



# Local Lettings Plan

## North Prospect

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## **1.0 Introduction**

The local lettings Plan (LLP) is an overarching document for all properties in the North Prospect Regeneration area (as identified in Appendix A). This local letting plan only applies to newly developed properties and existing blocks of flats that belong to Plymouth Community Homes. Rented properties will be allocated according to the local letting plan. The plan will be in place for the duration of the regeneration project and will be reviewed on a phase-by-phase basis.

## **2.0 Objectives**

- 2.1 Develop and maintain North Prospect as a distinct place in modern Plymouth.
- 2.2 Make it a vibrant self-sustaining community, a place of real quality, the pride of residents and a model of 21st century living, working and playing.
- 2.3 Guide and support allocations of social rented properties and sales of shared ownership properties in the regeneration area of North Prospect during the period of the regeneration project.
- 2.4 To support the creation of a sustainable and balanced community by allocating tenancies that can be sustained, contributing to meeting the housing needs of the city and of the whole community in the long term.
- 2.5 To help create and maintain North Prospect as a place where people want to live and are happy to stay.
- 2.6 To help develop a sustainable, balanced and cohesive community by including a broad section and proportionate number of residents from a variety of social and economic backgrounds.
- 2.7 To be used as a guide for allocations, transfers and any future choice-based lettings adverts. The plan will apply to the allocation of the rented homes. Only in exceptional situations will an allocation be considered outside the LLP and

this will need to be agreed with Plymouth City Council and PCH.

2.8 To achieve a fair balance between the needs of the existing community and the housing needs of the wider community of Plymouth.

2.9 To attain a mixture of occupancy levels and people with 'vulnerabilities' to encourage sustainability.

2.10 To make the best use of the housing stock.

2.11 To support residents and encourage active involvement and participation in the local and wider community.

### **3.0 Advertising and allocation process**

3.1 The LLP applies to all allocations of newly developed properties and existing blocks of flats within the North Prospect Neighbourhood. The Map of this area is defined on the attached document. (See Appendix A)

3.2 We will advertise the Homes through the Devon Home Choice system. The standard information with regard to property attributes and rent levels will be included.

3.3 Applicants may be matched to a property based on their housing needs assessment. Applicants may be permitted to under occupy a property by one bedroom provided the affordability check demonstrates the ability to meet rental requirements and they meet the criteria (e.g., Via a mutual exchange)

3.4 The Devon Home Choice adverts will describe the property types and sizes available for letting, together with a link to the Local Lettings Plan detailing the intention to give priority to the group of applicants identified below. The standard information with regard to property attributes and rent levels will also be included.

3.5 Upon closure of the bidding process, applicants will appear on the shortlist in band and date order. The final selection of applicants to be verified for the vacancies will depend upon their application band (housing need), the length of time they have been in this band, and the household's ability to meet the requirements of the overall aims and objectives of this Local Lettings Plan. This may require some applicants to be considered before others irrespective of their relevant banding and dates.

3.6 Properties at the Beacon will be allocated in accordance with this LLP and will be let specifically in accordance with Appendix B.

3.7 Properties at Briarwood Heights will be allocated in accordance with this LLP and will be let specifically in accordance with Appendix C.

#### **4.0 Eligibility, Verification & Refusal of Applicants**

4.1 We will require from the applicant proof of their identity if they are being considered for housing, prior to a property being offered.

4.2 As a member of Devon Home Choice we can, as part of the checking process, visit the applicant in their home, before we award a tenancy.

4.3 As a member of Devon Home Choice, we have the right to carry out any enquiries deemed necessary. Therefore, this entitles us to have access to any information we need in connection with the housing application. This might include information about any former tenancies or information about previous criminal convictions.

4.4 As part of the assessment of suitability for a tenancy under Devon Home Choice, we are authorised to liaise with Devon and Cornwall Constabulary to disclose any relevant information about the applicant and their household relating to convictions for arson, offences involving violence, offences of a sexual nature or convictions for possession, supply or possession with intent to supply any illegal drugs/substances.

4.5 Plymouth Community Homes may visit applicants to confirm their housing need and circumstances.

4.6 All applicant(s) will be required to complete a pre tenancy financial assessment which will ensure that they are able to afford the property. This will include undertaking a Credit Check through a credit reference agency. If the applicant(s) fails the financial assessment, we may not offer a tenancy.

#### 4.7 Refusals

- We reserve the right to refuse your application if it does not adhere to the principles of the local lettings policy or contravenes our principles. Such refusals should however be consistent with other overarching policies and agreements that may exist.
- All offers of accommodation will be subject to the policies of PCH. We will inform an unsuccessful applicant of the reason behind our decision. Applicants can request a copy of the PCH Allocations Policy.
- All offers of a tenancy made will be provisional until confirmed. Plymouth Community Homes reserves the right not to proceed with an offer where, there is insufficient evidence to support an application, there has been a previous or current history of tenancy breaches, or any offered tenancy is likely not to be sustainable or affordable.

If we assess that the applicant does not meet this criteria, we may not offer a home in the North Prospect area.

### **5.0 Breach of Tenancy and Anti-Social Behaviour**

5.1 This scheme only considers those applicants who have not been involved in incidents of anti-social behaviour, serious harassment, nuisance or drug & alcohol misuse; within the last 5 years.

5.2 If an applicant has a history of tenancy breaches of anti-social behaviour or other types of tenancy breach, which has required Plymouth Community Homes, Devon & Cornwall Police or another Registered Social Landlord/Local Authority/Private Landlord to serve warning letters or take other informal / formal legal action (e.g., Acceptable Behaviour Contract / Notice Of Seeking Possession).

Your application will be assessed using the following criteria and maybe refused if any of these apply to your household:

- Where a current Notice of Seeking Possession on the grounds of Anti-Social Behaviour is in place.
- Where any current action is being taken in respect of anti-social behaviour (e.g., Acceptable Behaviour Contract).
- If there has been an eviction for Anti-Social Behaviour.
- Where a previous Anti-Social Behaviour Order or injunction has been obtained against the applicant or member of their household.
- If a demotion of tenant has been obtained.
- Where there has been a conviction for actions that have directly caused issues of anti-social behaviour.
- If an applicant or member of the household has a current conviction or caution related to anti-social behaviour or where there is a potential risk to the household, neighbours, PCH staff/contractors or the wider community.
- Where any applicant or member of the household is known to have current or previous convictions which may have a direct impact on the

local community, offers of accommodation will be subject to a risk assessment prior to any decision being made.

- Persons with a criminal record showing offences within the past 5 years (if these offences are of a minor nature, these can be disregarded, however, any offences related to violent crime, drug use or dealing, or the misuse of alcohol would exclude the applicant).

### 5.3 Harassment

- Is where a householder has been **cautioned** for crimes of harassment against others within the last 12 months.
- Is where the householder has been **prosecuted** for crimes of harassment against others within the last 5 years.

### 5.4 Nuisance

Is where a householder who is known to have caused Nuisance and Annoyance to others which could lead to tenancy action by a landlord within the last 5 years. This includes actions against a tenancy through environmental health or planning legislation.

### 5.5 Drug and Alcohol Misuse

In addition to Anti-Social Behaviour, substance misuse has been a cause for concern for both North Prospect and PCH. If an applicant/household member is engaging with support services to address their substance misuse a Risk Assessments will be undertaken prior to a decision about the allocation of a property.

Applicants will not be considered if: -

- An applicant/household member has been **cautioned** for the

possession or supply of illegal substances within the last 12 months.

- householder has been **prosecuted** for the possession or supply of illegal substances within the last 5 years.

## **6.0 Known vulnerabilities**

6.1 PCH will undertake a Risk Assessment to ensure that any allocation is appropriate.

PCH will consider applicants who can evidence positive engagement with support services for a minimum 12-month period. This must have resulted in positive changes to their lifestyle which will enable them to sustain a tenancy and not present a problem to the local community.

## **7.0 Offers of accommodation**

All offers of a tenancy made will be provisional until a Risk and Affordability assessment is completed and is satisfactory. PCH reserves the right not to proceed with an offer where, in PCH's opinion, there is insufficient evidence to support an application, there has been a previous or current history of tenancy breaches, or any offered tenancy is likely not to be sustainable or affordable.

## **8.0 Equalities Statement**

- PCH will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equalities Act 2010.
- PCH will make this policy available in other languages and formats on request.

- PCH will carry out an equality impact assessment on this policy, in line with our corporate procedure.

## **9.0 Terms of tenancy**

The specific tenancy terms that are offered will depend upon a number of factors. Applicants will be informed of the specific terms as part of the formal offer process and will be able to consider these before accepting an offer of accommodation. New tenants will be offered an Assured Shorthold tenancy which may include additional conditions. After the 12 first months the tenancy will be reviewed, and the tenant advised if he/she has will become assured (non-shorthold) tenants. Any criminal convictions or anti-social behaviour that occurs within the initial 12-month starter tenancy period will result in the starter tenancy being extended or terminated.

## **10.0 Disputes**

Applicants have the right to ask for a review of any decision relating to their application for an offer of accommodation with PCH. Requests for a review should be put in writing, within 7 calendar days of the date of the decision letter, advising the reasons for the request. The review will be undertaken by an officer of PCH independent of the original decision. The review request will be responded to in writing within 21 calendar days. PCH reserves the right not to hold the property vacant whilst the review is undertaken so that rent loss can be minimised.

## **11.0 Monitoring and Review**

We will carefully monitor the allocations process and how the estate is forming to identify areas that we may need to review regarding future allocations of the estate.

We will collect and monitor the following information:

- number of refusals of offers and reasons
- number of transfers
- number of exchanges
- number and type of complaints about allocations

- number and type of complaints about anti-social behaviour
- number of children housed
- number and ethnicity of those housed
- origin of application
- number of re-lets
- reasons (if possible) for tenants leaving the properties

We will review this policy annually. If we don't review it within eighteen months, it will cease to have effect. The purpose of the annual review will include:

- to identify any trends or common complaints
  - to make policy recommendations
  - to explain targets not met or exceeded
  - to identify and explain inequities between the partners' results
  - to set objectives and agree action plans, if appropriate
  - to set new targets, if appropriate.

**Plymouth Community Homes**

Signature.....

Print Name .....

Job Titles .....

Date .....

**Appendices**

**Appendix A to North Prospect LLP**



## **Appendix B to North Prospect LLP**

### **Local Letting Plan for the Beacon, North Prospect**

This is a scheme specific Lettings Plan for the Beacon which sits within the wider LLP for North Prospect.

#### **1. Lettings**

The scheme is designed for active elders in the community and provides accessible and some adapted properties for over 55's. The scheme has no onsite support but is built with an element of communal living in mind. There is a communal rooftop garden. In addition, facilities are provided in the main part of "The Beacon" which includes a community space, shops and a library.

Applicants who apply for this accommodation will be applying for high quality, accessible flats for independent living. The scheme has two lifts,

is wheelchair accessible, with some flats providing fully accessible wet rooms.

Applications will be subject to a needs assessment which will be carried out prior to an offer being made.

In exceptional cases, consideration may be given to under 55, where there is demonstrable evidence that the applicant requires this type of accommodation.

## **2. Sustainable communities**

We aim to achieve a sustainable, balanced, and cohesive community by including a broad selection and proportionate number of residents from a variety of social and economic backgrounds.

Applicants for this scheme will be assessed as having a need for this type of accommodation but will also need to demonstrate that they are able to live independently in a communal housing environment without intensive onsite support.

It is acknowledged that some applicants will have higher care and support needs. Some high needs can be accommodated within the scheme if they are supported with appropriate care and support packages from outside the scheme. These will be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure a balanced community.

The tenant/main applicant will generally be over the age of 55, and any household member would need to demonstrate the need for this type of accommodation.

Applicants applying for this accommodation will be supported to live independently by linking in with other agencies and/or family support along with support from Plymouth Community Homes Housing Management Service.

We will endeavour to match mobility needs when allocating, as 20% of the properties are fitted with wet rooms. Preference will be given to applicants needing these specially adapted properties within the scheme.

### **3. Pets**

It should be noted that the properties concerned are not suitable for dogs or cats as there is no direct access to private a garden. Assistance dogs are not regarded as pets and are therefore exempt. (Please refer to the PCH Pets Policy for full details)

### **4. Under Occupation**

We will aim to make the best use of the stock and allocate on the basis of need. Eligible households needing a two bed home will, therefore, normally be considered before those seeking to under occupy. Where under occupation is necessary in order to let homes, couples will normally be given priority over singles.

## **Appendix C to North Prospect LLP**

### **Local Letting Plan for Briarwood Heights, North Prospect**

This is a scheme specific Lettings Plan for Briarwood Heights which sits within the wider LLP for North Prospect.

#### **1. Lettings**

The scheme is designed for active elders in the community and provides accessible and some adapted properties for over 55's. The scheme has no onsite support but is built with an element of communal living in mind. There is a community room on the ground floor as well as a communal patio area outside.

Applicants who apply for this accommodation will be applying for high

quality, accessible flats for independent living. The scheme 33, 1 bedroom flats, one lift,

is wheelchair accessible, has 3 flats adapted for wheelchair users, a buggy store on the lower ground floor as well as a communal car park on this level.

Applications will be subject to a needs assessment which will be carried out prior to an offer being made.

In exceptional cases, consideration may be given to under 55, where there is demonstrable evidence that the applicant requires this type of accommodation.

## **2. Sustainable communities**

We aim to achieve a sustainable, balanced and cohesive community by including a broad selection and proportionate number of residents from a variety of social and economic backgrounds.

Applicants for this scheme will be assessed as having a need for this type of accommodation but will also need to demonstrate that they are able to live independently in a communal housing environment without intensive onsite support.

It is acknowledged that some applicants will have higher care and support needs. Some high needs can be accommodated within the scheme if they are supported with appropriate care and support packages from outside the scheme. These will be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure a balanced community.

The tenant/main applicant will generally be over the age of 55, and any household member would need to demonstrate the need for this type of accommodation.

Applicants applying for this accommodation will be supported to live independently by linking in with other agencies and/or family support along

with support from Plymouth Community Homes Housing Management Service.

We will endeavour to match mobility needs when allocating the 3 wheelchair accessible properties. Preference will be given to applicants needing these specially adapted properties within the scheme.

### **3. Pets**

It should be noted that the properties concerned are not suitable for dogs or cats as there is no direct access to private a garden. Assistance dogs are not regarded as pets and are therefore exempt. (Please refer to the PCH Pets Policy for full details)