



# NCAC ALLOCATIONS POLICY

**Responsible Director:** Director of Homes and Wellbeing

**Responsible Manager:** Head of Specialist Housing

**Last updated:** January 2020

**Next update:** January 2023

## **Almshouses Allocations Policy and Procedure**

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To ensure vacant almshouses are occupied as quickly as possible to minimise void loss to the charities.
- 1.2 To ensure the allocation process is fair and transparent.
- 1.3 To ensure that homes are allocated to residents who meet the criteria and preferences in the Charities' Schemes.

### **2. RISKS**

- 2.1 The risk of almshouses remaining empty for long periods, thus incurring void loss and vandalism, and damaging the reputation of the Charity
- 2.2 Failure to prioritise the allocation of homes to the classes of persons to whom preference must be given under the terms of the Charity Commission Scheme.
- 2.3 Failure to maintain sustainable communities within the almshouse schemes.

### **3. REFERENCES**

- 3.1 Charity Commission Scheme
- 3.2 Almshouse Association Standards of Almshouse Management 2014.

### **4. PROCESS**

- 4.1. When an almshouse becomes vacant the Lettings/Housing Officer will collect the keys and carry out a check out on the property (PTI). The Lettings Officer will send the check-out memo to the Relet Team. If the works required are extensive or there are health and safety concerns, the Lettings/Housing Officer will arrange for a Technical Officer to inspect the property to decide what work needs to be done before it can be re-occupied.
- 4.2 The vacancy must be advertised, unless an advert has been placed in the last 12 months, in order to meet the requirements of the Charity Commission Scheme. An advert will also be added to Rightmove.
- 4.3. The Admin Team will add the property to the void report for monitoring and check for a gas safety certificate, EPC, identify utility suppliers and check if on a weekly or monthly rent. The rent will also need to be checked with the finance officer to ensure the most up to date rental is used.

- 4.4 When an application is received this will be passed to the Senior Housing officer to assess and ensure the applicants meet the criteria for the property. Also to ensure the property they have applied for meets the customers' needs and affordability requirements. A home visit and right to rent check will be arranged at that point to ensure suitability for the Almshouses applied for. This is to ensure that when a property is vacant; we are not holding the process up by arranging home visits for applicants that are not suitable.
- 4.5 If there is a waiting list for the scheme, and there are more applicants than properties, the Admin team will complete a table to assist shortlisting of the applicants for the Panel to consider, see Appendix 1. The panel will decide the top three applicants using the criteria below. If at this point the applicant has not had a home visit, one will be arranged.
- 4.6 When enquiries are received for an almshouse, the Admin Team will confirm as far as possible that anyone wishing to apply meets the criteria before an application form is sent out.

Criteria: applicants must:

- be in need, hardship or distress (in all cases) AND
  - be (or have been) resident in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire (but this does not apply to any of the Hardstaff Homes, Warner Almshouses or Blythe Cottages which has its own residency criteria).
  - The majority of schemes have a specific age requirement that is considered sensitively
- 4.7 The Trustee may consider applicants from outside the area but only in exceptional circumstances where there are no applicants from within the area. When making a decision the panel will consider:
- Applicant's financial situation
  - Current accommodation and its suitability
  - Ability to meet housing need through other housing options

N.B. The Charity Commission Scheme states that the trustee must give preference to certain classes of persons in certain homes: the Appointment Panel will consider this if it should be appropriate. Preferences by scheme are listed in Appendix 3.

- 4.8 The Lettings Admin will arrange a meeting of at least two of the Appointments Panel who will make a decision. The Panel comprises:
- Head of Specialist Housing
  - Specialist Housing Manager
  - Senior Housing Officers
  - Housing Officers

The Panel will have regard to the existing community within the almshouse scheme when making its decision.

- 4.9 All decisions will be recorded in the Almshouses Allocations spreadsheet.

- 4.10 Unsuccessful applicants should be contacted within three working days of an offer being made and accepted.
- 4.11 The Lettings Officer will contact the selected applicant to arrange a viewing. Subject to the applicant being satisfied with the property and a satisfactory home visit, the Lettings/Housing Officer will agree the start date, of the licence with the applicant.
- 4.12 At the sign up appointment, the Lettings/Housing Officer will complete all the paperwork as per the checklist (appendix 2), provide the resident with a residents' handbook, take meter readings and take a chip and pin payment for the maintenance charge. (Payment in advance should have been agreed at the home visit/pre sign up discussion).
- 4.13 The Admin Assistant will set up a new tenancy on Capita, new tenancy file and set up a paperless direct debit if the resident is not applying for Housing Benefit. **Note:** William Crane and Blythe Cottages cannot pay by direct debit, only by standing order or chip and pin. If resident qualifies for a free or subsidised TV Licence, the Admin Assistant will arrange for this.
- 4.14 A follow up call to be made by the Housing Officer two weeks after the commencement of the licence to ensure the resident has not had issues with setting up utilities; getting boiler recommissioned or has any other questions.

## 5 WAITING LIST

- 5.1 The waiting list will be administered by the Lettings Admin Team. When an application form is received, the form will be passed to the SHO to assess and if the application form meets the criteria for a scheme, then a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant and a home visit arranged. If they do not meet the criteria they will be advised of this and their application will be shredded. A record of their name will be kept on the waiting list for reference. If they do meet the criteria their details will be added to the waiting list database including their preferred schemes and requirements ie; ground floor flat or bungalow only.
- 5.2 When an almshouse becomes available, the Senior Housing Officer/Admin team will use the waiting list to identify applicants and create a shortlist for the Panel to consider as above.
- 5.3 The waiting list will be reviewed annually. All applicants will be contacted to confirm they still want to be considered for a vacancy and that the information on their application is still current. If their circumstances have changed, ie change of income, address, additional household members, change in health, a new application form should be sent out. If applicants advise us that they will struggle to complete a form, an appointment at the office can be arranged to help them complete the form. If we are unable to contact applicants after 3 phone calls and a follow up letter, their names will be recorded on the waiting list but they will no longer be considered for a vacancy and their application form will be shredded.

Appendix 1

Current property		Criteria for property									
Highest Need	Date of Application	Home visit done?	Name of applicant(s)	Ages	Household composition	Household Income	Live in Nottinghamshire?	Savings	Housing Need	Mobility Needs	Shortlisting notes - following home visit

Appendix 2

## Application Checklist and File Record

Name(s):

New Tenancy at:

O/H Property Reference:

Tenancy Commencement Date:

<b>Total Rent Payable pcm:</b>	<b>£ pcm</b>
<b>Maintenance contribution due in advance:</b>	
	<b>£</b>

**Before Signing Up**

1. Ensure all keys are returned.
2. Calculate maintenance charge due in advance
3. Home visit carried out on.....
4. Gas Certificate expiry date.....
5. Valid EPC.....

**Sign Up Documents**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Licence to Occupy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Additional charity statements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintenance Advice & Information Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Details on Utilities i.e. Gas, Electric, Water
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoke Alarm instruction & completion of Installation Form
<input type="checkbox"/>	All Keys To Tenant
<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing Benefit Forms
<input type="checkbox"/>	ID checked
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintenance charge taken on sign up
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulnerabilities form

**Advice given to applicants**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Discuss Payment Methods available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advice On Contents Insurance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintenance Advice & Information Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoke Alarm instruction & completion of Installation Form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Almshouse handbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Housing Benefit Form
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintenance charge taken on sign up
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advice on additional occupants
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advice on pets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Next of Kin contact details confirmed

**Meter Readings at sign up**

**Electricity**

<b>Meter Ref:</b>
<b>Supplier:</b>
<b>Readings</b>

**Gas**

<b>Meter Ref:</b>
<b>Supplier:</b>
<b>Readings</b>

**Water**

<b>Meter Ref:</b>
<b>Supplier:</b>
<b>Readings</b>

**After Sign Up - Administration Officer**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Application & Allocations Records Update
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Tenant File set up
<input type="checkbox"/>	Paperless Direct Debit set up
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notify Tenants Of Account Number
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulnerability recorded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Next of Kin recorded
<input type="checkbox"/>	Email to council Tax/ Water/ Utilities

Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:    
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## Appendix 3

<b><u>Almshouse Scheme</u></b>	<b><u>Description and Criteria</u></b>	<b><u>Please tick if you wish to be considered.</u></b>
<b><u>Denton</u></b> Blythe Cottages, Cawthra Court, Denton. Nr Grantham, Lincs	Two-bedroom houses. Priority will be given to people who live or who have lived in the Parish of Denton or currently resident in the neighboring Parishes of Woolsthorpe-by-Belvoir, Wyville-cum-Hungerton, Stroxtun, Harston, Croxton Kerrial, Harlaxton, Barrowby or as referrals from South Kesteven District Council.	
<b><u>Forest Fields</u></b> Norris Homes, Berridge Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham	One-bedroom houses for single women or couples of 50 years of age and over. Applicants must also live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	
<b><u>Sherwood</u></b> Pennhome Cottages, Haydn Road, Sherwood, Nottingham	Two-bedroom (2 <sup>nd</sup> room box) houses. For single women of 50 years of age and over who live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	
<b><u>Clifton</u></b> Wells Almshouses, Clifton Green, Clifton Village, Nottingham.	One and two bedroom houses for people over 50 years of age. Preference given to applicants who have live or have lived in Clifton, Nottingham.	
<b><u>Woodborough Road</u></b> William Crane Almshouses, Woodborough Road, Nottingham.	One bedroom houses for people over 55 years of age. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	
<b><u>Bulwell</u></b> John Wright Charity, Springfields, Bulwell, Nottingham.	Two bedroom bungalows for people over 50 years of age. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	
<b><u>Wollaton Vale</u></b> Emma Birks Trust, Wollaton Vale, Nottingham	Two bedroom semi-detached bungalows for people over 50 years of age who live or have lived preferably in Lenton, Nottingham.	
<b><u>Bramcote</u></b> Frances Longden Almshouses, Bramcote, Nottingham	One and two bedroom houses for women over 50 years of age. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	
<b><u>Derby Road</u></b> William Woodsend Nottingham Derby Road, Nottingham	One bedroom flats for people aged 50 years and over. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.	



<p><b><u>Mapperley Park</u></b> R.W.S. Chestnut Grove, Mapperley Park, Nottingham</p>	<p>Two bedroom houses for women or couples over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Gedling</u></b> Miss M.E. Hardstaff Homes, Arnold Lane, Gedling, Nottingham</p>	<p>Two bedroom bungalows &amp; two and three bedroom houses for people over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Giltbrook</u></b> Miss M E - Hardstaff Homes, Nottingham Road, Giltbrook, Nottingham.</p>	<p>One bedroom ground floor and first floor flats for people over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Mansfield Woodhouse</u></b> Miss M. E. Hardstaff Homes and J.G. Ryley Almshouses, Priory Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Nottingham.</p>	<p>One-bedroom flats and bungalows and two-bedroom houses for people over the age of 60 who live or have lived in Mansfield/Mansfield Woodhouse or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Lenton</u></b> Capt. Albert Ball VC Memorial Homes, Sherwin Road, Lenton, Nottingham</p>	<p>One bedroom house for people over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Lenton, Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Hucknall</u></b> Coupe Almshouses, Garden Road, Hucknall, Nottingham</p>	<p>Two-bedroom bungalows for people over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Edwalton</u></b> Hind Memorial Homes, Village Street, Edwalton, Nottingham.</p>	<p>Two-bedroom bungalows for people over the age of 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Wollaton</u></b> Henry Brown Homes, Burnwood Drive, Wollaton, Nottingham.</p>	<p>One bedroom ground and first floor flats and two bedroom houses for people of retirement age in housing need.</p>	
<p><b><u>St Anns</u></b> Ada Mary Best, St Bartholemew's Road, St Anns, Nottingham.</p>	<p>One bedroom ground, first and second floor flats for people over 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	
<p><b><u>Woodborough Road</u></b> Lambley, Woodborough Road, Nottingham.</p>	<p>One bedroom ground and first floor flats for people over 50. Applicants must live or have lived in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire.</p>	

<p><b><u>Warner Almhouse</u></b> Mill Lane Loughborough.</p>	<p>One bedroom ground and first floor flats. Applicants be residents in Loughborough or previously worked in Loughborough. Priority is given to applicants over the age of 50 and who have previously worked for Cartwright and Warners or TP Towle or who worked in the hosiery trade in Loughborough.</p>	
<p><b><u>Cahn Memorial Homes</u></b> Park Drive Hucknall.</p>	<p>Two bedroom bungalows for people over 60. Priority will be given to applicants born in the parish of Hucknall, Linby or Papplewick, or have lived in either parish for more than 20 years.</p>	