

# Local Lettings Policy

## Robinson Lane, New Road, Winsford



### What is a Local Lettings Policy?

Local Lettings Policies are used to create balanced and sustainable communities. They can be used when a new development is first let or for existing neighbourhoods to respond to specific local issues. They are used alongside the existing Allocations Policy of the Local Authority or Housing Provider and may include additional eligibility criteria and/or targets for lettings to different household groups.

A Local Lettings Policy should not dominate a Local Authority's Allocations Policy. It must balance the statutory requirement (set out in the Housing Act 1996 amended by the Localism Act 2011) to give reasonable preference to certain categories of applicants along with its objectives to create balanced and sustainable communities.

### What is the scope of this Local Lettings Policy?

This Local Lettings Policy applies to the homes owned by Weaver Vale Housing Trust on the Robinson Lane, New Road site in Winsford.

The new development built by Lane End will be handed over to Weaver Vale Housing Trust in two phases:

Phase One includes 46 units as follows:

- 16 one bed apartments
- 20 two bed apartments
- 6 two bed houses
- 4 three-bed houses

Phase Two includes 27 units as follows:

- 15 one bed apartments
- 12 two bed apartments

This Local Lettings Policy applies to all the homes in the development.

### Why do we need a Local Lettings Policy for Robinson Lane, New Road, Winsford?

As this is a new development, we want to make sure that we create a balanced and sustainable community from the beginning. Our aim is to create a community with a mix of different household types and economic circumstances at the same time as responding to local housing needs.

## **Who is eligible for housing on Robinson Lane, New Road, Winsford?**

This Local Lettings Policy sits alongside West Cheshire homes Common Allocation Policy. We will only consider applicants who meet the eligibility criteria for social housing under the Common Allocations Policy.

### **Application and selection process**

All properties will be advertised through West Cheshire Homes which is Cheshire West and Chester Council's Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

When determining an applicant's eligibility for housing on Robinson Lane, New Road, Winsford, Weaver Vale Housing Trust will apply the following selection criteria:

1. All applicants must meet the eligibility criteria set out in West Cheshire Homes Common Allocation Policy.
2. At least 50% of the properties will be let to applicants in priority housing need. This will be determined by applicants awarded Band A or B status. If there are no suitable applicants in Bands A or B, applicants in the Housing Options Band will be considered.
3. Preference will be given to applicants in employment, or who have an offer of permanent employment, or who are in Education or Training for 50% of lettings. This is irrespective of housing need and the Trust may give preference to an applicant who fulfils this requirement above another applicant in greater housing need, in order to create a balanced community on first letting. These applicants will be prioritised on the shortlists for the vacancies.
4. All applicants will be subject to an Affordability Assessment carried out by the Trust to make sure that applicants can afford the rent and other costs of the tenancy. This is in order to create sustainable tenancies and the Trust reserves the right not to make an offer of a tenancy to an applicant who cannot afford the tenancy irrespective of their housing need. As part of the Assessment process, the Trust will offer support to applicants to ensure they are claiming their full benefit entitlement and can access debt management support if it is needed.

The Trust reserves the right to advertise available properties on the open market if suitable applicants are not identified through West Cheshire Homes. Where this is the case, applicants will still be assessed using the above selection criteria.

### **Appeals**

The Trust does not operate an appeals process. Applicants who are dissatisfied with the handling of their case or a decision made by the Trust regarding their application under this Local Lettings Policy, can seek redress through the Trust's Complaints Policy.

### **Review of the Local Lettings Policy**

This Local Lettings Policy will apply to the first letting of the rented homes on Robinson Lane, New Road, Winsford and for any vacancies that arise within the first 12 months. After that time, we will review the Local Lettings Policy or withdraw it if it is no longer needed.