



## **Local Lettings Policy for Fleet Lane, Parr, St Helens** **May 2023**

### **1. Introduction**

This Local Lettings Policy (LLP) is proposed for the new development at Fleet Lane in Parr, St Helens, specifically in relation to the 25x affordable rent properties. These affordable rent properties include:

- 16 x one bedroom cottage style apartments
- 7 x two bedroom houses
- 2 x three bedroom houses

This policy will run from the phased handover scheduled between July 2023 and June 2024 for a period of 12 months. A review of the Policy will be held after twelve months in consultation with St Helens Borough Council and local residents.

### **2. Background**

The Homelessness Act 2002 enabled housing authorities to introduce flexibility into their letting policies. Local Lettings Policies were introduced as a targeted approach to implement additional flexibility to existing Choice Based Lettings Schemes which cover wider geographical areas and a range of differing estates. Local Lettings Policies enable properties to be allocated to applicants meeting the particular needs of an area. Addressing specific shortfalls at a neighbourhood level helps build and sustain balanced communities bringing them up to a similar level of other similar neighbourhoods.

The Jigsaw Group has successfully used Local Lettings Policies at new build developments for a number of years, either to protect existing stable communities or to address potential housing management problems. Unfortunately new developments within Jigsaw's current housing stock and within the St Helens borough have been disproportionately affected by housing management problems and a high level of tenancy failures; it is suspected that this is due to the large number of residents moving at a specific time, compared to individual households moving into an already established community. This is a large development in an already densely populated area, therefore consideration to tenancy sustainment and a balanced community is essential.

With this local lettings policy, we aim to identify tenants who will settle and contribute to the local community both socially and economically. The LLP takes into account the 2019 indices of multiple deprivations where St Helens is ranked as 40<sup>th</sup> most deprived area out of 317 local authorities in the country. In order to improve the position with regards to deprivation, and economic deprivation in particular we are proposing a percentage of properties are allocated to those applicants who are working or in education. This should hopefully bring increased economic activity to the area and increase aspirations of local residents.

Imposing additional qualifying criteria on only a proportion of the new properties here should help to create a more balanced and stable community whilst still meeting the



housing need of all applicants registered with Under One Roof. For the same reason, the housing need bands will be proportioned out for initial adverts.

### **3. Allocations**

Allocations for the houses will be made using St Helens Borough Councils choice based letting scheme "Under One Roof". The LLP will be clearly advertised in the advert.

### **4. Priority for re housing**

Jigsaw Homes will give priority to the following groups:

#### **Houses**

44% (4 of the 9 houses) will be allocated to applicants who are in full or part time paid employment or full-time education/ training.

56% (5 of the 9 houses) will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the Housing Allocations Policy

#### **Apartments**

50% (8 of the 16 apartments) will be allocated to applicants who are in full or part time paid employment or full-time education/ training.

50% (8 of the 16 apartments) will be allocated to applicants in accordance with the Housing Allocations Policy

### **5. Process**

- The LLP will be clearly indicated in the advert; applicants will only be shortlisted if they meet these requirements.
- A pre-offer interview will be carried out with all applicants, proof of ID, address and proof of employment/education when applicable will be required.
- Satisfactory landlord references will be required from every landlord that the applicant has rented from in the past three years (if applicable)

### **6. Review and Monitoring**

The LLP will be reviewed after 12 months in terms of the following:

- Demand for the properties, number of advertising cycles required, number of refusals and void loss.
- Tenancy turnover
- Number of 'failed tenancies' including evictions, abandonments, tenancy terminations due to ASB or other housing management problems.
- Levels of ASB and other housing management problems such as fly tipping, property damage.



The aim of this policy is that by the end of the first twelve months, there will be an established and relatively stable community. The aim is for tenancy turnover to be within the region of the Group's average of 8% and whilst some instances of rent arrears and ASB are accepted as inevitable, these should be isolated instances rather than wider scale issues at the development. The eligibility criteria will then be removed or relaxed in agreement with the council and other stakeholders. If the LLP has been unsuccessful in preventing the problems raised in this proposal, discussion between the Group, the Council and other stakeholders will address alternative actions that could be taken.

## **7. Allocation policy**

All other aspects of the allocation process will be carried out in accordance with Housing Allocation Policy

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