

**Local Letting Scheme  
Barlow Street, Liverpool L4**

**Background/ Introduction**

The Barlow Street development is in the Walton area of the city just 3 miles to the City Centre and is situated off County Road, which is one of the main thoroughfares into the city centre.

The development is within the North Housing Management area in the ward of Kirkdale, which falls within one of the most deprived areas in England. An extract from the Ward Profiles (produced by Liverpool City Council in autumn 2012) which includes data from the 2001 Census and Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010, is attached at Appendix B.

Tenancy sustainability is crucial to this area and it is for this reason we are extending the approach of local lettings to this development.

The site consists of 12 x two bedroom houses, and 6 x 3 bedroom houses.

This development is close to County Road, a busy shopping area with buses running regularly to the City Centre and other areas of the city with schools both primary and secondary nearby. Stanley Park, Queens Drive Baths/Gym and both Everton and Liverpool Football grounds are all within walking distance together with Churches and Kirkdale train station.

**Demand/current letting potential**

There are currently 15,152 people registered on Property Pool Plus (PPP) which is the City Council’s Choice Based Letting Scheme and used by LMH to allocate our vacant properties. PPP’s data has been based on the City’s designated Neighbourhoods and not the management areas of the individual Housing Associations. It is not possible, therefore, to extract demand information for LMH’s North area or Kirkdale Wards. However, an analysis has been produced for the North area using demand by the postal code L4 and this can be summarised as follows:

**Total Demand**

Band	City Demand		Liverpool 4	
	No	%	No	%
<b>Urgent</b>	289	2%	39	2%
<b>High</b>	4360	28%	546	31.5%
<b>Medium</b>	3763	24%	341	20%
<b>Low</b>	7178	46%	803	46.5%
<b>Total</b>	15590	100%	1729	100%

- Overall, there are 1,729 applicants who are currently living in Liverpool 4 who are registered on PPP which represents 11% of the total demand.
- Demand from the Urgent Band is low across the City, and therefore we will target more lettings to the High and Medium Bands.

### BME Demand

Ethnic Origin	City Demand		Liverpool 4	
	No	%	No	%
<b>White</b>	12361	79%	1568	90.5%
<b>BME</b>	1154	7.5%	42	2.5%
<b>Unknown</b>	847	5.5%	67	4%
<b>Other</b>	1164	7.5%	46	2.5%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	64	0.5%	6	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	15590	100%	1729	100%

- Clearly demand from white applicants living in L4 is significantly higher when compared to the total demand and demand from applicants from the BME groups is considerably lower. We are hoping therefore that by targeting 10% of the properties to BME applicants it will help to redress some of the imbalances that currently exist 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 is to reinforce our approach on Barlow Lane by helping to achieve a balanced community, sustainable tenancies and reduce high levels of anti social behaviour. To help us achieve this we will aim to:

- Create a stable environment and feelings of safety and wellbeing within the estate;
- Reduce void turnover by improving the quality of the living environment and reducing anti social behaviour using robust processes and partnerships.
- Rebalance the mix of tenants by increasing the numbers not solely dependent on welfare benefits.

## Divergence from the standard policy

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

- All of the properties on the development will be let at affordable rents (market rates) but any existing LMH tenant with protected rights who accepts a tenancy will keep these rights;
- Applicants with criminal records or a record of anti social behaviour may be rejected if there is concern their activities have not abated and will affect these properties and surrounding estate. This will be subject to information provided through a police check and any offer will be subject to information obtained via these arrangements;
- Where necessary, supporting information for applicants will be sought from a wider range of sources than usual for previous anti social behaviour, rent arrears etc;
- The provision of 2 excellent references is a requirement and any offers may be overlooked if this information is not provided;
- Prospective tenants must attend a pre tenancy interview and financial/benefits check to establish applicant's financial status and suitability for the scheme. This approach is being adopted because of both the rent levels and Welfare Reforms;
- Applicants with support needs will only be accepted with a recognised support package;
- Priority will be given to key workers, residents in full employment or full time education (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finances to pay the rent).
- Applicants will be required to sign the **Good Neighbour Agreement**
- The individual circumstances will be taken into consideration, but as a general rule, applications with a history of any of the following serious criminal offences or anti social behaviour will not be considered.

Prostitution (includes convictions for loiter/solicit for purposes of prostitution, tenant/occupier allowing premises to be used as a brothel for prostitution, living off immoral earnings, woman controlling prostitution);

Robbery (includes convictions for robbery and assault with intent to rob);



Violent crime (includes convictions for murder, manslaughter, wounding and assaults);

Drug trafficking offences (includes convictions for production of controlled drugs, supply of controlled drugs, possession with intent to supply controlled drugs, allowing premises to be used for use of controlled drugs);

Domestic Burglary (includes convictions for burglary of dwelling houses and aggravated burglary dwellings);

Racially Aggravated offences (includes convictions for racially aggravated assaults, criminal damage and harassment);

Vehicle crime (includes convictions for theft of vehicle, theft from vehicle, unauthorised take of motor vehicle, aggravated vehicle take, vehicle interference;

Domestic Violence.

### **Selection Process**

All allocations will be subject to the agreed criteria and all properties will be advertised via PPP. Future voids 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.

Applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview before an offer is made when the local letting criteria 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.

To help us achieve the letting criteria, the following targets will be applied:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Sub Band</b>	<b>Proposed target</b>
<b>Urgent</b>	Homeless	6 %
	Health/Welfare	
	Decant	
	Overcrowd x 2	6 %
<b>High</b>	Health/Welfare	6 %
	Overcrowd x 1	12%
	Disrepair	
	Under occupied	33%
<b>Medium</b>	Health/Welfare	10%
	NP Homeless	
	Intentionally homeless	
	Family/friends	17%
<b>Low</b>	Employed	10%
	Not employed	

- Properties will be advertised on PPP and allocations governed strictly by LMH’s own allocations scheme. The agreed % targets specified by LMH and LCC will assist the local circumstances and needs which LMH are looking to address by this local lettings plan.
- 50% of properties will be targeted towards those applicants in full time employment or education or training (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay the rent)
- Priority will be given to those applicants who can demonstrate full occupation of the property
- 10% of the properties will be targeted to BME applicants (this will assist LMH in working towards its committed target of BME applicants) and will help to redress some of the imbalances that currently exist.

**In the event there is insufficient demand:**

Applications from families in the priority bands, who can provide 1 good reference, will also be considered.

## **Consultation**

In developing this policy, we have consulted with the local Tenants and Residents Association, Community Groups, Ward Councillors, Liverpool City Council, and they will continue to be involved in the ongoing monitoring and review.

Pre advertisements about the development will be posted at all LMH reception areas and website to promote the scheme and invite interest from residents who currently have registered applications and can demonstrate housing need.

## **Managing the Policy**

All new tenants will be visited within 4 weeks of their tenancy date to complete the settling in visit and they will receive further home visits by LMH staff after 3, 6 and 9 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 a more balanced and sustainable community.

We will monitor and review the policy every twelve months, 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

(Director of Housing and Customer Services)

(Date)

## Reviewed

.....  
(Director of Housing and Customer Services)

.....  
(Date)

**Barlow Lane  
Good Neighbour Agreement**

**Aims**

Residents in Barlow Lane believe that everyone has a right to live in a clean, tidy and peaceful environment.

This agreement sets out what residents and LMH as the landlord are committed to do to make this happen.

We are all different and need to be tolerant of each others' lifestyles. This agreement aims to provide a set of common principles and standards that we can all meet, in order to achieve a neighbourhood 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 the area

**Purpose**

By signing this agreement, residents, LMH and partner agencies are committing to the well-being of the estate 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, their environment, their homes or the law. This community will succeed if we all work together.

- Preventing problems happening in the first place;
- Stating what is and is not reasonable behaviour to anyone who wants to move to the estate;
- 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 wilful damage, neglect or vandalism anywhere on the estate;
- 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 Barlow Lane I agree that looking after this estate is not just the landlord's responsibility; what I do is also vital.

I want to live in an area which is clean, tidy and safe, and where neighbours treat each other well.

**As a resident of Barlow Lane I am committed to:**

- Respect 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 break 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 will make 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 are kept clean and tidy so that visitors to the estate 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.



**Barlow Lane  
Good Neighbour Agreement**

**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:-

Name .....Signature .....Date .....

Name .....Signature .....Date .....

Signed on Behalf of LMH .....

Date.....

## Appendix B

Extract from the Ward Profile for Kirkdale (produced by Liverpool City Council (Autumn 2012))

### Population

- In 2010 Kirkdale's estimated population was 15,873. The population has begun to increase in recent years having previously been in decline. The ward has slightly more males than the city and national average, fewer children and slightly more working age people meaning tackling worklessness and poor health issues are particularly relevant.

### Deprivation

- Kirkdale has extremely high levels of deprivation, with 50.5% of the ward in the most deprived 1% of neighbourhoods in the country.
- More than 90% living in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods nationally.

### Household Income

- Households incomes levels are low reflecting high levels of worklessness. The average household income is £26,000, compared with the Liverpool average of £30,400.

### Child Poverty

- Child poverty in this ward is amongst the highest in the city.

### Housing

- The housing stock in Kirkdale is predominantly low value with a large proportion (44.9%) of properties socially rented.
- Flats and terraces dominate the area and most of the dwellings are in Council Tax Band 'A'.
- House prices in the ward are substantially lower than the city-wide average for semi-detached and terraced dwellings, but the average price of a flat is only slightly lower than the Liverpool average.

- There are a large number of low demand terraced properties and 287 properties in the ward are long term vacant (3.4%).

### **Crime**

- Kirkdale has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest overall crime rate of all Liverpool wards, vehicle crime and business robbery are particularly high.
- The crime rate increased slightly between 2010/11 and 2011/12 at a time when it fell across the city as a whole, in particularly domestic burglary and vehicle crime.
- Antisocial behaviour remains a significant issue in Kirkdale, but has improved over the last year.

### **Unemployment**

- Unemployment and benefit dependency are key issues in the ward. One in three working age residents (33.1%) receive workless benefits compared with the Liverpool average of 21.9%.
- Incapacity Benefit/Employment Support Allowance rates are particularly high, as too are lone parent claimant rates.
- 9.1% of working age residents claim Job Seekers Allowance compared with a Liverpool rate of 7.2% and 4.1% nationally).

### **Health**

- The standardised mortality ratio is significantly higher than both Liverpool and England.
- Life expectancy is four years lower than the city average and more than six years below the UK.
- Kirkdale has the second highest percentage of adult smokers in Liverpool.
- Teenage pregnancy and alcohol related hospital admission rates are also high.



## Education

- In 2011, 83.0% of pupils resident in Kirkdale achieved 5+ GCSE's A\* - C in all subjects, which is now similar to the Liverpool average of 83.9%.
- In the same year only 38.5% of Kirkdale pupils achieved 5+ A-C GCSE's including English and Maths which is well below the Liverpool average of 55.7%.
- Only one school in the area has GCSE pass rates including Maths and English above the city-wide average.

Extract from the Ward Profile for Clubmoor (produced by Liverpool City Council Autumn 2012)