent approach to the management of all tenure types. For clarity, when reference within this policy is made to residents, it is these types of residents being referred to.

Feedback from residents

As part of this policy review, we invited our leaseholders via email and sms to provide feedback via settle Connect. The response rate was low – receiving just 5 comments. The feedback received didn't provide feedback on the Policy itself but on ways to improve the pre 2021 Shared Ownership model. These improvements were built into the new Shared Ownership Model lease (2021-26) which we implemented from 2022 onwards.

2. Key principles

- We always fulfil our legal obligations set out in our leases and other relevant legislation
- We are transparent in our approach to managing leases and service charges
- We use data and customer insight to take a proactive approach to shaping and delivering our services
- We consider sustainability and value for money when looking at procurement of services and service improvement
- We focus on getting the basics right

3. Current Position

The Home Ownership Team currently manages 1,599 properties (as of June 2024). Within this portfolio we have 664 shared ownership, 593 RtB Leaseholders, 208 Letchworth Leasehold Properties (Ground Rents), 65 Market Sale, 40 SO Fully Staircased, 13 Mortgage Rescue Properties, & 10 Retirement Leasehold.

The overall satisfaction score from the Tenant Satisfaction Measure scores – Shared Owners are 62% Satisfied, 20% Neutral, 18% Dissatisfied. We can see that the areas of highest

dissatisfaction for shared owners are very similar to tenant satisfaction measures we see for other residents at settle:

- Satisfaction with communal areas being clean and well main
- How we handle complaints
- How we listen and act
- Our approach to handling anti-social behaviour

We have plans in place to improve our work in each of these areas

4. Objectives

- To deliver a high level of customer service for homeowners, ensuring that we understand and meet customer expectations
- To send reliable and timely service charge demands
- To fully recover billable service charges
- To be clear about our responsibilities and our residents' responsibilities
- To improve the onboarding process for residents
- To improve the data that we hold about our residents
- To agree key performance indicators and benchmarking with residents
- To ensure digital services are easy to navigate and accessible for all our residents irrespective of tenure
- To listen to and learn from customer feedback, including complaints and compliments in order to improve the services we offer
- To respond to all residents (both tenants and leaseholders) service charge queries with the help from the service charge team.

5. Policy actions

- Review service charge communications sent to residents to ensure they are easy to read and understand
- Ensure that members of the homeownership team are available to discuss further queries
- Improve onboarding documentation for residents including a homeownership handbook that details services we offer
- Offer suitable payment plans to assist residents who may be facing financial difficulty
- Develop the website and portal to enable residents to access information more easily
- Deliver Home Ownership training to other areas of the business
- Ensure Home Owner representation on the Voice of the Resident Panel

- Ensure Home Ownership Team respond to shared owners and leaseholders complaints in line with settle's complaint handling processes to ensure residents know their rights and what to expect from us when things go wrong.
- Introduce a real-time satisfaction survey through CX-feedback, our insight partner, which will be sent to leaseholders following any interactions with our team. This will enable us to monitor leaseholders' satisfaction with our services on a continuous basis and make regular improvements to how we work.

6. Desired outcomes

- Our customer offer for homeowners is clear and transparent
- The standard of the service we offer to homeowners is consistent with that of other tenures
- The communication we send is accessible and easy to understand, reducing residents' need to contact us for clarification
- Residents experiencing financial difficulty feel supported by settle
- We can evidence how customer feedback has contributed to improvements in the service we deliver

7. Performance indicators

- Increase overall satisfaction of shared owners to 70% – measured from the Tenant Satisfaction
- Measures Meet service level agreements (SLAs):
 - We will respond to an initial enquiry within 24 hours
 - Provide general information within 5 working days
 - Provide sales packs and permissions within 10 working days
- Limit annual shared owner and leaseholder residents annual arrears increase to below 20%.

8. Key legislation

- Landlord and Tenant act 1985
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- Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993
- Housing Act 1996
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or as changes in legislation or regulation require.