

Local Lettings Framework

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Weaver Park, Northwich Cheshire

1. Introduction

Weaver Park's Local Lettings framework aims to make a significant contribution to the overall sustainability of the area by helping to identify suitable tenants, who will settle and contribute to the local community, ensuring tenancies are sustainable for the long term.

2. Aims of the framework

The purpose of the framework is to ensure our lettings create a balanced and sustainable community; encourage cohesion across the mixed tenure new development scheme and to ensure tenancies are sustainable for the long term.

3. Background

Weaver Park, Hartsford on the outskirts of Northwich Cheshire, is a new build mixed tenure development of 258 private homes, the majority of which are for sale, ranging in price between £300 and £450k.

Included within the development are 78 affordable homes, 26 of which will be for shared ownership along with 52 houses to be let at affordable rent.

The 52 affordable rent houses are a mixture of two- and three-bedroom houses along with 4 two-bedroom flats, broken down as follows:

- Thirteen 3 bed houses, thirty-five 2-bedroom houses, four 2-bedroom flats all which will be available for rent through Plus Dane.

Handovers are scheduled to take place between December 2021 and Summer 2024 with the eight properties being handed over on or around 17 December 2021.

4. Proposal for scheme

Overall, the content of this framework does not diverge from the main principles of West Cheshire Home's Allocation Policy, and we remain committed to rehousing people in housing need.

Homes will be advertised through West Cheshire Homes; however, we intend to include a local lettings criterion to ensure the sustainment and reputation of the new development along with the economic well-being of the area.

It is intended that a local lettings policy will apply on the first let to safeguard the reputation of the development and the significant investment being made in the new homes, striking a balance between supporting sustainable, settled neighbourhoods and housing need.

Our aim through this local letting framework is to create a stable environment and feeling of safety and wellbeing, creating a safe place to live, minimising anti-social behaviour.

Specifically, this means for this this scheme that priority for applications will be given to those who:

- Are economically active to ensure a balance of incomes
- Do not have a history of anti social behaviour.

We **will** give 60% preference to working household and applicants in continuing employment.

We **will** be giving preference to those household able to demonstrate a stable and continuing employment history. All applicants will be subject to financial assessments to ensure affordability and sustainability.

We would **not** allocate to any household unable to provide satisfactory tenancy references for the preceding 2 years.

We will **not** allocate to any household that has been served with any form of written warning for breach of tenancy in the previous 2 years

We would **not** allocate to any household where any member of that household has any criminal convictions (excluding driving offences), police cautions, reprimands or formal warnings recorded against them in the previous 2 years.

4.1 Selection Process

The properties will be advertised on West Cheshire Homes advising applicants that a Local Letting scheme is in place and applicants will be required to satisfy the criteria specified.

We will continue to give priority to suitable applicants in accordance with the appropriate banding and date order system but shall give priority to those in employment where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay the rent.

Applicants given priority for employment should be working 16 hours or more at the close of the bidding cycle and be able to provide as evidence a contract of employment, letter from employer and/ or recent wage slips.

Applicants will be required to fully occupy the property in line with current bedroom eligibility needs.

In addition, applicants must demonstrate a local connection to the Cheshire West and Chester area.

Before any offer is made, all applicants will be required to undergo a formal interview when the local letting criteria and any additional checks that may be necessary will be discussed in detail.

5. Conclusion and Review

It is intended that this Local Lettings Policy shall apply to the first lets only. When a property on this development becomes available in the future, it will be advertised in accordance with our general Lettings Policy.

We will use the following indicators to measure the overall success of this Local Lettings Plan.

- Turnover of homes
- Average length of tenancy
- Number of Anti-Social Behaviour reports