



LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Responsible Director: Director of Homes and Wellbeing

Responsible Manager: Head of Homes and Wellbeing

Last updated: March 2018

Next update: **Under Review**

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1. Purpose of the Local Lettings Plan

- 1.1 This policy is intended to establish the framework under which Local Lettings Plans (LLPs) will be developed for new and existing housing schemes.

2. Objectives of the Local Lettings Plan

- 2.1 The objectives of these plans are:

- a. to create sustainable, balanced and cohesive communities
- b. to attain a mixture of occupancy and household types to encourage sustainability
- c. to complement the objectives of Neighbourhood Action Plans

- 2.2 We recognise that there are circumstances where exceptions to a plan should be made.

- a) The LLP may be suspended in order to meet housing need in exceptional circumstances, (e.g. where a customer requires an emergency transfer and there is only one available property or where there is an urgent need which has arisen to rehouse someone who is homeless via a Local Authority nomination).
- b) Where there is a need to avoid long-term empty properties but no bids/applications are received from applicants who meet the criteria.

3. Where local lettings plans should be used

- 3.1 Generally, plans may be devised for new developments of 20 or more units of accommodation or new developments which contain a block of flats.

- 3.2 Additionally, plans may be developed for existing developments or areas identified by housing management staff, customers and other stakeholders where there are issues that affect sustainability e.g. high turnover and abandonments, high levels of ASB/criminal activity, high concentrations of vulnerable customers, a high number of transfer requests and properties that are generally difficult to let or low demand.

4. Development Process

- 4.1 For new and existing estates we will:

- a. Identify the numbers and types of tenures of all properties. Establish the existing issues in the area where the new scheme will be located and how these issues might affect the viability of establishing a thriving community. Log these issues on the "Preparation for an LLP" form (Appendix b.14.1). Agree a mix of household types, economic and social needs for the area covered by the plan.

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- b. Consult to establish targets for the community mix with relevant members of staff / departments (e.g. Estates teams).
- c. Consult over targets for the community mix with the relevant local authority. Agreement should be reached on a method for achieving allocations targets through the nomination procedure for initial lettings. Consultations should take account of existing Section 106 local lettings agreements and consultations should be held with the local Parish Council where appropriate. Where there is an established estate which is experiencing issues with anti social behaviour and we are proposing to introduce an LLP to help to create a more balanced community the Estates, Allocations and Customer Involvement teams will discuss how best to approach the consultation process with customers – this may involve both surveys and public meetings/focus groups.
- d. The form contained in Appendix B.14.1 will be completed by the Senior Allocations Officer.
- e. Officers creating LLPs will give due regard to any relevant equality and diversity issues to ensure that no groups suffer intentional or unintentional discrimination. An impact assessment will be completed by the Estates Service Manager see Appendix B.14.2
- f. Ongoing lettings should be guided by reference to LLP targets.

4.2 Targets for LLPs should include:

- a. CBL Bandings – agree % of lettings to each of the Local Authority CBL bands
- b. Economic circumstances (agree % for employed full / part time, unemployed/ claiming benefits)
- c. Family composition/household type (using the NCHA guidelines for occupation of different sized properties contained in the Allocations Policy)

4.3 Approval of Local Lettings Plans:

- a. All LLPs should be approved by the Estates Service Manager for both the Allocations and the Estates teams.
- b. A sample of a generic local lettings plan which can be adapted for use with a specific scheme is enclosed at Appendix B 14.3. Lettings criteria and associated percentages under the plan will be a matter for negotiation with the relevant Local Authority, always bearing in mind the equalities and diversities implications of any decisions made.

5. Reviewing Local Lettings Plans

- 5.1 At the point of every letting the key information relating to an LLP (taken from CORE) will be recorded in tabular format in order to give an accurate profile of the make up of tenancies on an estate.

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- 5.2 At the end of the initial 12 month period of the LLP the estate profile will be analysed by the Estates Service Manager who will make recommendations to the Head of Affordable and Social Housing as to the future of the LLP. The Estates Service Manager will be consulted at this point.
- 5.3 The information contained in the profile will be compared to the original targets for lettings under the LLP. Any issues identified with the estate will be discussed before a decision on whether to close down the LLP or continue with it is made. If there are no outstanding issues with the estate the LLP will be discontinued.

SAMPLE DOCUMENT – Preparation for a Local Lettings Plan

Scheme Name:

Date of Plan:

No. of Properties & Property Type:

1 Bed Flats:		2 Bed Houses:	
2 Bed Flats:		3 Bed Houses:	
3 Bed Flats:		4 Bed Houses:	

Local circumstances to be taken into account, i.e.; history of ASB, drug abuse, gang and crime problems in local area?

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Details of consultation undertaken & views of stakeholders:

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Proposed lettings plan details

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Equality & Diversity Impact Assessment:

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Approved by Estates Service Manager

Approved by Head of Affordable and Social Housing

Date

SAMPLE DOCUMENT - Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX B 14.2

Name of project, policy, function, service or proposal being assessed:	Local Lettings Policy for xxxx				
Main objective:	The purpose of the local lettings policy is to ensure that the allocations process for these new homes produces a thriving and sustainable community from the outset.				
<p>What impact will the Local Lettings policy for the first allocation of new build developments have on the following groups? Please note that you should consider both external and internal impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External (e.g. stakeholders, residents, local businesses etc.) • Internal (staff) 					
Please use only 'Yes' where applicable		Negative	Positive	Neutral	Comments
Gender	External			✓	
	Internal				
Disability	External				Any applicant who is in receipt of either mid to high rate Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or a Personal Independent Payment (PIP) for mobility or care is excluded from the X% employment

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					requirement and the X% of applicants who are required to be on out of work benefits so is not disadvantaged by the employment criteria
	Internal				
Race & Ethnicity	External				
	Internal				
Sexual Orientation	External				
	Internal				
Religion or Belief (or no Belief)	External				
	Internal				
Pregnancy & Maternity	External				The occupancy standards applied by most housing associations define a set occupancy (household size) for each property type. This is largely based on housing benefit payment rates and ensures the best use

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					of the stock. We are proposing the following occupancy standards. 1 bed = single applicant or couple, no children. 2 bed = single applicant or couple, 1 to 2 children. 3 bed = single applicant or couple, 2 or more children 4 = single applicant or couple, 3 or more children
	Internal				
<p>Other Groups (e.g. any other vulnerable groups, rural isolation, deprived areas, low income staff etc.)</p> <p>Please state the group/s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' groups Rural and inner city communities 	External				
	Internal				
Is there is any evidence of a high disproportionate adverse or positive impact on any groups?	Potentially	The proposal is to allocate 75% of the new homes to applicants from band 1 and the remaining 25% to applicants from band 2. This is to enable those applicants with high medical needs (in band 2) to have an opportunity to be considered for these properties			

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		and also to ensure that NCHA do not have 100% of customers in the most urgent housing need, to better reflect the wider community and facilitate the creation of a settled and sustainable community.
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Is there an opportunity to mitigate or alleviate any such impacts?	No	The age restriction (over 18s) relates to the legal ability to hold a tenancy agreement although there can be exceptions when a guarantor is used. There can also be complications with housing benefits for persons under 18s who could be considered as minors and therefore the responsibility of Children's Services.
Are there any gaps in information available (e.g. evidence) so that a complete assessment of different impacts is not possible?	No	

In response to the information provided above please provide a set of proposed actions including any consultation that is going to be carried out:

Planned Actions	Timeframe	Success Measure	Responsible Officer
Monitoring	Annual	Duration of tenancies Compliance with tenancy conditions i.e. payment of rent and avoidance of anti-social behaviour	

N.B. Please note that other actions might follow after the consultations outlined above.

Authorisation and Review

Service Manager (Estates)	
Head of Affordable and Social Housing	
Date	
Review date (if applicable)	

SAMPLE DOCUMENT - LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY (LLP) FOR NEW BUILD DEVELOPMENT

Scheme	XXXX
Landlord	Nottingham Community Housing Association
Purpose of this Local Lettings Policy	<p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the allocations process for new built homes produces a thriving and sustainable community from the outset.</p> <p>Therefore, while the XXXX Choice Based Allocations system adopted by XXXX Council along with Registered Provider partners will remain the overarching mechanism against which allocations will be made, changes to the principle policy have been made for lettings to new developments to encourage the creation of a settled and sustainable community.</p> <p>The local lettings policy will only be used for the first allocation of new build properties.</p> <p>NCHA will seek approval of this Local Lettings Policy from XXXX Council.</p>
Marketing of the Development	<p>All properties will be advertised on XXXX, the Council's Choice Based lettings scheme. Interested parties will need to be registered and accepted onto XXXX in order to bid and be eligible for an allocation of a property.</p> <p>Properties will be allocated to households in accordance with the XXXX allocations policy and for the first allocation of new build properties the additional requirements of the local letting policy will be applied.</p>

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<p>Allocations criteria</p>	<p>In order to achieve a balanced community, it is proposed that the following criteria will be used</p> <p>4 bedroomed house Preference will be given to families with 3 or more dependent children, (depending on ages and genders) or those applicants with resident carers</p> <p>3 bedroomed house Preference will be given to families with 2 or more dependent children, (depending on ages and genders) or those applicants with resident carers</p> <p>2 bedroom flats & houses Preference will be given to families with 1 or 2 dependent children, (depending on ages and genders), or those applicants with resident carers</p> <p>1 Bedroomed properties Couples and single people without children</p> <p>Banding split Up to X% of applicants from band 1 Up to X% of applicants from band 2</p> <p>Employment, Education and Training status X% of these properties will have a preference to those who are in employment or who are in full time higher education or training. Those working less than 20 hours per week will need to be in receipt of in work benefits in order to be able to sustain the tenancy financially. The remaining X% will have a preference to applicants who are currently in receipt of out of work benefits.</p> <p>Applicants with disabilities Applicants who are unable to work due to age or disability or because they are the full time carer of a disabled child are able to bid on and will be considered for any of the properties. Disability is defined as those who receive mid to high rate DLA or PIP for mobility or care. An applicant who is the main carer of a disabled child will need to be in receipt of Carer's Allowance and DLA or PIP for the child.</p>
<p>Nomination of Bidders</p>	<p>In addition to the checks carried out by the Council NCHA will also conduct further checks, such as Pre- tenancy assessments</p>
<p>Final decision on allocation</p>	<p>NCHA will have the final decision on who the property will be allocated to, not the Council.</p>

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Termination of the Local Lettings Policy	This Local Lettings Policy will apply to first lets on practical completion of the scheme. The plan will be reviewed 12 months after handover of the scheme and a decision taken as to whether it should continue in place. If there are no outstanding issues on the estate the plan will be discontinued.
Monitoring and Review	NCHA will monitor the outcomes from the Local Lettings Policy on an annual basis.
Equal opportunities	NCHA has completed an Equality Impact Assessment which is attached.