

Local Lettings Plan for Orchard Court, Ryewood Meadows, Dunton Green, Kent

1. Description of site

This site is made up of 15 general needs rented properties and consists of a mix of 1 and 2 bed flats.

2. Issues to take into account

- This is a new development of general needs rented accommodation to be let on an Affordable Rent.
- Section 106 Site

The rented properties consist of:

9 x 1 bedroom flats (9 x 2 person units)

6 x 2 bedroom flats (6 x 4 person units)

3. Justification for Lettings Plan

This lettings plan is for the rented properties managed by Orbit South to which Sevenoaks District Council has nomination rights via the Kent Homechoice, choice based lettings system. It is designed to support sustainable lettings in accordance with the Kent Sustainable Communities Protocol. It also aims to meet housing need whilst preventing potential management problems on the site, freeing up larger properties within the District which are under occupied.

4. Aims

- To allocate to those in housing need.
- To create a local thriving community.
- To reduce the problems of anti-social behaviour (ASB) reported, relating to the rented properties.
- To reduce potential breaches of tenancy.
- Free up larger properties.
- Open opportunities to those who are economically active and have restricted housing options.
- Open up housing opportunities to those who have a local connection to this area.

5. Allocation and letting

- The properties will be advertised through Kent HomeChoice and allocated in accordance with the Nominations Agreement concluded between the parties (Orbit South, Sevenoaks District Council and the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Manager) on 8 December 2014 and the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy (SDHRAP). Following the ranking (Banding) of applicants under the SDHRAP, priority will be given to applicants with a local connection to the Parish of Dunton Green.
- A local connection will be established if an applicant has: lived in the Parish continuously for the last 3 years; or 5 out of the last 10 years; or has been a member of a household currently living in the Parish where said household has been living in the Parish for at least 10 years continuous; or is in full time employment within the Parish and their main place of work is within the Parish or needs to move to take up said employment and their main place of work will be within the Parish.
- All applicants will be given Affordable 5 year Fixed Term tenancies when accepting a property.
- The Units will be advertised at Affordable Rent Levels.
- Promote and create a sustainable community within a mixed tenure environment by aiming to achieve a mix of working and non-working applicants and applicants with children, to be of varying age ranges
- Exclude households who have reports of, or have faced legal action for anti social behaviour in the last 3 years, for example this could include any related drug, alcohol, substance misuse or any other behaviour resulting in criminal convictions.
- Minimise the need for management transfers by allocating properties to accommodate existing family growth.

6. Age distribution and child density

In line with the aims of the Kent Sustainable Communities Protocol, we wish to ensure that the development has a mixture of residents reflecting the local community and minimising the adverse impact that a lack of variety may cause.

- **3 x One bedroom ground floor flats** advertised as 1 – 2 people. Preference will be given to single people or couples who are under occupying their current social rented home.
- **3 x One bedroom 1st floor flats** advertised as 1 – 2 people. Preference will be given to single people or couples who are under occupying their current social rented home and who are economically active or on a low income.
- **3 x One bedroom 2nd floor flats** advertised as 1 – 2 people. Preference will be given to single people or couples who are under occupying their current social rented home and who are economically active or on a low income.
- **2 x Two bedroom ground floor flats** advertised as 2 – 4 people. Preference will be given to couples or families who are under occupying their current social rented home. For families preference will be given to those with a child or children under 10 years.
- **3 x Two bedroom 1st floor flats** advertised as 2 – 4 persons. Preference will be given to couples or families who are under occupying their current social rented home. Families must have at least one child.
- **1 x Two bedroom 2nd floor flat** advertised as 2 – 4 persons. Preference will be given to couples or families who are under occupying their current social rented home. Families must have at least one child over 10 years.

7. Household composition

In order to create a stable community, the lettings plan will aim to ensure that households who move into the properties will be able to remain there for at least five years in line with the Localism Act. This will be achieved by aiming for a proportion of the homes not to be allocated to the maximum number of residents (i.e. 2-3 people rather than 2-4 people) and aim for applicants with children that are sharing a bedroom, to be of appropriate ages to allow the family to remain in their property for five years where possible.

The ages of children will also be considered to ensure an appropriate mix of younger and older children to maintain child density and to minimise anti-social behaviour on the development. Family make up will also be taken into account and properties will be offered to couples, single parent families and households from mixed income sources.

8. Households with Disabilities

No adaptations can be made due to the restraints put in place during the property defects period (first year from date of completion).

9. ASB and Tenancy Breaches

- Applicants and members of the household will not be the perpetrators of serious and/or ongoing nuisance or anti-social behaviour at their current home, nor had any legal action as a result of nuisance or anti-social behaviour taken against them including a Notice of Seeking Possession.
- Applicants and members of the household will not be connected to any activity in the use or supply of drugs or any alcohol or substance misuse
- Applicants will not have been evicted for nuisance or anti social behaviour from any previous addresses. Discretion may be exercised if the applicant can show that they have over a period of not less than 3 years rectified their behaviour.
- Applicants and members of the household will not have a recent criminal conviction which will impact upon the management of the tenancy or the local community. (Applicants and members of the household with recent criminal convictions will have their circumstances discussed in partnership with Orbit South).
- Applicants will not be in rent arrears for their current home where a Notice of Seeking possession has been served. If arrears are because of a delay in Housing Benefit such that a Housing Benefit payment is owing equivalent to the whole of the arrears, applicants will need to show this is the case and that they have dealt with their claim appropriately and are paying any estimated contributions (e.g. non-dependent deductions) regularly.
- Applicants will not have been evicted for rent arrears from a previous home.
- Applicants will not have been previously evicted from a housing association or local authority (Council) property.
- Applicants will not have any outstanding or current tenancy notice for any breaches of tenancy.

10. Other Criteria

- No adaptations can be made during the property defects period (first year from date of completion).
- We will not house applicants who own their own homes or a property elsewhere, unless there is proof of sale or if the property is unsuitable due the applicant's disability issues.
- For reasons of community stability, we will aim to have 50% of tenants in employment.
- We will only house applicants who have been assessed as vulnerable i.e. persons with mental health issues or a learning disability, if they have an appropriate support package in place. An applicant may be excluded if they seem unlikely to be able to meet the conditions of general needs dwelling without additional support and we are unable to determine that appropriate support is available and in place at the time of letting.

11. Monitoring of Lettings Plan

Orbit South Housing Association and Sevenoaks District Council will monitor the impact of this lettings plan to demonstrate that it does not discriminate, directly or indirectly on any equality grounds.

12. Role of Sevenoaks District Council

- Monitor the local lettings plan on an annual basis to ensure it remains equitable.
- Assist in the verification of an applicant's local connection to Dunton Green Parish where a residency connection is claimed.

13. Role of Orbit South

- Advertise properties via Choice Based Lettings and ensure shortlists are validated by the Sevenoaks District Housing Register Manager.
- Co-ordinate the development of the lettings plan.
- Advise Sevenoaks District Council and/or West Kent Housing Association on names of successful applicants.
- Monitor the local lettings plan on an annual basis to ensure it remains viable.

Signed by:



Name:

... Catherine Charles.....
For Orbit South

Date... 10 August 2015.....

Signed by:



Name:

PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING + HEALTH
For Sevenoaks District Council

Date... 14/08/15.....

