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## Housing Landlord Policy on the Green Deal

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### Housing Landlord

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February 2013

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| <b>Version Control</b>  | Version 2                                   |
| <b>Status of Policy</b> |   |
| <b>Sponsor</b>          | Elliott Brooks, Assistant Director, Housing |
| <b>Author/Reviewer</b>  | Ricky Lang, Energy Efficiency Officer       |
| <b>Approved</b>         |   |
| <b>Review Date</b>      |   |

## **1. Scope of policy**

1.1 This policy sets out the Council's approach should tenants request to make alterations/improvements to a Council dwelling through the Green Deal

1.2 The policy applies to all social housing dwellings managed by the Housing Department

## **2.0 Policy Context – The Green Deal**

The Green Deal is a government initiative designed to help increase the energy efficiency of properties across the UK. It allows people to pay for energy efficiency improvements, such as insulation upgrades and new boilers, through savings on their energy bills.

- Energy-saving improvements can be made to a property without the need for any upfront payments. This is covered by the Green Deal Provider
- The work has to be carried out by an accredited Green Deal Installer following a Green Deal Assessment
- The cost of the works will be recovered through a charge on the electricity meter. The electricity supplier will pass payments on to the Green Deal Provider
- Interest will be charged on these payments and it is predicted this will be approximately 7%.
- The charge remains with the property until it is paid off, there may be a charge if it is paid off early
- A Green Deal Plan can only be agreed by the home owner or landlord

Green Deal measures can be installed where the recipient satisfies the 'Golden Rule'; meaning the expected financial savings that result from the energy-saving improvements must be equal to or greater than the costs attached to the energy bill. The 'Golden Rule' determines the amount of Green Deal finance made available and the length of time it takes to pay this off.

The Green Deal went live on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

## **3.0 Objectives and principles of the policy**

3.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position on energy efficient improvements in Council dwellings financed by the Green Deal

3.2 The aims of the policy are:

- To ensure Council tenants do not have Green Deal measures installed at their homes
- To clarify the Council's ongoing energy efficient improvement programme

#### 4.0 Housing Landlord Dwellings

The Council is committed to improving the energy efficiency of its housing stock. We tackle Fuel Poverty and try to ensure tenants can afford to stay warm at home. We have achieved this through the installation of energy efficient measures such as new windows, boilers, doors and insulation. More homes every year will continue to receive these measures and the Council will maintain and repair the measures we install.

Having accessed funding through the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) loft insulation and cavity wall insulation has been installed throughout the Borough. The Council will continue to insulate homes and access Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding to help deliver these works.

#### 5.0 Housing Landlord Position

Tenants would need the consent of their landlord before having work done on their homes under the Green Deal. The Council will not give consent to tenants as energy-saving works will be delivered through improvement programmes at **no additional cost to tenants**.

Improving energy efficiency of the social housing stock is vitally important and the Council understand that the Green Deal is designed to achieve this. However, the Council already have plans to deliver energy-saving improvements that do not result in a charge on the property. The Council believe that where there is a change in circumstances or tenants the 'Golden Rule' may fail and the Green Deal could push tenants in to Fuel Poverty.

The Council's average SAP rating of 66 is well above the national average 55. Where energy efficiency is already high the savings via the Green Deal will be hard to achieve, and this could lead to a Green Deal Provider exaggerating the benefits of the measures and manipulating the 'Golden Rule'.

Properties which the Council builds from 2013 onwards will be developed to high energy efficiency standards, in excess of those required for Part L of Building Regulations. Therefore these properties will not be suitable for the Green Deal.

Should a tenant sign up to the Green Deal they will be breaking the terms of the Tenancy Agreement as well as the Green Deal Plan.

#### 6.0 Supporting Policies/Documents

6.1 The Tenancy Agreement states that the tenant must obtain the Council's permission should they wish to carry out alterations or improvements at their property. This would apply to proposed work through the Green Deal, therefore the Council's permission should be sought.

6.2 A Green Deal Plan can only be agreed by the home owner or landlord, meaning the Council's consent is needed.

6.3 The Council's Cross Tenure Home Energy Strategy states the Council will fund improvements through the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan and by leveraging ECO funding, whereby the tenants would derive the benefits without having the additional charge applied to their electric meter.

## **7.0 Equality and Diversity**

7.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently to all our customers. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or any other grounds set out in our Equality and Diversity policy.

7.2 This policy and any other related publications of Dacorum Borough Council are available on request in other formats (e.g. in an alternative language, in Braille, on tape, in large type).

## **8.0 Review of policy**

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary and following consultation with tenants.

## **9.0 Appeals procedure**

9.1 Appeals must be received within 28 days of the decision letter.

9.2 Where the appeal is in respect of how the policy and procedure have been applied the Property and Place Group Manager will investigate the matter and respond.

9.3 Appeals against decisions will be considered by the Assistant Director of Housing whose decision is final.

## **10.0 Communicating the policy to staff**

- Staff involved in the implementation of the policy will receive a copy.
- A copy of the policy will be placed on the Housing Shared Drive (P Drive).
- Any amendments to the policy will be communicated to all staff involved in implementing the policy.

## **11.0 Communicating the policy to customers**

The policy will be available on request.