

Trent Gardens Local Lettings Plan

Introduction

The Allocations Policy satisfies the requirement on the Council by Part VI Section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to have a scheme for determining priorities, and the procedure to be followed, in allocating housing accommodation both to first time applicants and transferring tenants.

The aim of the Allocations Policy, whilst meeting legislative requirements, is to make best use of the limited supply of social and affordable housing becoming vacant each year by providing a simple, transparent priority system based on clear criteria which determines an applicant's place within the allocations scheme.

The policy recognises that from time to time certain housing stock would benefit from a local lettings plan where the needs are not met by way of the main Allocations Policy.

Location

This plan relates to the Trent Gardens development of 37 new build properties developed at Burton Crescent, Springfield, Wolverhampton (map at appendix 1). These properties are owned by the Council, who is the landlord and managed by Wolverhampton Homes, who is the managing agent.

Scope

This plan relates to the first let of properties only. Relets will be let in full accordance with the Council's main Allocations Policy. This plan relates only to the general new build properties on the development. The supported housing scheme is excluded from the Allocations Policy and will be let directly through the Council's Adult Social Care service.

Objective

This local lettings plan sets out how the Council has varied the Allocations Policy in prioritising applicants for the new build properties at Trent Gardens to:

- Maintain a stable and sustainable community;
- Better meet the housing needs of local tenants;
- Make best use of stock.

Properties will be prioritised for Emergency Band applicants, transferring Council tenants and transferring Council tenants with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area in the proportions set out in section 'Letting Plan Criteria' below.

Local Letting Plan Criteria

Applicants must be eligible for the specific property type to be considered for it. **Eligibility criteria and household categories are determined by the Council's Allocation Policy and set out at appendix 2 of this plan.**

There are 37 new build properties that make up the Trent Gardens development. Each property will be advertised giving priority to particular applicant types:

- **Emergency Band** – At least 10% of all properties will be prioritised for applicants in the Emergency Band
This will ensure those households on the housing register in greatest housing need have the opportunity to be housed when new build properties become available to let.
- **Applicants transferring from another Council property** – At least 45% of properties will be prioritised for existing Council tenants registered on the transfer register with an assessed housing need – Emergency Band, Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3 priority.
This will support the creation of a sustainable and mixed community, with housing being let to existing tenants with a housing need who are eligible for a move and so are able to demonstrate they can manage and sustain a tenancy. This will also make available a Council property elsewhere, which will be advertised to all eligible applicants on the Housing Register in line with the Allocations Policy, meaning multiple households housing needs will be met from each new property developed.
- **Applicants transferring from another Council property with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area** – Up to 45% of properties will be prioritised will be prioritised for existing Council tenants registered on the transfer register with an evidenced local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area, with an assessed housing need – Emergency Band, Band 1, Band 2 and Band 3 priority.
This will help to maintain the existing sustainable community in the area bringing stability as a high number of new lettings will be made in a concentrated area including a number of new tenants and new people to the community. It also provides the opportunity to satisfying some local housing need, helping those that need a more appropriate property maintain support networks that may be in place.
The criteria for evidencing a local connection to an area is determined by the Allocations Policy and set out at appendix 3 to this plan.

Property Type Criteria

This local lettings plan relates to all general need properties at Trent Gardens. Due to the short supply and high demand for some property types, certain restrictions apply:

Bungalows are reserved for applicants who are aged 60 plus or have an immediate need for a fully adapted or purpose build property or have a progressive degenerative disease and their needs are such they will require a fully

adapted/purpose built property imminently. Bungalows advertised to those with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area will be eligible to applicants in the Emergency Band and Band 1 to ensure best use is made of these homes.

Ground Floor Flats are provide level access homes and are reserved for applicants requiring one level accommodation and access without climbing stairs or 1 or 2 steps. Ground floor flats advertised to those with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area will be eligible to applicants in the Emergency Band and Band 1 to ensure best use is made of these homes.

Four bedroom plus homes advertised to those with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area will be eligible to applicants in the Emergency Band and Band 1 to enable people to remain within the estate who need to right size into a more suitable homes due to overcrowding, under occupation and the need for an accessible home, whilst ensuring best use is made of these homes.

Giving some priority for bungalows, ground floor flats and four bedroom homes to applicants with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area will enable people to remain within the estate who need to right size into a more suitable homes due to overcrowding, under occupation and the need for an accessible home.

The homes at Trent Gardens will be prioritised in the following way

	Emergency Band Applicants	Transferring Council tenants	Transferring Council tenants: local connection^	Total
5 x 1 Bedroom Bungalow*	1	2	2	5
6 x 2 Bedroom Bungalow*	1	3	2	6
16 x 2 Bedroom House	0	6	10	16
4 x 4 Bedroom House*	1	2	1	4
3 x 1 Bedroom Flat	0	2	1	3
3 x 1 Bedroom Ground Floor Flat*	1	1	1	3
Total	4	16	17	37

* Bungalows, ground floor flats and four bedroom homes advertised with a local connection are eligible to applicants in Emergency Band and Band 1

^ Local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area

37 dwellings (4 to Emergency Band)

How the Local Letting Plan will be applied

The allocation of properties through this local lettings plan will be done in close accordance with the Council's Allocation's Policy:

- Applicants will need to have a live housing application on Homes in the City;
- Properties being let under this local lettings plan will be advertised on Homes in the City. Adverts will be clearly marked with who priority is given to.

- Where applicants have a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent they will need to register this as part of their application provide evidence to demonstrate they meet one of the necessary criteria for a local connection. Please see appendix 3.
- Eligible applicants will need to bid on properties within the advertised bidding period.
- When the bidding period comes to an end, contact will be made with the applicant who:
 - i. Meets the criteria advertised for the property type:
 - Is an Emergency Band applicant or,
 - Is a current Council tenant or,
 - Is a current Council tenant with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area;
 - ii. Is in the highest priority band;
 - iii. Has the greatest number of housing needs that placed them in that band;
 - iv. Has had that level of housing need the longest;
 - v. and is eligible for that property.
- The applicant will be contacted to request that they supply evidence of their housing circumstances, their identity and the identity of those moving with them. If the applicant fails to provide this evidence within a reasonable amount of time the applicant will be bypassed and contact will be made with the next applicant on the shortlist.
- If a successful applicant cannot be found for the properties advertised to Emergency Band applicants or current Council tenant with a local connection to the Spring Valley/ Springfields/ Falkland Crescent area the home will be advertised to current Council tenants.
- If a successful applicant still cannot be found the home will be let in accordance with the Allocations Policy, removing the local lettings plan priority.

Ending the Local Lettings Plan

This local lettings plan will be in operation for the first let of the properties specified.

Once all of these properties have been let the local lettings plan will come to an end and all future letting will be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's Allocation Policy.

Equalities Analysis

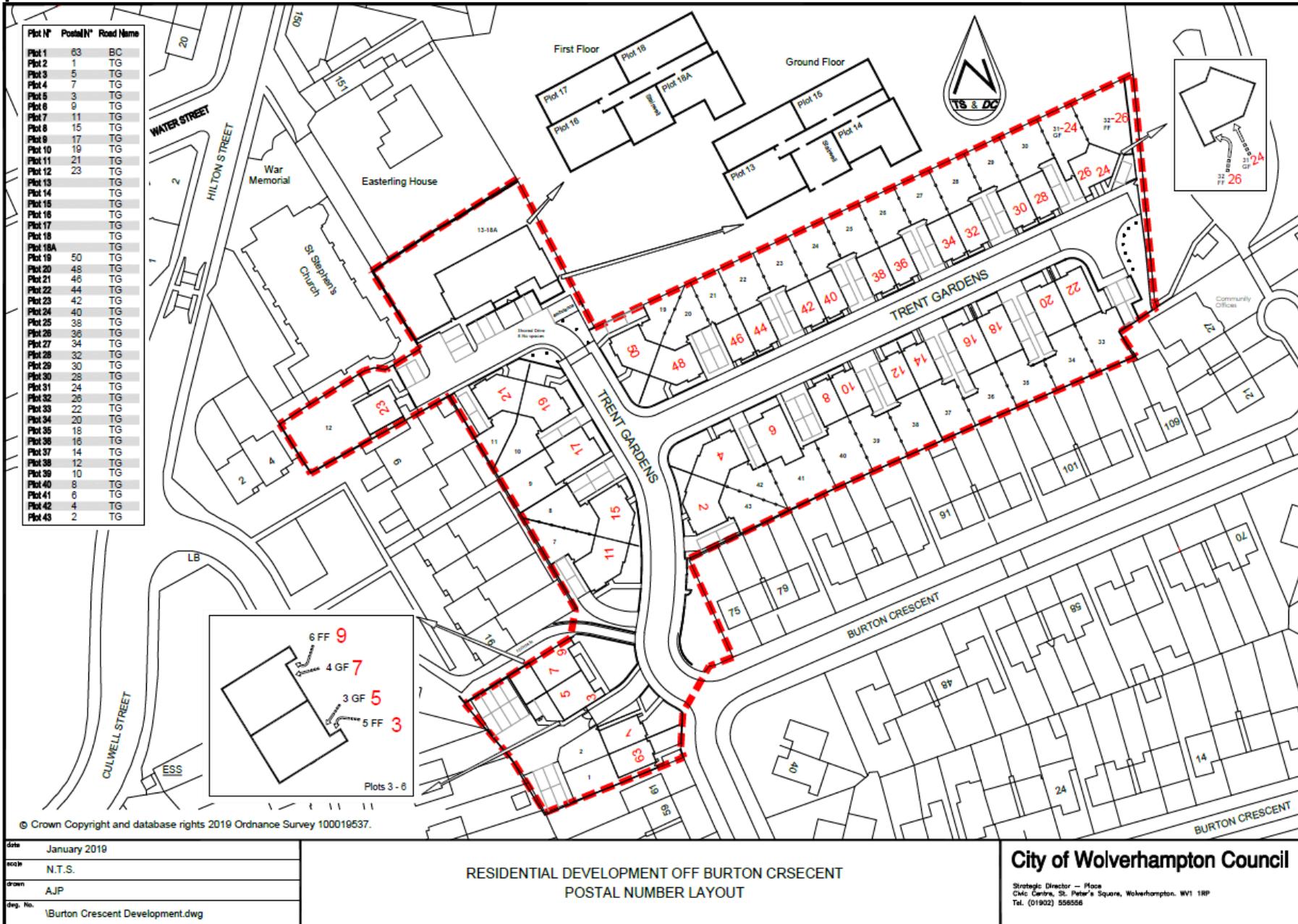
An equalities analysis has been completed which supports a small proportion of properties being let to those that are eligible and have the greatest need for them, whilst enabling them to stay within their local community where they can access established support networks.

Any impact of restricting these lets to transferring tenants will be mitigated by the resulting void properties being open to those on the housing register, being allocated via the usual housing allocations process.

Monitoring of the Local Lettings Plan

Once all new build properties on a development have been let the Council will complete an evaluation exercise to review how all properties were let, assessing factors of housing need, household composition, equalities and if the original objectives of the local lettings plan have been achieved.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

City of Wolverhampton Council Allocations Policy Eligibility Criteria

Property types	Household category eligibility
Bungalows	Bungalows are reserved for applicants who are 60 plus or with an immediate need for a fully adapted or purpose build property or have a progressive degenerative disease and their needs are such they will require a fully adapted/purpose built property imminently.
1 Bedroom Bungalow	Disabled* singles and couples, eligible for 1 bedroom Applicant aged 60+, eligible for 1 bedroom
2 Bedroom Bungalow	Disabled* singles and couples, eligible for 2 bedrooms Applicant aged 60+, eligible for 2 bedrooms
Houses	Houses are reserved for applicants with children under the age of 21 living with them.
2 Bedroom House	Families eligible for 2 bedrooms
4 Bedroom House	Families eligible for 4 bedrooms
Flats	Priority for ground floor flats is given to applicants who are over 55 years old or applicants requiring one level accommodation and access without climbing stairs or 1 or 2 steps.
1 Bedroom Flat	Singles and couples
1 Bedroom Ground Floor Flat	Singles and couples

*Households with at least one person who has a disability who has been assessed as needing adapted property.

- Increase the supply of family housing within the Springfield Horseshoe HMC area by helping to reduce the level of under occupancy within family accommodation through the provision of smaller, accessible units;
- Improve the range of property types available, helping to alleviate local housing need by assisting existing council tenants living within the Springfield Horseshoe HMC area to move to more suitable accommodation within their local community;
- Enable a degree of continuity across the area by prioritising a proportion of the 37 units to households in housing need living in the area, managed by Springfield Horseshoe HMC, which will assist in the maintenance of a sustainable community.
- Maximise the relief of housing need as housing transferring tenants into homes that better meets their needs, frees up a home that can be advertised to applicants on the housing register in the normal way in accordance with Allocations Policy.

Appendix 3

City of Wolverhampton Council Allocations Policy Local Connection Criteria

Applicants need to register 'Spring Valley/Springfields/Falkland Crescent' as their local connection area as part of their housing application. Existing applicants can update their housing application to register this local connection where they meet the criteria set out below.

In order for this to be accepted, applicants need to be able to demonstrate at least one of the following criteria in addition to any housing need criteria:

- a) Giving or receiving essential support which is evidenced by professional support e.g. hospital, social services etc. Can also be confirmed by the Council's medical advisor.
- b) Needs to be close to family/child minder for help with child care etc. which is necessary for the applicant to find/remain in work and travelling from one part of the City to leave children at childcare and then travelling on to work/education has cost, time, disruption implications etc. Difficulties must be able to be evidenced.
- c) Long term residency - 5 years out of the previous 10.
- d) Working in the area where the job includes early starts/late finishes.
- e) Children in school in the area.
- f) Cultural reasons e.g. to be near place of worship, community facilities etc.