

DESIGN HEADER TO INCLUDE POLICY NAME AND DATE RANGE

**New Build Allocations Policy – Whitefield Drive, Kirkby** 

**INFORMATION**

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| **Policy Name** | **New Build Allocations Policy**  **Whitefield Drive, Kirkby** |
| **Effective Date(s)** | **October 2021 - September 2022** |
| **Approved By** | **Head of Housing** |
| **Approval Date** | **August 2021** |
| **Policy Owner/Dept** | **Head of Housing** |
| **Policy Author** | **Kelly Tasker, Service Manager - Lettings** |
| **Review Date** | **September 2022** |
| **Policy Framework Ref** |  |
| **Version Number** | **1** |

**Version Control**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Date** | **Changes** | **Approver** |
| **1** | **8/10/21** |  |  |

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| **Business Plan Theme** | |
| **Keep Everyone Safe** | **Be a Great Landlord** |
| **Deliver New Affordable Homes** | **Innovation and Transformation** |
| **Business Viability** | **People and Culture** |

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| --- | --- |
| **Relevant National Standards or Regulation** | * Tenancy Standard * Rent Standard |

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| --- | --- |
| **Relevant Legislation** | * Housing Act 1988 * Housing Act 1996 * Homelessness Act 2002 * Equality Act 2010 * Localism Act 2011 |

1. **Purpose**

This policy aims to effectively manage the first lets of the affordable rent homes at Whitefield Drive, Kirkby in Knowsley.

1. **Scope**

This policy applies to all first lets of affordable rent homes at Whitefield Drive, Kirkby in Knowsley. The development consists of 266 properties which is a mix of 115 affordable rent, 45 private rent and 106 shared ownership homes. The affordable rent homes are expected to commence hand over in October 2021.

The mix of affordable rent units is as follows;

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Property type and size | Number units |
| House - 2 bed (4 person) | 49 |
| House - 3 bed (5 person) | 46 |
| House - 3 bed (6 person) | 16 |
| House – 4 bed (7 person) | 4 |

1. **Background and Context**

Your Housing Group own and manage approximately 461 general needs and older persons homes in Knowsley for affordable and social rent.

The area of Kirkby in Knowsley area is one of the more deprived areas of the Country. Claimants of working age workless benefits is well above the national average with 22.6% of the population in receipt of out of work benefits, compared to a national average of 10.9%.

1. **Demand**

Your Housing Group is committed to allocating our affordable housing to meet local housing need. The aims of this policy are to ensure that the new homes we develop support the national housing crisis, support local housing need and also contribute to the overall viability and sustainability of the area. It is crucial that we ensure tenancies are sustained and that these have a positive impact on the local area.

As at August 2021 there are currently circa 923 active applications eligible for a 2, 3 or 4 bedroom property (within Bands A-C priority need bands) on Property Pool Plus within the Knowsley sub region. Your Housing Group allocate our social rented homes through Property Pool Plus. Of the 923 active applications the breakdown by banding is as follows;

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Band | Applicants with 2 bed need | Applicants with 3 bed need | Applicants with a 4 bed need |
| Band A | 46 | 25 | 7 |
| Band B | 319 | 173 | 56 |
| Band C | 234 | 52 | 11 |
| Total | 599 | 250 | 74 |

1. **Allocation criteria and selection**

100% of the allocations will be advertised through Property Pool Plus, in accordance with the criteria detailed within this policy. The principles in this policy do not diverge from the overall aims of the allocations scheme. Property adverts for homes at Whitefield Drive will clearly state on the advert that allocations are subject to this policy, this will help applicants when making a choice about whether to bid on the property.

In order to meet housing need and to ensure that we are achieving a sustainable mix of customers living at Whitefield Drive the allocations will be split with a % in each band that is reflective of the overall demand within that band.

* All properties will be allocated at affordable rent (80% of the market rent) and customers will be offered as Assured Shorthold (starter) tenancy agreement. The only exception to this will be if a customer transferred from another YHG property who currently held a full assured tenancy. In this case a full assured tenancy would be offered.
* All properties will be advertised and allocated with preference given to Knowsley residents.
* All properties will be allocated on a % basis across Band A- C housing need Property Pool bandings.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Banding | Property Type | | |
| 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed |
| A | 10 | 13 | 2 |
| B | 35 | 37 | 2 |
| C | 4 | 12 | 0 |

* Applicants will be required to provide 2 satisfactory references. If the applicant has held a recent tenancy (within the last 5 years) one reference should be from their landlord. Any decision not to offer a tenancy would be made in conjunction with Knowsley Borough Council.
* Applicants with a criminal conviction (which is not spent) and/or previous antisocial behaviour will be reviewed and if there are concerns that this will impact their tenancy and/or neighbours and the local community could result in an offer not being made. This could include a Police check. Any decision not to offer a tenancy would be made in conjunction with Knowsley Borough Council.

1. **Management arrangements**

* All new applicants will have a face to face housing interview and we will complete a financial assessment to ensure that they are able to sustain the tenancy. All new applicants will have a face to face sign up where the terms of their tenancy agreement will be explained.
* Customers will be required to have a new tenancy visit within the first 7 days of their tenancy.

1. **Consultation**

Your Housing Group has consulted with key internal stakeholders and Knowsley Borough Council. Consultation will continue throughout the implementation of this policy and throughout the review period.

1. **Risk Management**

Failure to implement this policy will result in the Group being adversely affected by high turnover at these schemes, associated management costs and dissatisfaction from our existing customers.

1. **Data Protection, Record Storage and Retention**

Data regarding applications will be stored and managed through our ICT systems, CRM, Orchard and Documotive. There are no additional GDPR requirements associated with this policy.

1. **Equality and Diversity**

Your Housing Group will only participate in allocations schemes that are compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and which offer equality of access to services for all applicants.

We assess our policies and provision of services to ensure that no individual or group is treated less favourably because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

Choice Based Lettings schemes we participate in are equality impact assessed, and individual / internal policies are also impact assessed, in line with equality of access for applicants and any adverse/ positive impacts of those policies on our customers.

1. **Communication**

This policy will be communicated with all internal staff and stakeholders.

The policy will be available on the Your Housing Group website and also available to applicants registering through Property Pool Plus choice based lettings scheme.

1. **Performance Management and review**

KPI’s will be reported including average re-let time, occupancy and void rent loss.

Specific KPI’s will be reported on the voids within this scheme this will include;

* Turnover
* % of failed tenancies within the first 12 months
* Customer satisfaction

1. **Review of this Policy**

This policy will be regularly reviewed after 6 months following implementation.