

Policy on Housing Management – 9.3

Queenstown Lakes Community Housing Trust

February 2012

Updated May 2013, May 2014, April 2015, June 2018, July 2018

Background

The “General Policies” below apply to all QLCHT properties. The remaining policies apply specifically to QLCHT rental properties.

1. General Policies

In fulfilling its role as a housing provider, QLCHT will:

- a. Manage its assets in a professional and financially appropriate manner.
- b. Have a robust system in place to manage its housing stock and collection of revenue.
- c. Have an effective process in place for ensuring necessary maintenance is carried out in a timely manner and completed to a satisfactory standard. When building new houses, seek to provide quality design and construction and solar efficient positioning, suited to the needs of tenants/owners.
- d. When purchasing houses, ensure the house is in a reasonable condition and that it's suited to the needs of the tenants/owners.
- e. Be a supportive and helpful landlord, through establishing constructive and open relationships.
- f. Trustees, Management and Staff will respect the privacy of all QLCHT's tenants and homeowners, and their right to “quiet enjoyment” of their homes.
- g. Manage its housing in accordance with legislative requirements including the Residential Tenancies Act 1986 (RTA), the Health Act and Regulations, the Building Act, Fire regulations and the Consumer Guarantees Act (in relation to contractors' carrying out work).

2. Tenancy Management

- a. The Residential Tenancy Agreement for Rent Saver is for an initial fixed term of one year. It then becomes a periodic tenancy (i.e. able to be terminated by the tenant on 21 days' notice), except that the Landlord (QLCHT) agrees it will not terminate the tenancy during the initial five-year period unless the Tenant breaches certain covenants (including covenants in the interdependent Rent Saver Agreement).
- b. Affordable Rental provides a periodic tenancy with limitations on QLCHT terminating the lease until five years has passed. See the Affordable Rental Residential Tenancy Agreement for full details.

3. Rent Setting Policies and Procedures

- a. Property rents will be set at a market value which falls within a market range (relevant to the size and location of the property), determined by an independent rental property manager.
- b. QLCHT will review the rent annually taking into account shifts in the market range and any increases in outgoings applicable to the property

- c. Having undertaken a rent review, QLCHT may increase the rent up to a maximum of 5% per annum and by giving notice in accordance with the RTA.
- d. When setting rents, QLCHT needs to do so in accordance with its obligations to lenders, donors, or other stakeholders.
- e. Rent Saver tenancies will be set at market rent as determined by QLCHT in the process outlined above.
- f. Rent Saver households must provide QLCHT with a copy of a bank statement, or other form of savings, showing that the minimum \$50 per week has been saved as per their Rent Saver Agreement.
- g. Affordable Rental tenancies will be set at the lower of market rent (as outlined above) or 30% of gross household income provided that the rent is not less than 80% of the lowest rent amount in the market range.
- h. If a household qualifies for the Income Related Rent Subsidy, the Ministry of Social Development will set the rent.
- i. Affordable Rental households will have a full review of their financial situation annually and if household income has altered, then rents may be adjusted accordingly by giving notice in accordance with the RTA.

4. Rent Payments

- a. Rent is to be paid weekly by automatic payment, one week in advance.
- b. Full bond (a max of 4 weeks rent equivalent) must be received upon moving into the property.
- c. Bond will be lodged with Tenancy Services within 23 working days of receiving it from the tenant.
- d. QLCHT will reconcile rent payments weekly. Confidential information of tenants will be kept locked away or electronically password protected; this is an RTA requirement.

5. Rent Arrears

- a. Tenants are encouraged to contact QLCHT if they have any problems with paying rent on time.
- b. If a payment is missed, QLCHT will undertake the process for rent arrears as outlined in Policy 9.13 Policy on Rent Arrears

6. Pet Policy

No pets are to be kept on the property without first obtaining QLCHT's written consent. As a general rule, single cats and small dogs are acceptable.

7. Property Inspections

- a. A six monthly property inspection will be carried out by a QLCHT contractor.
- b. Tenants will be asked to agree a suitable time for the inspection to be undertaken, and will be encouraged to give their input and participate in the process.
- c. Tenants are required to keep properties reasonably clean and reasonably tidy and report any maintenance items they notice to QLCHT.
- d. Tenants are required to maintain the landscaping to the same standard it was when they first moved in, at minimum.

8. Testing for illegal substances

- a. The policy on testing for meth use will follow that of Housing New Zealand's meth testing policy.
- b. Only where QLCHT suspects very heavy meth use or meth lab activity, will meth testing be carried out.
- c. Meth testing may be carried out between tenancies or during a tenancy after providing the tenant with the required notice, as per the RTA.
- d. Meth testing will be carried out by a qualified agent and results analysed by a qualified laboratory.
- e. If a property tests under 15 µg/100 cm², decontamination is not triggered.
- f. If a property tests higher than 15 µg/100 cm² decontamination will be carried out in accordance with the current standards to a level of 1.5 µg/100 cm².

9. Eviction, Abandoned Property, Damages, Dispute Resolution, Complaints, Illegal Tenants, Recording of Tenant Information, Keys etc.

Where the Occupation Agreement is silent on these points the requirements of the RTA will be followed.