

Local Letting Scheme Holt Road, CH41 9BB Birkenhead, Wirral

Background

This development falls within the Rock Ferry Ward of Wirral Council. The development consists of 30 units comprising of 18 x 2-bedroom and 12 x 1-bedroom apartments available at affordable rent.

Block A – 3 x 3P 2 Bed / 3 x 1 Bed total 6 units

Block B - 3 x 3P 2 Bed / 3 x 1 Bed total 6 units

Block C - 12 x 3P 2 Bed / 6 x 1 Bed 18 units

The site benefits from a close walking distance to Green Lane Merseyrail station for trains to Liverpool, Chester and beyond and local bus network providing connections to the Northwest.

The development is also situated with good access to local shops with Birkenhead Town Centre 1 mile away for more retail and hospitality facilities.

The properties are modern in design and constructed to an extremely high standard. They include the latest energy efficient products including new boilers, new central heating systems, double glazed windows and doors. These energy efficiency upgrades will result in lower fuel bills for new tenants. Further benefits include a cycle store, high quality modern kitchens and bathrooms. There are 17 car park spaces available allocated on a first come first served basis.

All 30 units will be advertised via Propertypoolplus (PPP).

Our Commitment

Torus understands the very important role we must play in meeting the housing needs of customers on the housing register within Wirral and positively contributing to neighbourhood sustainability and cohesion.

Torus is committed to tackling social and economic inequality and at the same time, providing a fair and equitable service through a joined-up approach in all the services we provide. Torus is working in partnership with all agencies to strike a balance between supporting employment, sustainability and routes into employment as well as making a difference in terms of benefit dependency and at the same time, meeting housing needs.

The DLHC recognises very positive outcomes can be achieved from local letting schemes and this approach will support Torus's commitment to develop sustainable tenancies and communities, through our development programme. The development activity of registered providers, including new build programmes, participation in the Government's Affordable Housing Programme, is identified as one route to achieve a balanced housing stock and sustainable communities.

To achieve this, we need to rehouse a good balance of tenants and a healthy mix of people with different lifestyles. Overall, however, the content of Torus's local letting schemes do not diverge from the overall principles of the Property Pool Plus Allocation Scheme and we remain committed to rehousing people in need.

It is our intention to advertise 100% of the properties on Property Pool Plus (PPP). This approach reinforces our commitment to make sure applicants on the waiting list can maximise their rehousing opportunities via our new build schemes.

In addition to our approach to lettings, Torus also offers a full range of social value programmes to support our neighbourhoods and to help residents prosper and we will also continue to support those tenants who need additional help to manage their tenancy and stay in their home, wherever possible.

Demand and lettings potential

Information provided by Wirral Council 27 June 2025.

There are currently 4,990 people registered on Property Pool Plus (PPP) for accommodation in Wirral. 100% of allocations for this site will be from PPP.

The following tables provide a breakdown of:

- Active PPP applications in Wirral by Band and Bedroom Need
- Average bids for 2- and 3-bedroom property within the Wirral area

Wirral Active Applicants by Band and Bedroom Need as at 27/6/2025

Count of HRA – Housing Register Wirral	Bedroom Need						
Band	1	2	3	4	5	6	Grand Total
Band A	346	145	98	44	4	1	638
Band B	837	455	305	125	2		1724
Band C	1278	882	419	47	2		2628
Grand Total	2461	1482	822	216	8	1	4990

Bid Analysis for Wirral area for 1- and 2-bedroom flats

Average bids for properties advertised 1/4/24 to 31/3/2025:

Bedroom size	Average number of bids
1 general needs	237
1 sheltered	50
2 general needs	144
2 sheltered	41

If we examine the data for the applicants who have a recognised need for rehousing, we can see that demand from applicants in Band A equates to 13% and demand for applicants in Band B is 35%. Non-priority band for rehousing demand (Band C) equates to 52%.

We are working in partnership with all agencies to strike a balance between supporting employment sustainability and routes into employment as well as making a difference in terms of benefit dependency and at the same time, meet housing need. Through this local letting plan we hope to create a more sustainable development and to help do this we are proposing to reach a target of 35% lets to applicants who are employed or in full time education or training (subject to affordability). By doing this we hope that this will help to improve health and wellbeing and aspiration in the area.

Aims of the Local Letting Scheme

A local lettings scheme introduces flexibility into agreed allocation policies and the purpose of this local letting scheme for the development at Holt Road, CH41 9BB Birkenhead, Wirral, is to achieve balanced, cohesive communities and sustainable tenancies. This scheme aims to make a significant contribution to the overall sustainability of the area by ensuring tenancies are sustainable for the long term. To help us achieve this we will aim to:

- Create a stable environment and feeling of safety and wellbeing, creating safe places to live that people are proud of and want to live in.
- Maintain current performance in terms of void turnover by improving the quality of the living environment and minimising anti-social behaviour, using robust processes and partnerships.

Divergence from the standard policy

The local letting scheme for this development differs from our principal Allocation Scheme in the following ways:

- All the properties to rent on the developments will be let at affordable rents (80% of market rent). All tenants will be awarded the standard Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreement but, in the event, any existing Torus tenant with protected rights accepts a tenancy, they will keep these rights.

- The provision of 1 reference will be requested. If an applicant has held a tenancy, then references will be requested from either the current or previous landlord and any offers may be overlooked if references are not provided or are unsatisfactory. However, all applications will be considered on an individual basis in this respect.
- Prospective tenants must attend an interview and financial assessment / benefits check to establish applicants' financial status and suitability for the scheme. This approach is standard practice for Torus and was adopted because of rent levels and welfare reforms.
- Applicants with support needs where no support package is in place will be encouraged to accept support. If a tenancy has failed previously due to support issues the offer may be withdrawn if applicant refuses to accept a support package.

Priority for at least 35 % of the properties (11 of which 6 x 2 bedroom and 5 x 1 bedroom as detailed below) will be given to applicants who are in employment or full-time education/training (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay rent). Properties will be advertised to all bands with preference to those in employment or full-time education/training. However, offers will be made in accordance with priority need. This criterion is to help create a sustainable and balanced community.

Block	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	Total
Block A	1 employment or full-time education/training	1 employment or full-time education/training	2
Block B	1 employment or full-time education/training	1 employment or full-time education/training	2
Block C	3 employment or full-time education/training	4 employment or full-time education/training	7
Total	5	6	11

- The remaining 65% of each property size to be advertised to all bands.

Applicants will be required to sign the Good Neighbour Agreement (**Appendix A**).

Applicants with criminal record and history of antisocial behaviour will be considered in the context of whether they are suitable to be a tenant. If there is concern their activities have not abated and will have a negative impact on these properties, neighbours or surrounding estate, the offer may be withdrawn. This will be subject to information provided through a police check.

Where an applicant is rejected on the basis of their criminal record or past antisocial behaviour they will be notified in writing with an explanation as to why they are deemed to be 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.

Selection Process

All affordable rent allocations managed by Torus for this development will be subject to the agreed criteria and 100% of the properties will be advertised via PPP. Future voids in the first 12 months will continue to be advertised on PPP, advising applicants that a local letting scheme is in place and applicants will be required to satisfy the strict criteria already specified. We will continue to give priority to suitable applicants in accordance with the appropriate banding and date order system. This local letting policy will remain in place for 12 months.

Applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview before an offer is confirmed, whereby the local letting criteria, good neighbour agreement and any additional checks that may be necessary, will be discussed in detail. During this interview, applicants will be required to demonstrate they understand their responsibilities as a tenant to respect their neighbours and are capable of maintaining and sustaining their tenancy.

In the event there is insufficient demand:

Properties will be re advertised via PPP to all bands.

Consultation

In developing this policy, we have consulted with Wirral Council, and they will continue to be involved in the ongoing monitoring and review.

Managing the Policy

All new tenants will be visited within 6 weeks of their tenancy start date to complete a settling in visit and will receive further home visits by Torus staff after 7 months to determine their suitability to continue with the tenancy. During the visits, the following will be discussed:

- any issues raised by the tenant and/or any support needs.
- any tenancy matters including the rent account, any complaints/ASB, property damage.

Intended Outcomes

It is intended that by implementing changes to the way allocations are carried out and to allow a change of tenure within the area, the aims of the policy will be met, and this will help us to create/sustain balanced and sustainable communities. This Local Lettings Policy will be in place for the first 12 months.

We will monitor and review the policy, using the following as indicators of the success:

- Turnover of voids

- Numbers of offers to let a property.
- Average void period
- Rent loss.
- Average length of tenancy
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Customer satisfaction survey

Approved

.....
Regional Director

.....
Date

Appendix A

Good Neighbour Agreement Holt Road, CH41 9BB Birkenhead, Wirral

Aims

Residents in this development believe that everyone has a right to live in a clean, tidy and peaceful environment. This agreement sets out what residents and Torus, as the landlord, are committed to undertake, to make this happen.

We are all different and need to be tolerant of each other's' lifestyles. This agreement aims to provide a set of common principles and standards that we can all meet, to achieve neighbourhoods where:

- we are happy to live and get along with our neighbours.
- we respect each other.
- we are given support and good services from our landlord and other partner agencies working in our communities/neighbourhoods.

Purpose

By signing this agreement, residents, Torus, and partner agencies are committing to the well-being of our communities and understand that a 'Good Neighbour' approach and tolerant attitude is needed from everyone.

We will make a united stand against anyone who does not respect their neighbours, environment, homes, or the law. Our communities and neighbourhoods will succeed if we all work together in:

- Preventing problems happening in the first place.
- Stating what is and is not reasonable behaviour to anyone who wants to move to the developments.
- Not tolerating crime, nuisance, harassment, or anti-social behaviour.
- Supporting residents and witnesses who work with us to tackle and prevent nuisance and harassment.
- Taking all complaints of anti-social behaviour seriously and dealing with them sensitively, appropriately, and as confidentially as possible.
- Helping and encouraging you, as residents, to sort out problems between yourselves.
- Working closely with other agencies to deal with the whole of the problem.
- Making empty properties safe and secure as quickly as possible and acting promptly when residents report properties empty.
- Not tolerating willful damage, neglect, or vandalism anywhere on the locality.
- Making sure every resident enjoys the right to peaceful enjoyment of their home.
- Using all the legal tools and powers we have to tackle nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

As a resident of Holt Road, CH41 9BB Birkenhead, Wirral I/We agree that looking after this locality is not just the landlord's responsibility; what I/We do is also vital. I/We want to live in an area which is clean, tidy and safe, and where neighbours treat each other well and with respect.

As a resident of this development at Holt Road, CH41 9BB Birkenhead, Wirral I am committed to:

- Respecting other people whatever their age, background or lifestyle and being considerate about how my lifestyle may affect others, within my home and the local community.
- Showing tolerance and reasonableness before complaining; and talking to my neighbour to resolve issues in the first place.
- Not breaking the tenancy conditions or the law.
- Letting children play. If children harass or disturb others, then complaints are justified, and parents must be reasonable in their response.
- Not dropping litter or dumping rubbish and making sure that my rubbish is properly bagged and put out for collection on the allocated day.
- Not allowing damage to the property of other residents or areas of this estate, including graffiti.
- Not playing loud music late at night or at other times to the annoyance of my neighbours or other residents.
- Reporting incidents of nuisance or crime.
- Watching out for other people and their property and keeping a look out generally to help make this estate a safe place to live.
- Making sure that the front of my home and communal areas is kept clean and tidy, so that visitors to the area can see that we care about where we live.
- Keeping my dog/pets under control at all times. I will clean up after my dog/pets and will not let it bark/make noise to the annoyance of other residents.

By signing this agreement, I accept responsibility for myself, visitors to my property and any other household members.

I agree with these standards and will abide by them.

NameSignature..... Date.....

NameSignature..... Date.....

Signed on Behalf of Torus Name Signature.....

Date.....