

Local Lettings Plans Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy outlines our approach to using Local Lettings Plans (LLPs) for new delivery of affordable housing in partnership with Registered Providers to respond to any local issues and priorities and set a pro-forma agreement.
- 1.2 On some developments the planning permission or S106 agreement may include conditions relating to occupation which can be achieved through an LLP.
- 1.3 The TMBC Housing Allocation Scheme refers to local lettings policies setting out they may be used to make affordable housing available to a wider range and variety of households, rather than concentrations of those with particular support needs, to contribute towards establishing balanced sustainable communities.

2. Background - what are local lettings plans?

- 2.1 Local Lettings plans (LLP) give a framework for allocating homes outside the Housing Allocation Scheme to address local priorities or issues. They may be used to achieve a variety of housing management and policy objectives such as creating mixed sustainable communities and can differ from the allocations scheme in various ways such as:
 - giving priority to people with a connection to a certain area
 - allocating properties to applicants in non-priority groups
 - disregarding household type and / or property type and size matching rules, such as allowing under-occupation to promote longer-term tenancies, reduce child density and account for future family growth (in turn reducing the need for transfers).
- 2.2 Section 166A(6)(b) of the 1996 Act enables the allocation of particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories, provided that overall the authority is able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Section 166A(3) (to give overall priority to people in the reasonable preference categories). This gives the statutory basis for local lettings policies.

3. Use of Local Lettings Plans – approach and priorities

Prioritisation criteria

- 3.1 The two priority criteria for inclusion in LLPs for new developments are:
 - A) Local connection to the area immediate to the development giving additional priority
 - B) An aim for 50% of lettings to be to economically active households.

Accessible homes (built to M4(2) with accessible bathroom or M4(3) building regulation requirements) will be prioritised for households with a need for an accessible home ahead of the criteria above.

- 3.2 LLPs will be required as part of planning conditions for all new developments which include 10 or more affordable housing units, to provide an opportunity to respond to any local priorities, issues or specific needs. There may be circumstances where an LLP is not appropriate, this will be agreed between the Planning case officer and Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager.
- 3.3 For the delivery of rented homes the LLP will apply to all new homes at first let. If no households meet the local connection element of the LLP then they will be allocated by reverting to the top of the housing register shortlist.
- 3.4 Any other LLP format or aims a Registered Provider (or other manager of the affordable housing provision) wishes to use or include will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.5 Accessible homes and ground floor flats will be considered using the above prioritisation criteria and medical need for an accessible or ground floor home. Households with a medical need for an accessible or ground floor home who also meet prioritisation criteria A or B will be prioritised for these homes. Next priority will be to those with a medical need for an accessible or ground floor home, regardless of meeting criteria A or B.
- 3.6 **Areas for local connection** – ward groupings into sub areas
- 3.7 Areas for local connection priority are sub areas consisting of ward groupings as follows:

Sub-area	Wards in sub-area	
Tonbridge	Trench	Higham
	Vauxhall	Judd
	Cage Green and Angel	Hildenborough
Rural East	East and West Peckham, Mereworth and Wateringbury	Bourne
Rural West	Pilgrims with Ightham	Borough Green and Platt
Malling and Kings Hill	East Malling, West Malling and Offham	Kings Hill
	Birling, Leybourne and Ryarsh	
Medway Gap	Larkfield	Aylesford South and Ditton
Rural North	Walderslade	Aylesford North and North Downs
Snodland	Snodland West and Holborough Lakes	Snodland East and Ham Hill

- 3.8 The housing area in which the development is located will be used unless the scale of the development requires an alternative option to be considered. The relevant wards will be clearly stated in the LLP agreed with the Registered Provider.
- 3.9 Households in temporary accommodation (TA) will have their local connection considered based on their last settled accommodation before placement in TA, or through family. This is to ensure they are treated fairly, regardless of where they are placed in TA.
- 3.10 Economically active is defined by permanent paid employment or work-based training.
- 3.11 The second prioritisation criteria of 50% of homes to be let to economically active households is based on the permanent employment or work-based training of the lead and/or joint applicant.
- 3.12 Households not able to be economically active because they are not working age, are full time carers or due to a disability or impairment, will not have the economically active element of priority considered, i.e. they will be treated in a neutral way and not bypassed due to not working should they be next in line to be offered in line once the other criteria of this local lettings plan have been applied

4. Template Local Lettings Plan (LLP)

- 4.1 **Appendix A (Annex B** to this report) gives a template Local Lettings Plan. This shows key sections and considerations, but content may vary between each LLP depending on the local issues and priorities each one seeks to address.

5. Monitoring and review

- 5.1 This Policy will be monitored through annual lettings reviews with the relevant Registered Provider partner and reviewed every five years or sooner if needed due legislative changes or in response to monitoring of its implementation.