

## WILL THE PROPERTY BE IN KEEPING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?



FIRST CHOICE BUILDS AND DEVELOPS 'ORDINARY HOMES IN ORDINARY STREETS'. FIRST CHOICE WILL BUILD A HIGH QUALITY PROPERTY AND AIMS FOR IT TO BLEND IN WITH NEIGHBOURING HOUSES.



## WHAT ABOUT FUTURE USE OF THE PROPERTY?

IF A LOCAL AUTHORITY NO LONGER WISHES TO HOUSE VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN A FIRST CHOICE PROPERTY, THE PROPERTY IS USUALLY SOLD ON THE OPEN MARKET.



## WHO IS ON YOUR WAITING LIST?

First Choice works in partnership with local authorities across Wales and Shropshire to provide specialist homes to identified individuals with specific needs. The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to house people with learning disabilities in appropriate accommodation within their local community. The local authority has responsibility to make sure that the tenants are compatible with each other and that the property, including its location within the community, will suit their individual needs. Our tenants pay rent to the association to live in their property. We also provide supported living options for veterans enabling a smoother transition from military to civilian life. We operate a waiting list for our general needs properties throughout Wales and this is usually in line with the Local Authority common housing register or specialist Adapt Register.

## WILL THE PROPERTY BE LOOKED AFTER?

First Choice is responsible for the property and all maintenance and repairs. We will ensure it is maintained to a high standard, usually by local contractors, including external decorations every five years.

Where we refurbish a property we will undoubtedly improve its appearance. The tenants, usually with the help of their support provider, will ensure that the gardens are well maintained and the house and windows are cleaned.

## WHAT ABOUT PARKING?

When we develop or refurbish a property we make every effort to provide as much off-street parking as possible.

Some of our tenants may have specially adapted vehicles to accommodate wheelchairs. Support staff may also have cars, which could cause additional parking for short periods during staff handover times.

We always ask support staff to park sensibly and with consideration for neighbours. We would encourage you to speak to the support staff at the property should problems arise. However, should parking become an unreasonable issue then please contact First Choice by telephone or e-mail and we will liaise with the support provider to resolve the issue.



ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT VULNERABLE PEOPLE BENEFIT FROM LIVING IN SUPPORTED LIVING ACCOMMODATION SUCH AS THOSE MANAGED BY FIRST CHOICE. THIS DRIVES FIRST CHOICE'S PHILOSOPHY OF 'AN ORDINARY HOME IN AN ORDINARY STREET'.



## HOW LONG WILL THE TENANTS LIVE AT THE PROPERTY?

In most cases our tenants have an assured tenancy agreement, like any other tenant, which outlines the tenants' and our responsibilities. An assured tenancy is for life, unless the tenant chooses to give notice to First Choice or First Choice applies to evict a tenant through the courts.

When First Choice accepts new tenants we provide them with training on their rights and responsibilities as tenants. This includes their responsibilities to their neighbours as part of the local community. We repeat this training to reinforce it and to convey it to our support provider partners.

Many of our tenants lead rich and fulfilled lives, attending day care centres or working within the local community, usually on a voluntary basis.

## WHAT IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS?

Should issues arise with any of our properties you should in the first instance discuss these with the support staff at the property. Any issues are best dealt with calmly and reasonably by discussion.

If there are no support staff available, or the issue is not resolved, then please contact First Choice's Housing Management department. First Choice's housing staff are experienced in dealing with tenancy related issues. Our team will speak to the Support Provider and monitor resolution of the issue.

## WILL TENANTS LIVE ON THEIR OWN?

The Local Authority appoints a support provider to support tenants to maintain their tenancies and assist with everyday activities. The level of support will usually be determined by the Local Authority commissioner and reviewed annually in conjunction with the support provider.

First Choice and the local authority work in partnership with the support providers who provide care and support for the tenants. This support may include live-in 24 hour support but can vary dependant on an individuals needs.

First Choice has signed agreements with the Local Authority and Support Provider which outline both parties roles and responsibilities in relation to the Association's tenants. First Choice's properties are classed as supported living (shared accommodation) and will never be used as commercial premises or a care home.



FIRST CHOICE SUPPORTS THE RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE ADULTS TO FULLY PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR LIVING ARRANGEMENTS AND TO HAVE A CHOICE ABOUT THE NATURE AND LOCATION OF THEIR ACCOMMODATION.



## HOW SHOULD WE TREAT NEW TENANTS?

FIRST CHOICE WOULD ENCOURAGE NEIGHBOURS TO TREAT TENANTS AS YOU WOULD YOUR OTHER NEIGHBOURS. OUR WISH IS FOR TENANTS TO BECOME VALUED MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.



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FIRST CHOICE IS AWARE THAT MANY OF OUR TENANTS OR PROSPECTIVE TENANTS COULD BE CONSIDERED VULNERABLE AND THEREFORE DOES NOT CONSULT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES WHEN PURCHASING OR DEVELOPING NEW PROPERTIES. FIRST CHOICE IS A TENANT FOCUSED LANDLORD AND WE ROBUSTLY ENGAGE WITH OUR TENANTS IN RELATION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF OUR PROPERTIES AND THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS OUR TENANTS.

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Building Independence

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### OUR AWARDS

IIP Gold • Silver Armed Forces Defence Recognition • Positive About Disabled Living Wage Employer  
Small Workplace Health Award Gold • TPAS Award Service User Involvement

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## FIRST CHOICE HOUSING ASSOCIATION INFORMATION FOR NEIGHBOURS OF FIRST CHOICE PROPERTIES

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FIRST CHOICE HOUSING ASSOCIATION IS AWARE THAT THE TERM SOCIAL HOUSING CAN HAVE NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS. YOU MAY BECOME AWARE THAT FIRST CHOICE IS PURCHASING OR BUILDING A PROPERTY IN YOUR AREA WHICH MAY INITIALLY CAUSE YOU CONCERN. THIS BROCHURE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO ADDRESS SOME OF YOUR CONCERNS AND INFORM YOU OF THE WORK OF FIRST CHOICE.

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