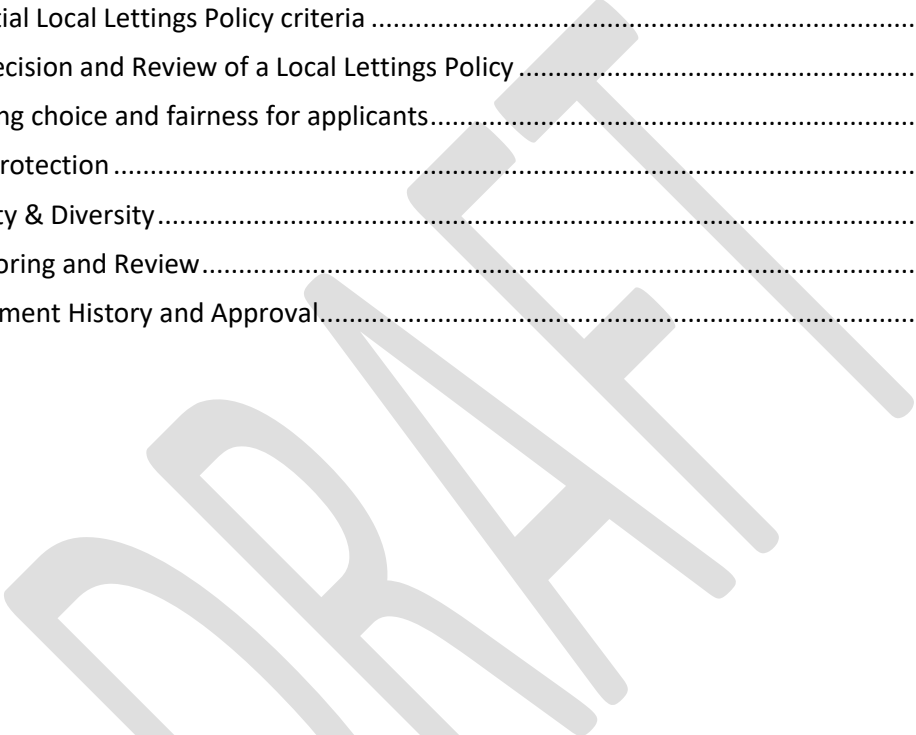


Local Lettings Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1 A key priority within the Eastleigh Borough Council (the Council) Housing Strategy 2018, is to enable the provision of new affordable quality housing. It notices that it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of suitable, high-quality homes that can meet the diverse needs of residents both now and in the future. Building new homes provides opportunities for people looking for affordable rent, or a new home to meet their changing needs.

<https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/3905/housing.pdf>

1.2 There are occasions where properties may need to be allocated taking additional information into account rather than following the standard Allocations Policy. This includes where there are issues of low demand, persistent anti-social behaviour, or other estate management issues. It is also good practice to use a Local Lettings Policy for new build and regeneration schemes.

1.3 Eastleigh Borough Council may decide to operate a separate allocation system with a separate waiting list and lettings policy for transferring tenants who are not in the reasonable preference categories or to cover applicants with a good tenancy record or give a degree of priority to those who want to move for work.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60df2d0de90e0771784b991f/Current_allocation_of_accommodation_guidance.pdf

1.4 The Council is the Housing Authority for the purposes of the Housing Act 1985 and, as the housing authority, is required by Section 8 of the Housing Act to consider the needs of the Borough with respect to the provision of further affordable accommodation.

1.5 The Homelessness Act 2002 and Housing Act 2004 identifies the need for Local Housing Authorities to address the issues of housing conditions, homelessness and provision of suitable decent homes.

1.6 The Housing Act 1996 (amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) also requires local authorities to have a written policy for determining priority and the procedures to be followed for the lettings of housing. Whilst 'Reasonable Preference' must be given to certain defined groups, Section 166A (3). enables authorities to let properties to people of a particular description where there is a clear need for the approach. The Eastleigh Borough Council Allocation Policy 2021 advises that;

2.4 Local lettings policies may be applied in addition to any local planning restrictions (contained in agreements made under Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990) which may be in place but will not override them. These local lettings policies will be agreed by the Council's Affordable Housing Manager and the Housing & Homelessness Specialist.

<https://www.eastleigh.gov.uk/media/11364/scheme-of-allocations.pdf>

1.7 Affordable Housing is defined as housing products that are below market prices or rents. It is provided to specific eligible households whose needs cannot be met by the market at a cost that they can afford, determined with regard to local incomes and house prices.

1.8 **If a property will be allocated according to a local lettings policy, the advert will clearly state: 'Allocations will be made in accordance with a local lettings policy'.**

2. Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to develop an appropriate lettings strategy for new schemes recently developed and have been identified as affordable housing. This is to ensure we achieve greater sustainability of communities and tenancies, and to address concerns about premature deterioration of these sites.

2.2 The strategic objective of this policy is to ensure that national, regional and local priorities are being considered. It also seeks to ensure that Eastleigh Borough Council is contributing towards the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities by ensuring that affordable homes within new housing development schemes in the Borough are allocated to those people in most housing need.

3. Consideration of a Local Lettings Policy

Any manager in the Housing Service can request a local lettings policy to be developed.

A Local Lettings Policy defines what a Local Lettings Policy is; when it should be or can be used; what outcomes will be sought as a result and how it will be reviewed.

The Affordable Housing Manager will consider all requests and consult with the Executive Head of Housing. Following the consultation, a draft local lettings policy will be developed and sent to the Lead Member for Housing and ward Councillors for consideration. Full details of this process are included in the Local Lettings Policy procedure.

The Council will demonstrate that by changing the allocation criteria it is possible to allocate the accommodation to other groups than those who currently qualify.

New build scheme -When a new community may be being created it is appropriate to consider the mix of people living on the scheme to provide the greatest opportunity to make the scheme more sustainable.

Specialist housing -If accommodation is developed for a particular group of people, then priority will be given to those requiring the specialist property, for example dementia friendly bungalows.

Regeneration scheme -If tenants have been moved from their former accommodation to enable the regeneration and development of the area, it would be appropriate for those tenants to be given priority to move back into the regenerated area.

4. Potential Local Lettings Policy criteria

4.1 The additional criteria for allocation introduced as part of the local lettings policy will depend on the reason for the implementation of the policy and the desired outcome.

4.2 The Council will evidence why the additional criteria will achieve the desired outcome.

4.3 Additional criteria can include, but is not limited to:

- Age restrictions
- Family composition (including under occupation)
- Level of support needs
- Economic status and affordability
- Local connection to area
- Criminal convictions
- History of tenancy issues

5. The Decision and Review of a Local Lettings Policy

5.1 Approval for a local lettings policy and any restrictions will be made by the Affordable Housing Manager

5.2 A local lettings policy can be implemented for between one year and five years.

5.3 Annual reviews will be completed to monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

6. Ensuring choice and fairness for applicants

It is acknowledged that by introducing local lettings policies, the choice for applicants is reduced. Therefore the availability of alternative properties in each area will always be considered. No more than 20% of the Council's available affordable housing stock will be subject to a local lettings policy at any one time. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

7. Data Protection

The Council are committed to protecting and respecting the privacy of personal data. As a registered Data Controller (Reg. no. Z7118863) it complies with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR).

More information on how the Council collects, uses and keeps your personal information, and how it protects privacy can be found in our [Record of Processing Activity](#) (ROPA).

The corporate privacy notice provides general information about the council's personal data processing activities overall. As the range of services the council provides is so varied, it has also produced individual [privacy notices for each service area](#), to explain specifically how data will be used within each service.

8. Equality & Diversity

8.1 Equality and diversity are of fundamental importance to services provided regardless of a person's protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, religion pregnancy and maternity, race, belief, or sex). All must be treated with respect. The Council treats everyone it houses, serves, and employs, fairly, and encourages others to do the same.

8.2 The Council provides information that is clear, accessible, and in an appropriate format (such as translated into another language, or in large print on request). Where appropriate, Council Officers will assist residents, by, for example, helping to complete paperwork. These policies ensure residents are treated in a fair and efficient manner.

9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly, to incorporate legislative and regulatory amendments and changes, best practice developments, or to address any operational issues with the procedure. Input and approval will be sought from our residents (via the **Residents Committee or similar**) prior to making any substantive changes. This is in line with our Corporate Values and is intended to ensure our policy continues to meet the needs and aspirations of our residents.

10. Document History and Approval

Identity and Version Control

This document is the final approved version and will be a controlled document with an individual assigned to version review/amendment.