

LOCAL LETTINGS POLICY

LOCATION: 55A, 55B, 55C, 55D, 55E HIGH STREET WALKERN HERTS

This scheme consists of the following units:

2 x 2 Bed 4 person Houses - General Needs
2 x 3 Bed 5 person Houses – General Needs
1 x 2 Bed 4 person House - Shared Ownership Life time Home.
Total 5

The terms of this local lettings policy will apply to the general needs rented properties only. Shared ownership and intermediate rental properties will be allocated separately using the criteria relevant to those tenures.

Any scheme where several properties are being let at the same time and new communities are being developed needs to be pro-actively managed to avoid the potential for unsustainable communities and future management problems. This development consists of large family accommodation with own gardens in close proximity with the additional potential for a high level of child density, there will be a local management group comprising of residents some of which will be residents in private owner occupied properties. The front gardens of the properties will be maintained by the management group not the tenants.

Experience of managing similar schemes indicates that there are likely to be issues relating to support needs and tenancy sustainment, which in turn may lead to anti-social behaviour and loss of tenancies. Furthermore although there is parking on site it is felt that a Local Lettings Policy (LLP) will help to manage these issues and achieve long term sustainability.

Local Lettings Policy Objectives:

1. To meet local housing need and to assist in tackling homelessness.
2. To create a sustainable and manageable community in order to minimise turnover and to create long term homes for local people in housing need, rather than stepping stone to other housing.

New Lets:

100% of new lets will be allocated to nominations from East Herts District Council.

Objective	Criteria
Objective 1: To meet local housing need and assist in tackling homelessness.	
Balanced community:	One of the four general needs vacancies will be allocated to a homeless family.
	This will assist the local authority in meeting their statutory duties.
	Two vacancies will be set aside for existing RSL tenants living in the district who are registered with East Herts council for a transfer, this will bring households with experience of successfully managing a tenancy to the scheme.
	One vacancy will be offered to non transfer applicants from East Herts housing register. This will enable new households to access social housing in the area.
Objective 2.	
To create a sustainable and manageable community in order to minimise turnover and to create long term homes for people in housing need, rather than a stepping stone to other housing.	
Diversity:	The overall community within each development should reflect the East Herts Housing policy, particularly in terms of gender, age (for those of non pensionable age) and ethnicity.
Economic Activity:	Aim to ensure that at least 40% of the properties are let to households with at least one member in employment.
Support:	No more than 15% of households should have a member with high support needs, the Housing Association will confirm with the Council any cases they consider high support needs.
Family mix:	To treat single parents and couples equally so that:
	3 person properties have a maximum of 1 child
	4 person properties have a maximum of 2 children of the same sex
	5 person properties have a maximum of 3 children
	Aim to ensure the children cover a mix of ages, aiming for no more than 30% children under the age of 5 and no more than 30% of children over the age of 14

In order for Riversmead staff to provide individual and tailored management & maintenance services the current good practice of sharing applicant details at the time of nomination should continue. This process is especially important for vulnerable households. If appropriate a support plan should be in place to determine initial and future support needs.

This LLP will override the Council's points scheme for deciding which applicant receives priority for a nomination. However where more than one applicant meets the relevant criteria, applicants will be considered in points order which takes account of reasonable preference requirements.

East Herts will keep a record of the decision made with regard to the nominations for the general needs rented properties, justifying the nomination and maintaining proper audit records.

RELETS:

As part of the joint working initiative through the choice based lettings scheme Riversmead will offer 100% of re-lets to nominations from East Herts Council. Should the Choice Based Lettings scheme cease to exist in the future the arrangement will be subject to review.

After the initial letting of the scheme general needs properties becoming available for re-letting will be allocated in accordance with any local lettings policy in operation at that time (see review section below).

Review:

This Local lettings policy will be reviewed jointly by representatives from Riversmead Housing Association and East Herts District Council, 2 months after initial lettings are completed, to review the allocations process in respect of the various tenures, and to assess any issues in relation to the anticipated supply and demand.

Examples of good practice and areas for improvement will be incorporated into other local lettings policies set up by Riversmead Housing Association in the East Herts area.

Should any vacancies occur at High Street Walkern during the first 12 months after initial letting they will be allocated in accordance with this LLP in order to maintain the balance of the scheme. If at the end of the first 12 months it is felt that there are outstanding management or sustainability issue, Riversmead Housing Association will provide relevant statistical information (eg: on turnover anti-social behaviour, arrears actions, complaints) and the continuation of an amended LLP will be considered jointly by Riversmead and East Herts Council.

Publicising Local Lettings Policies:

In order to ensure that allocations through local lettings policies

Are as transparent as possible the details of this policy will be made available on the Riversmead/ East Herts websites and will be referred to in the choice based lettings adverts. A paper version of the LLP should be available on request for applicants who request it.