

Local Lettings Plan: Buckley Hill Lane

1. Introduction

The Buckley Hill Lane housing development consists of 18 new apartments: 9 one-bedroom units and 9 two-bedroom units let by the Council for Social Rent. The Local Lettings Plan (LLP) has been prepared to ensure that the allocation of these homes supports the creation of a sustainable and balanced community, meeting local needs and promoting stability.

Block A: 3 one-bedroom and 6 two-bedroom apartments

Block B: 6 one-bedroom and 3 two-bedroom apartments

This LLP forms part of the Property Pool Plus allocation framework and ensures that allocations are fair while addressing specific local priorities.

2. Purpose of the Local Lettings Plan

The purpose of this LLP is to:

- Address local housing needs and support residents with strong local connections to the Buckley Hill Lane area.
- Promote community cohesion and long-term tenancy sustainment.
- Minimise issues such as anti-social behaviour and tenancy turnover.
- Encourage economic activity by prioritising working households.

3. Objectives

The objectives of the LLP are to:

1. Give priority to applicants with a strong local connection to the area through residence, family ties, or employment.
2. Achieve a balanced community by allocating a mix of tenants, including working households and those requiring support.
3. Reduce the risk of tenancy management issues by ensuring applicants are suitable for the properties offered.

4. Property Details

The development at Buckley Hill Lane consists of:

9 two-bedroom apartments (50% of all properties): These are suitable for households with children or specific medical/welfare needs.

9 one-bedroom apartments (50% of all properties): These are suitable for singles or couples with no dependents.

5. Allocation Criteria

5.1 Ground Floor Need

The six (6) flats on the Ground floor - in the first instance will be offered to applicants who need ground floor for health reasons. The apartments are not wheelchair accessible but do have level access showers. Preference will be given to those customers with limited mobility and needing a level access shower. Medical or Occupational Therapy evidence will have been requested from applicants for these apartments. If there is not sufficient demand on health grounds, any remaining ground floor properties will be allocated to priority need individuals/families as per section 5.2.

5.2 Priority Households –

A minimum of four (4) properties will be allocated to priority need individuals or families.

- 1 property to be allocated to an individual family with a history of domestic abuse.
- 1 property to be allocated to a veteran of the Armed Forces
- 2 properties to be allocated to a Care Experienced Young Person (CEYP)

Support agencies may be involved in assessing and assisting these applicants as required.

5.3 Employment and Community Contribution

The remaining eight (8) properties will be allocated to applicants who are in employment or full-time education or training (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay rent). However, offers will be made in accordance with priority need.

This equates to:

- 3 properties allocated within Band A
- 3 properties allocated within Band B
- 2 properties allocated within Band C

This approach promotes economic diversity and supports working households.

5.4 Tenancy History

Applicants with a recent history (that is within 2 years) of anti-social behaviour, criminal activity, or significant rent arrears will only be considered if evidence of sustained improvement is provided.

6. Local Connection

Applicants with a strong local connection to the Buckley Hill Lane area will be prioritised through this Local Lettings Plan.

Local connection will be defined and applied in accordance with the Property Pool Plus Policy. The priority criteria are detailed below. Initial priority will be given to households with a local connected to the immediate and surrounding wards in which the development sits

before being widened to a local connection to Sefton if no successful applicants can be selected.

1. Local connection to St Oswald ward (the immediate ward in which the development sits), Netherton and Orrell, Ford, Manor or Park wards.
2. Local connection to the Borough of Sefton.

7. Selection Process

The selection process for allocating properties at Buckley Hill Lane will involve the following steps:

7.1 Properties allocated

Allocations to Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) will be made through direct matching nominated by the Council's Children's Social Care teams.

7.2 Advertising Properties

All other properties will be advertised on Property Pool Plus advising applicants that a Local Letting scheme is in place and applicants will be required to satisfy the criteria specified.

We will continue to give priority to suitable applicants in accordance with the appropriate banding and date order system but shall give priority to those in employment where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay the rent.

Applicants given priority for employment should be working 16 hours or more at the close of the bidding cycle and be able to provide as evidence a contract of employment, letter from employer and/ or recent wage slips.

Applicants will be required to fully occupy the property in line with current bedroom eligibility needs.

7.3 Shortlisting Applicants

Applicants will be shortlisted based on their Property Pool Plus priority banding, housing need, and adherence to LLP criteria (e.g., local connection, employment status or welfare needs).

Priority will be given to those meeting the LLP's local connection requirements, followed by employment and key worker status.

7.4 Pre-Tenancy Assessment

All shortlisted applicants will undergo a pre-tenancy assessment to confirm their suitability for the property.

The assessment will evaluate:

- Financial ability to sustain the tenancy (e.g., proof of income or benefits).
- History of tenancy management (e.g., references from previous landlords).
- Support needs for vulnerable households.

7.5 Final Allocation Decision

Final allocation decisions will be made in line with the LLP priorities, ensuring that the balance between local needs, community stability, and tenancy sustainability is achieved.

Where multiple applicants have equal priority, factors such as length of local connection and Property Pool Plus registration date may be considered.

7.6 Offer and Sign-Up Process

Successful applicants will receive a formal offer of tenancy. A tenancy sign-up process will include:

- An explanation of tenancy terms and conditions.
- Details about rights and responsibilities.
- Additional support arrangements, if applicable.

8 Monitoring and Review

This LLP will be monitored quarterly to evaluate its effectiveness in meeting its objectives.

A full review will be conducted after 12 months, with adjustments made as necessary to improve outcomes and address feedback from stakeholders.

When a property on this development becomes available in the future, it will be advertised through Property Pool Plus system.

This Local Lettings Plan ensures that the Buckley Hill Lane development meets the

9. EIA-Rapid Impact Assessment

Name of policy: Local Lettings Policy – Buckley Hill Lane development

Is this a new service or policy? New

Person responsible for assessment: Alistair Malpas

Date completed: 20th December 2024

What are the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy or service?

The aim of the Local Lettings Policy is to make a significant contribution to the overall sustainability of the area by helping to identify suitable tenants, who will settle and contribute to the local community, ensuring tenancies are sustainable for the long term. The policy supports our lettings policy objectives which are to:

- Ensure our homes are let in a fair, transparent and efficient way.
- Support the local authority's strategic housing function.
- Give people choice through participation in choice based letting schemes.
- Make best use of available stock and create sustainable communities.
- Minimise the time that properties are left unoccupied.
- Allow us the opportunity to market our homes in a diverse, accessible and innovative way.

Who does the policy or service affect?

All customers who express a wish to move to the Council's new build development at Buckley Hill Lane, Netherton.

Working through the questions that follow are there any concerns that:

- the policy or service could affect people differently because of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion belief or social economic circumstances, or
- that the needs of people in any of these groups will not be met?

(NOTE: For comments that apply to all diversity strands, rather than repeat the comment against each strand, complete the summary box below)

	Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary
<p>Characteristic – Ethnicity.</p> <p>People from different ethnic background including travellers & gypsies)</p>	Impact - No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of Race or Religious belief. Where there are language difficulties / language limitations, the services of a translation service will be utilised.
<p>Characteristic – Gender.</p> <p>Between men & women</p>	Impact -No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLP will apply equally to men and women. Applicants can speak with either a male or a female Officer to discuss their housing needs.
<p>Characteristic - Sexual Orientation.</p> <p>People with difference sexual orientations</p>	Impact - No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of sexual orientation. Same sex couples are recognised within the bedroom standard criteria
<p>Characteristic – Age.</p> <p>People of different ages including young, older people and children</p>	Impact -Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of age. However, as this is a development of flats, our priority is to not consider families with children under age 5 for flats above the first floor. This is in recognition of the evidence that living in flat accommodation is not practical or in the best interest of a young child. A household member age restriction applies to the flats due to the practicalities of living with young children in flats above the first floor with lack of play and outside space. The law and Property Act 1925 prevents minors from holding a legal estate in land. Therefore, people aged 16 and 17 years cannot hold a tenancy in their own name. We shall support young applicants by sign posting to support agencies and by advising them of relevant supported housing schemes where appropriate.
Characteristic – Disability.	Impact - No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of their disability.

(including mobility, hearing, HIV, visual impairment and people with mental health problem)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme provides limited rehousing opportunities for applicants with mobility difficulties, though there is no lift in the scheme, and the scheme itself is not purpose built to wheelchair standards. • All apartments on upper floors have a shower over the bath, with all ground floor flats providing level access bathing at the scheme. • Accompanied viewings are offered to all customers and we will discuss any support needs with all customers to ensure provisions are in place for the start of the tenancy. • We can arrange a British Sign Language interpreter if required at viewing or sign up, for hearing impaired customers. • Residents with an identified ground floor need and/or level access shower provision will benefit as they will be prioritised for ground floor accommodation.
<p>Characteristic - Faith / religious belief.</p> <p>People with different religions or beliefs</p>	Impact - No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of faith or religious belief. • Applicants with a religious preference for a shower will find we have showers installed over the bath
<p>Characteristic – Transgender.</p> <p>Peoples whose gender identify is not the same as that assigned at birth</p>	Impact - No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LLP will apply equally to all applicants irrespective of their gender identity.
<p>Other socio-economic factors such as an emerging community, people living in geographical areas, migrant workers, people with a criminal record, people on low income</p>	Impact - Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under the LLP 50% of allocations will be prioritised to applicants in employment, however the LLP is not 100% ring-fenced based on economic circumstances, it includes 50% equivalent priority for those with a medical need for ground floor/ level access shower provision and priorities specific households who may not be in employment. • Checks will be undertaken for all applicants who are to proceed to an offer.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entitled to benefit assessments will be completed for all applicants. This is to ensure the customer is claiming all benefits they are entitled too which in turn helps ensure they can meet their rental obligations meaning we do not set them up with a tenancy they will be unable to afford and sustain. • All applicants are required to provide a week's rent in advance. This is in line with the terms of the tenancy agreement. Where applicants are unable to do this, we will not proceed with the offer. This requirement is explained at advert stage and during the pre-allocation stage giving applicants sufficient time to understand the requirement. consider. • Applicants with an offending history that make them unsuitable to be a tenant will be excluded from the first lets. This is a necessary restriction which applies to all characteristics for the reputation of the scheme.
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Summary of impact assessment:

The impact assessment is medium.

It is acknowledged that the Local Lettings Plan may impact on applicants from all protected characteristics due to the additional lettings criteria, such as the requirement to be in employment, requirement to have a local connection and those who may have an offending history. This impact is necessary to ensure we get the balance of allocations correct to protect the reputation of the scheme and maximise sustainability of new tenancies.

This impact has been mitigated by introducing a % of lets between each band, widening the reach of applicants who can be housed.

The scheme is designed to ensure its long-term viability and community contribution. As Buckley Hill Lane is a new development, we want to ensure that we create a balanced and sustainable community from the beginning by identifying suitable tenants who will settle and make a positive contribute to the local community, ensuring tenancies are sustainable for the long term.

We can only achieve this by housing a mix of different households, with different lifestyles and economic profiles, whilst at the same time, still providing housing to residents in housing need.

The LLP reinforces our commitment to the local area and provides an opportunity for applicants with a real commitment to the area to be priorities and this will be applied to all protected characteristics.