

# Local Lettings Framework

Plus Dane Housing

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## Shacklady - Knowsley

### 1. Introduction

Shacklady Local Lettings scheme 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. Background

Shacklady development is a new build scheme situated in the Northwood area of Knowsley. The development comprises of 43 homes split as follows.

- 8 x 1 bed cottage flats
- 6 x 2 bed bungalows
- 21 x 2 bed houses
- 8 x 3 bed houses

Handovers are scheduled to take place on a phased basis between May 2019 and October 2019. The first phase of 13 properties will contain a mix of two and three bedroom houses along with four two-bedroom bungalows.

### 3. Rational for use of a Local Lettings Policy

Overall, the content of this Local Letting Policy does not diverge from the overall principles of the Property Pool Plus (PPP) Allocation Policy and we remain committed to rehousing people in housing need.

Although homes will be advertised through PPP, for all first lets, we intend to include a local lettings criterion to meet the specific local issues of Northwood and to ensure the sustainment and reputation of the new development and the economic regeneration of the area.

Northwood has a higher percentage of benefit claimants at 6.2% compared to 3.6% for the borough of Knowsley as a whole. In addition, the proportion of unemployed residents in the Northwood ward is greater than the Borough as a whole. (Source Knowsley Knowledge 2016).

We aim to address the economic and worklessness imbalance by giving priority to working households thereby increasing the numbers not solely dependent on welfare benefits. We do not intend to apply this in isolation to housing need and we therefore proposed to advertise a proportion of properties to applicants in all priority bands, giving preference to those in employment. By targeting applicants in employment, it will help to make a positive impact on deprivation and poverty levels in the area, promoting economic regeneration.

The other issue pertinent to Northwood relates to crime and anti-social behaviour. Historically, Northwood has been an area that has seen higher levels of both crime and ASB compared to other areas in the Borough. Data in the 12 months leading up to April 2016 shows that Northwood recorded 1,251 crimes, which equates to a crime rate of 155 crimes per 1,000 population. This is almost twice the Borough rate of 64 crimes per 1,000 population (9332-recorded crimes).

Similarly, Northwood recorded 742 ASB incidents, which equates to a rate of 68 incidents per 1,000 population. Again, this is markedly higher than the Borough rate of 40 ASB incidents per 1,000 population (5821 ASB incidents). – Source: Northward Ward Profile – Knowlsey Knowledge Hub 2016.

Our aim through this Local Letting Plan is to create a stable environment and feeling of safety and wellbeing, creating a safe place to live, minimising anti-social behaviour. For this reason, we intend to prioritise applicants who do not have a history of ASB.

#### **4. HRA active application breakdown in Knowsley as at 31 March 2019**

Figures provided by First Ark show there are 2231 applicants waiting on 1, 2 or 3 bedroom properties in Knowsley. The table below provides a breakdown of demand by Band as at 31 March 2019.

<b>Priority Band</b>	<b>Sub Band</b>	<b>Bedroom need</b>			
		<b>1 bed</b>	<b>2 bed</b>	<b>3 bed</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>A</b>	Health and welfare Urgent	4	4	2	<b>10</b>
	Statutory Homeless	2	0	1	<b>3</b>
	Homeless Relief	24	13	10	<b>47</b>
	Regeneration	41	1	0	<b>42</b>
	Overcrowded (2 or more)	2	11	4	<b>17</b>
<b>Total Band A</b>					<b>119</b>
<b>B</b>	Health and Welfare High	108	89	39	<b>236</b>
	Overcrowded ( 1 bedroom)	9	62	69	<b>140</b>
	Disrepair	1	1	0	<b>2</b>
	Under occupation	178	84	13	<b>275</b>
	<b>Total Band B</b>				<b>653</b>
<b>C</b>	Health and Welfare Medium	152	70	25	<b>247</b>
	Homeless no priority need	29	3	0	<b>32</b>
	Homeless Intentional with Priority need	0	0	0	
	Living with family and friends	193	126	8	<b>327</b>
	<b>Total Band C</b>				<b>606</b>
<b>D</b>	No assessed need in employment	74	125	53	<b>252</b>
<b>E</b>	No assessed need	317	202	82	<b>601</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>					<b>2231*</b>

\*It is not possible to show the breakdown for applicants interested in Northwood so demand for the area cannot be confirmed.

## **5. Local Letting Policy**

Overall, the content of this Local Letting Policy does not diverge from the overall principles of the Property Pool Plus (PPP) Allocation Policy and we remain committed to rehousing people in housing need.

The local letting policy for this development differs from our principal PPP Allocation policy in that priority will be given to applicants who:

- Are in employment, in order to make a positive uplift to levels of deprivation in the area. 60% of lets will be targeted to applicants in employment.

### **5.1 Property allocation**

In keeping with our partnership with PPP and the planning consent for this scheme, all properties will be advertised and let through PPP with priority given to Knowsley residents.

To help us achieve the letting criteria, the following targets are being proposed for 100% of the properties being advertised on PPP.

- Offers will be made in accordance with priority need on the following basis:
  - Houses – 60% will be prioritised to applicants who are in employment. All applicants will be subject to financial assessments to ensure affordability and sustainability.
  - Flats – 60% will be prioritised to applicants who are in employment. All applicants will be subject to financial assessments to ensure affordability and sustainability.
  - Bungalows – priority in the first instance will be given to applicants who have a health and welfare medical need for ground floor properties. This will override the economical preference

This provides an opportunity for 100% of properties on this site to be advertised on PPP and allocations governed by Plus Dane's own allocations scheme, which includes priority being given to those applicants who can demonstrate full occupation of the property and can demonstrate they, have the finance in place to pay the rent.

To ensure a mix of applicants from each priority Band we will seek a representation of applicants, working and not working, from each priority Band. As shown in the table above (Section 4), the highest demand is from applicants in Band B and C and we therefore propose to target a higher percentage of properties to these bands.

We will generally not allocate to any household who have been served with any form of written warning for breach of tenancy in the previous 12 months.

Where an applicant is rejected on the basis of their previous antisocial behaviour, they will be notified in writing with an explanation as to why they are deemed unsuitable to be a tenant and giving advice as to what steps are available to them to make them suitable to be a tenant in the future. Other examples of behaviour deemed unacceptable are detailed within Section 3 of the PPP Allocation Policy.

## **5.2 Selection Process**

The properties will be advertised on PPP. The advert will advise applicants that a Local Letting scheme is in place and applicants will be required to satisfy the criteria specified.

Prospective tenants must attend a pre tenancy interview and undergo a financial assessment and credit check to establish their financial status and suitability for the scheme.

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

As shown in the table above (Section 4), the highest demand is from applicants in Band B and C and we therefore propose to target a higher percentage of properties to these bands.

Applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview before any offer is made when the local letting criteria and any additional checks that may be necessary, will be discussed in detail.

To help us achieve the lettings criteria, the following targets are proposed for the houses and flats. Within these targets, 60% will be priority given to applicants who are in employment. NB: Bungalows shall be offered to applicants with a health and welfare need.

<b>Priority Band</b>	<b>Sub Band</b>	<b>Proposed offers*</b> Subject to bids received & achieving employment target
<b>A (urgent)</b>	Health and welfare Urgent	2 x 1b flat 2 x 3b houses 4 x 2b houses
	Statutory Homeless	
	Homeless Relief	
	Regeneration	
	Overcrowded (2 or more)	
	<b>Total Band A</b>	
<b>B (high)</b>	Health and Welfare High	3 x 1b flat 3 x 3b houses 10 x 2b houses
	Overcrowded ( 1 bedroom)	
	Disrepair	
	Under occupation	
	<b>Total Band B</b>	
<b>C (Medium)</b>	Health and Welfare Medium	3 x 1b flat 3 x 3b houses 7 x 2b houses
	Homeless no priority need	
	Homeless Intentional with Priority need	
	Living with family and friends	
	<b>Total Band C</b>	
<b>D (Low)</b>	Employed / not employed	Residual % shall be determined based on proportion of working household allocated from above bands

<b>Priority Band</b>	<b>Sub Band</b>	<b>Proposed offers*</b> Subject to bids received & achieving employment target

In the event there is insufficient demand from priority Bands A to C to achieve our employment targets, applicants shall be sourced from Band D.

The handover programme for the scheme is shown at Appendix B.

## **6. Review**

The aim of this Local Lettings Policy is to achieve a balanced and sustainable community with a strong sense of community cohesion.

It is intended that this Local Lettings Policy shall apply to the first lets only.

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