

Local Lettings Plans

– New Developments

Aim

The overarching aim of a local lettings plan is to help achieve balanced communities and support greater community cohesion and sustainability; in doing so contribute to making the area an even better place to live, work and visit.

Stonewater recognises the importance of allocating homes to those in housing need, however, a local lettings plan may mean that vacancies will not always be allocated to the applicant who can demonstrate the greatest need.

The local lettings plan aims to give opportunities to those who are economically active and have restricted housing options.

The local lettings plan will be flexible and non-discriminatory and all applicants will be considered on a case by case basis.

General Approach

It is proposed that all new developments be subject to a local lettings plan and that the following principles are adopted:

- Aim to allocate 50% of the properties to residents who are economically active and working either full time or part time and not wholly reliant on benefits. (Economically active - a person of working age who is in employment plus those who are unemployed)
- Minimise the need for future moves by allocating properties to accommodate family growth, this might be by initially having an under occupation (by one room maximum).
- Our Access to Housing Policy details all eligibility criteria. Included are generic reasons why we may not select an applicant from a LA register for a particular scheme. A copy is available on request.
- All applicants will be assessed to ensure they meet Stonewater's affordability criteria.
- Avoid lets where an overcrowding situation could occur within 12 months

Duration

Any agreed local lettings plan is to apply to initial and subsequent relets for a period of up to three years after which time it will be reviewed. The length of any local lettings plan is agreed with our Local Authority partners

Local Letting Plan

Name and address of development

Proposed Handover Dates

February 2024

Breakdown of properties by type

13 units

4 x 1 bed flats

3 x 2 bed houses

6 x 3 bed houses

Property addresses

1 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

2 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

3 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

4 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

5 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

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10 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

12 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

14 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

15 Barbury View, Wroughton, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN4 0GZ

Reason for local lettings plan

1. Meet the requirements of Swindon & **Stonewater's** Access to Housing Policy to ensure allocations are made to suitable applicants
2. To help achieve balanced communities and support greater community cohesion and sustainability; in doing so contribute to making the area an even better place to live, work and visit.
3. Ensure community cohesion between different tenures; prevent residents from being dissatisfied with their homes and community affecting their ability to thrive.
4. Ensure that current and future residents feel safe and content and to make the best use of housing stock.
5. Reduce unnecessary turnover and potential refusals of properties well as protecting the reputation of the scheme.
6. Provide opportunities to those who are economically active and have restricted housing options.
7. To meet housing need whilst preventing future management problems on site
8. Ensure that the new community aligns smoothly with the existing community
9. Ensure that the needs of the local and wider community are reflected in the new development

10. Ensure that any allocation does not result in a household becoming isolated or vulnerable
11. ANY SCHEME SPECIFIC REASONS
12. To assist Stonewater to facilitate moves for current customers as part of its overcrowding strategy – note all relets that arise from this strategy will be offered up to applicants on the council’s housing register.

General Approach

1. All applicants will be subject to a comprehensive pre-tenancy assessment and must meet the relevant criteria under Stonewater’s current Access to Housing Policy
2. Stonewater’s eligibility criteria sets out reasons in which we may exclude an applicant from a local authority housing register; these may include but not limited to those applicants with a housing related debt where there is no agreement in place to clear the debt, those with a history of drug or alcohol misuse and no sustained engagement in support services or any other breaches of a tenancy. Refusals will only be made in consultation with
3. Aim to allocate 50% of the properties to residents who are economically active and working either full time or part time and not wholly reliant on benefits
4. Minimise the need for transfers by allocating properties to accommodate existing family growth
5. All applicants will be assessed to ensure they meet Stonewater’s affordability criteria and will be subject to a credit check. Applicants will never be refused based on their credit score; the check is used ensure that we have a full picture of the applicants current commitments and ensure that action is being taken to address any debts.
6. We require applicants to be able to demonstrate an income that will cover rent and service charge for the homes it covers.
7. We require applicants where there is an acute vulnerability to demonstrate a history of sustained engagement with support services; we will also look to ensure that those with high support needs are not housed in close proximity to each other or within the same block. This will prevent any life style clashes.
8. We require applicants where needed to ensure that any existing support package can be delivered at their new address or that a new support provider will be in place.
9. We may refuse applicants where the level of support required would seriously undermine Stonewater’s ability to support other residents in the neighbourhood
10. The local lettings plan will be flexible and non-discriminatory; refusals or skipping of applicants will be agreed in consultation with our Local Authority partners

S106 Letting Requirements

Ensure that any allocation meets the requirements set within the S106 as detailed below;

- (a) Any person who income means they cannot afford to buy or rent a suitable property on the open market without financial assistance and meets the qualifying criteria set out in ‘A Home in Swindon – The Council’s Housing Allocation Policy’ or meets the affordability criteria set out by the Home Buy Agent for Swindon (currently Help to Buy South);
- (b) A designated person being any person who is at all material times immediately prior to the occupation of the Affordable Housing Unit:
 - (i) On the housing register or the housing transfer list of the Council, details of which can be found at www.swindonhomebid.org.uk; and/or
 - (ii) Owed a duty by the Council pursuant to section 193 of the Housing Act 1996; and/or
 - (iii) Ordinarily resident or employed in the Borough of Swindon and is approved in writing by the Council as being suitable to occupy the Affordable Housing Units or part thereof
- c) any person who meets the qualifying criteria meaning any of the following or a combination of the following;
 - (i) is on the Help to Buy South Home Buy Register www.helptobuysouth.co.uk (or current Home Buy Agent for Swindon) or
 - (ii) qualifies to move to the area in which the Affordable Housing Unit is situated pursuant to a mobility scheme to which the Council is a participating authority or
 - (iii) Is owed a duty by the Council pursuant to section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 or
 - (iv) Is ordinarily resident or employed in the borough of Swindon and is approved in writing by the Council as being suitable to occupy an Affordable Housing Unit or part thereof

Scheme Specific Criteria

5% of lets (or no more than 5 lets) to be offered up to Stonewater tenants who are living in overcrowded or accommodation and the relet will be offered up to applicants on the Council's housing register.

Duration of local lettings plan

First and subsequent relets for a period of three years

Approved by

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Stonewater

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Local Authority

Date

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