

# LAMBETH COUNCIL'S HOUSING REGENERATION Programme **Local Lettings Plan & Local Allocations Strategy**

**For new homes on the Westbury Estate,  
Wandsworth Road, Lambeth SW8 3ND**

This document provides information on the Council's offer to Council Tenants, HFL tenants in Westbury Phase 1, and other designated residents, for allocating newly built HFL homes on the Westbury Estate in alignment with the Council's 'Key Guarantees' and the Council's Allocation Scheme 2013 which states:

***Local lettings Policies***

*The Council may from time to time agree to a proportion of properties being let through Local Lettings Policies approved by the Council...*

*Local Letting Policies may set out, but not be limited to:*

- *The properties or area covered by the Local Lettings Policy,*
- *The type of tenancies to be offered*
- *Eligibility criteria for applicants,*
- *How priority may be determined between applicants"*

## **1. JUSTIFICATION FOR A LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN FOR WESTBURY**

- 1.1. In the Cabinet report 'Investing in better neighbourhoods and building the homes we need to house the people of Lambeth – Westbury Estate' of 9th November 2015, the council committed to put in place a Local Lettings Plan for residents on the Westbury estate when the estate was re-developed. There have been no changes to this policy in the intervening period.

## **2. LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN (LLP)**

- 2.1. The objective of this LLP is to ensure a fair and easily understood allocation of the new affordable homes in accordance with the council's decisions on the matter. This plan sets out the criteria to be followed when allocating new affordable homes on the Westbury estate.
- 2.2. For affordable rented homes it applies to first lets only plus those residents who relocate to homes in Westbury Phase 1 and the following phases 2 and 3. Subsequent lettings will be made in line with the council's usual allocations process through the Council's Allocation Scheme and let by HFL Homes.
- 2.3. The formal and binding commitments to residents on estates undergoing regeneration and set out in the council's "Key Guarantees" (KGs) are closely linked to the LLP which must align with them as well as with the Council's Allocations Scheme, and each will be referred to throughout this LLP.
- 2.4. It is expected that through this LLP the following benefits may also be realised:
  - Will enable tenants to and their families to remain on the estate and benefit from a new home and environment.
  - Will enable those tenants who relocate to homes in Westbury Phase 1 and subsequent phases to relocate to other homes in the completed development.
  - Will ensure the delivery of the development as planned by facilitating the moves of affected tenants and tenants from the estate into alternative affordable homes where applicable.
  - Will help to ease over-crowding on the estate.
  - Will help increase the number of family homes available on the estate by freeing up homes that are presently under-occupied in the Amesbury and Durrington tower blocks.

## **3. NOMINATION RIGHTS TO HOMES FOR LAMBETH AFFORDABLE HOMES**

- 3.1. The Council retains 100% nomination rights to all new affordable homes developed by Homes for Lambeth (HFL) on Council land.
- 3.2. The HFL group is the Council's wholly owned housing company. The HFL group includes HFL Homes, a Registered Provider that will take ownership of all new affordable homes constructed on the Westbury Estate (the Estate). The homes will be let by HFL Homes through "Lifetime Assured Tenancies" (LATs). LAT's give much the same rights, and carry the same obligations, as secure tenancies.

#### 4. COVERAGE OF THIS LLP

- 4.1. This LLP will cover all phases (1-3) of the Westbury development scheme.
- 4.2. All new homes in Phase 1 are to be let to existing Secure Tenants presently living on the Westbury estate, or those on the council's housing register or transfer list.
- 4.3. Later phases will be of mixed tenure and will also include shared ownership homes. Phases 2 and 3 are still in the outline planning stage and as a result the actual numbers of affordable homes to be provided in each of these phases is still to be finalised.

##### Phase 1

- 4.4. All new homes in Phase 1 will be let on HFL Homes Lifetime Assured Tenancies at Council Rent levels with all existing Secure Tenants in the blocks being redeveloped guaranteed a new home.
- 4.5. The construction for Phase 1 of the scheme is being undertaken by developer St James at 2 sites on the Estate. These homes are due to be completed in late spring/early summer of 2021. There will be a total of 64 homes (consisting of flats and maisonettes).
- 4.6. Site 1 of Phase 1 will comprise 40 new homes distributed throughout an 8-storey building and Site 2 of Phase 1 will comprise 24 new homes distributed throughout a 5-storey building and shown in table form below:

	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4-Bed	Number of new homes
<b>SITE 1</b>	27	7	6		40
<b>SITE 2</b>		14	6	4	24

##### Phases 2 & 3

- 4.7. The development of Phases 2 & 3 has outline planning consent. The actual number of affordable homes to be provided in each of these phases will be determined following the completion of viability assessments over the course of the development. Homes for Lambeth will maximise the number of affordable homes. It is expected that the two phases will deliver circa 270 new residential homes. It is intended that the Local Lettings Plan applies to all phases of the scheme.

#### 5. HOW RESIDENTS WILL PRIORITISED

- 5.1. This LLP aims to provide priority access to new homes ONLY for the following groups:

##### 1st Priority:

- Secure Tenants living in low-rise properties on the estate, or with a "Right to Return" to the Estate (see below).
- Secure Tenants LBL decanted from the low rise homes, into phase 1 as assured lifetime tenants, who require a subsequent transfer to a home in phase 2 or 3.

##### 2nd Priority:

- Secure Tenants who have chosen to move from the estate but retain an "Option to Return". (see below).

#### 3rd Priority:

- Secure Tenants in Durrington and Amesbury Towers will have priority for up to 50% of the residual homes (i.e. those remaining to be allocated after 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Priority lettings). Priority will be based on the normal Housing Allocation Scheme, so those who are overcrowded, under-occupying or have medical needs etc will have priority.

#### 4th Priority:

- Qualifying applicants on the Council's Housing Waiting list after Priority 1-3 have been re-housed or given the opportunity to exercise their option – all remaining homes according to housing need as set out in the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme.

All subsequent Phases will follow this prioritisation for the affordable homes.

### The 'Right to Return' and 'Option to Return'

#### 'Right to Return' (RTR)

- 5.2. Secure Tenants who have been asked by the council to move temporarily to facilitate the phasing of the development retain the right to be allocated a new home suitable to their needs

#### 'Option to Return' (OTR)

- 5.3. This applies to those Secure Tenants who have moved, or wish to move, away from the Estate during the construction period. The tenants must notify the Council before they move that they wish to have an Option to Return. Once all secure tenants, and those with a 'Right to Return' have been re-housed, the Council will write to those who have retained an Option to Return to ask if they wish to exercise that option as part of the 2nd priority group. Those who wish to take up the option are then given information about the homes still available and will be given band A1 status on the housing register or transfer list or the Council may request Homes for Lambeth to make a direct offer.
- 5.4. No allocations to those on the housing register or transfer list will be made until all those exercising this right have been given the opportunity to return to the estate.

## 6. HOW RESIDENTS WILL PRIORITISED

- 6.1. ALL applicants, including those with a Right to Return, must be registered on the council's housing register or transfer list. If already registered the application must be reviewed and updated as necessary.

### Priority 1 - Secure Tenants living on estate with a RTR

- 6.2. The Council will manage the allocation, moves, and compensation payments, where applicable, for all Priority 1 Tenants and those with a RTR. Pre-allocation of the new homes will commence as soon as HFL have notified the Council of the number and type of homes available to let. Early notification and pre-allocation of the new homes

will enable the residents to have some choice in the finish of some of the internal fittings.

### **Priority 2 - Secure Tenants who have chosen to move from the estate but retain an Option to Return**

- 6.3. Once it is known approximately how many Priority 1 tenants will be allocated a new home on the estate, the Council will write to those residents who chose to move away but retained an option to return or right to return with an offer of a suitable new home on the estate – Priority 2. They will be given 2 weeks' notice to respond or forfeit their Option to Return. Where possible the Council will pre-allocate homes to these tenants.

### **Priority 3 - Secure Tenants in the Amesbury and Durrington Towers**

- 6.4. The Council will then request Expressions of Interest for up to 50% of the residual number and type of homes, of each bedroom size from Secure Tenants in the Amesbury and Durrington Towers who are on the Council's Housing Transfer list at the point the request for Expressions of Interest letters are sent out.
- 6.5. Up to 50% of the residual number of homes, of each property size, may be allocated to this group on a 1-offer only basis. The council will not consider an Expression of Interest from Secure Tenants in the Amesbury and Durrington Towers who are currently suspended from bidding, for instance due to rent arrears or subject to a possession order.

### **Priority 4 - Qualifying applicants on the Council's Housing Waiting list**

- 6.6. Following the allocation of homes to residents in Amesbury and Durrington Towers in Priority 3, HFL Homes will provide the Council's Allocations Manager with the number and type of homes that remain available for letting through the allocations process – Priority 4.

### **Viewings**

- 6.7. Viewings will take place at by appointment.
- 6.8. Once the new homes are ready those tenants who have had homes pre-allocated may view and make their final decision. Residents will be offered two slots to view the home and 24 hours after their viewing to either accept or decline the offer. If they want to move to the new property they will then be advised of when and how to end their existing tenancy and will be given a date to sign the tenancy agreement with HFL Homes and move into their new home.

## **7. ADDITIONAL POINTS TO NOTE**

- 7.1. All Wheelchair adapted homes will be ring-fenced for those in need of this type of home. They will follow the priority process as described above.
- 7.2. Prioritisation of offers of level access ground floor homes to LLP applicants will be determined by the Council's Allocation Scheme and must have a recommendation for a level access ground floor property through the Medical Assessment process.

- 7.3. 1st Priority applicants (see section 5 above) may be made direct offers by the Council and will not be required to 'bid' on the CBL system. Where possible the direct offers will take account of other preferences made by the tenants. If under-occupying their existing home they will be permitted to under-occupy their new home by 1 bedroom only (but may be liable for the 'Bedroom Tax'). Alternatively, they may surrender the extra room and take up the Council's 'Transfer Incentive Scheme' for those downsizing
- 7.4. 2nd and 3rd Priority applicants may also be made direct offers by the Council. Offers in the first instance will be made to those applicants on the council's transfer list in Band A, and then Band B and so on. Where bids are received from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Priority applicants for the same home priority for who is offered the home will be determined by the normal Housing Allocation Scheme rules.

## **APPENDICES AND REFERENCES**

- Appendix 1 – Key Guarantees and FAQ's  
Appendix 2 – The Council's Allocation Scheme