

Local Lettings Policy for Lockleaze Affordable Housing Developments

Context

The policy below has been developed with the following principles in mind:

- 1) **Administrative simplicity** – to minimise the need to update and change the policy for every new development in Lockleaze, the wording has been kept generic with no direct reference to any specific development. Site-specific commentary about the intentions underpinning each separate development should be publicised on that specific development’s website and could potentially be included in some form when the associated units are made available to the public.
- 2) The **definition of the boundaries** of ‘Lockleaze’ are agreed as the [Ward boundary](#) as commonly accepted for Voting purposes.

In terms of data analysis performed to inform this policy, the Postal Code BS7 was used to derive supporting Housing Register data although this may differ slightly from the ward boundaries as shown on a map.

- 3) The **process to secure approval to implement** this policy required that
 - a. an Equality Impact Assessment be performed to evaluate the potential impact of our internal and external policies, procedures, activities and decisions on equality communities and make sure we meet our legal duties as defined by the Public Sector Equality Duty.
 - b. It be circulated for comment by the WoE Housing Partnership.
 - c. It be presented to and approved by the applicable forum as dictated by BCC decision pathways.

These have been followed and fulfilled.

Local Lettings Policy for Lockleaze Social and Affordable Housing Developments

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Bristol City Council (BCC) is committed to the creation of a mixed and balanced community within Lockleaze through new build affordable homes.
- 1.2. *(General undertaking)* From 2020, a number of development projects are to be undertaken with the intention of delivering a significant number of affordable homes within the Lockleaze area over the next 10+ years
- 1.3. *(Specific undertaking)* In line with BCC strategy this policy is intended to further support Community Led Housing initiatives which we believe are vital to meeting the needs of the city. These particularly intend to deliver true benefit for the local community, a specific group of people (an intentional community), or both.
- 1.4. *(Definition of Lockleaze)* The boundary for this policy is the same as Lockleaze ward boundary.
- 1.5. *(Development approach)* This policy has been developed through a process of consultation and community engagement undertaken in conjunction with Lockleaze Neighborhood Trust and Lockleaze Planning Group.
- 1.6. *(Contextual overview)* Whilst BCC recognises the needs, priorities and ambitions of the Lockleaze community, it also recognises the pressures and demands on social and affordable housing throughout the city. This Policy will supplement the existing Bristol Housing Allocations Policy to ensure homes are allocated in a fair and transparent manner.

Only applicants who are already on the Housing Register and deemed to be in Housing Need AND who meet the required eligibility criteria in this Policy will be considered under the Local Lettings Policy.

- 1.7. *(Application boundary)* The Local Lettings Policy may only be applied where the properties concerned are to be let by means of the Lettings System in use by the Bristol City Council (Currently Home Choice Bristol) i.e. social housing.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. 50% of new social and affordable rented properties within each of the developments being undertaken within Lockleaze will be allocated to applicants that meet the criteria set out in this document.
- 2.2. In the case of Community led Housing developments 100% of the new social and affordable units will be allocated in line with the Local Lettings Policy where this is possible, and in line with the relevant development's Lettings Plan where this exists.

- 2.3. This policy shall be applied for first let of all new build social and affordable housing and, in cases of turnover of tenancy, for an initial duration of 12 months from the date of first allocation using the policy. Subsequent extension of the LLP shall be contingent on the findings of the Annual Review.
- 2.4. In the case of CLH developments the Local Letting Policy will apply in perpetuity or until such time as it is renegotiated, as the protection of the benefits of CLH in perpetuity is one of the principle tenets of such developments.
- 2.5. Bristol City Council (BCC) recognises a strong desire for properties freed up by tenants moving to new build social and affordable housing within Lockleaze by virtue of this policy to be allocated in a way that benefits the local community, however this has to be done with recognition of wider housing need.

The policy will therefore cover all new social and affordable homes and developments built within Lockleaze and will also cover the first let of Bristol City Council properties vacated by residents moving to new build properties where the vacated BCC property has 3+ bedrooms.

Rationale below based on Dec 2020 data extract.

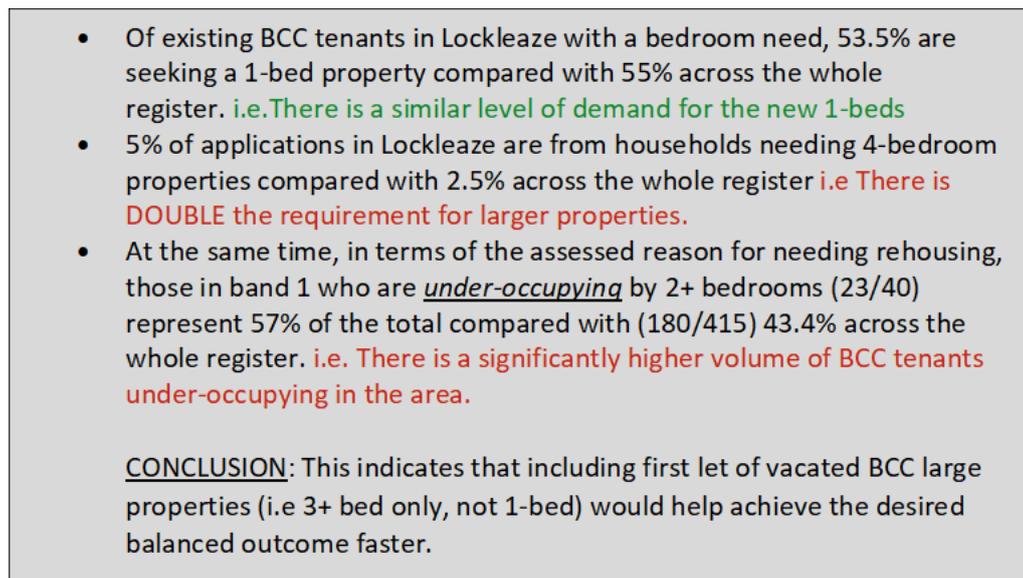


Figure 1: Data at point of LLP initiation

NOTE: This provision will be removed after the annual review should it be demonstrated by BCC data that the above disparity no longer exists.

- 2.6. Should this process fail to select a suitable candidate, the property will be allocated according to the current Bristol Housing Allocations Policy.
- 2.7. This policy will be enacted once the first new build property or site is built ready for allocation and occupancy and will be applied per development. The process of application, shortlisting and allocation in line with the Policy may commence up to 16

weeks (4 months) prior to occupancy in order to enable a degree of consultation with prospective occupants. Individual timeline to be agreed per development up to the limit stated. Should there be a significant delay in the subsequent delivery of a development (more than 2 months), then we may consider withdrawing bids without any negative impact on their housing application.

3. Aims and Objectives

The aim of the policy is to:

- 3.1. Provide clear guidance to Bristol City Council, housing provider partners, existing Lockleaze residents and citizens of Bristol how the new homes built within Lockleaze will be allocated and monitored.
- 3.2. Ensure that value created by the development is retained within the neighbourhood by prioritising local residents in housing need, and people with a strong connections to Lockleaze.
- 3.3. To address current challenges in the provision of homes for both growing families and those who are downsizing to enable movement within the area as residents' needs change over time.

4. Eligibility Criteria

- 4.1. Applicants must be on the Bristol Housing Register and any offers made to applicants meeting the criteria below will be given to the applicants in the highest housing need. The normal Bristol Housing Allocation policy criteria regarding the number of reasonable offers rejected will apply.
- 4.2. Priority will be given to residents who meet at least one of the following criteria to successfully demonstrate a need or connection to live within Lockleaze.
 - 4.2..1. Applicants who are currently living within Lockleaze and have 2 years of more continuous residency with no breaks in their tenancy or residency and/or:
 - 4.2..2. Applicants who can demonstrate that they had 2 years or more of continuous residency with no breaks in their tenancy or residency in Lockleaze no more than 2 years prior to their application, and/or
 - 4.2..3. Applicants employed within Lockleaze for at least 2 years. (Min 16hpw)
 - 4.2..4. Applicants of no fixed abode, or living in Temporary or Supported Housing, whose previous address was in Lockleaze and who can demonstrate 2 years' continuous residency in Lockleaze.

- 4.3. Should an applicant not be found who matches the above criteria, the allocation of the property will revert back to the Bristol Housing Allocation Policy.
- 4.4. There will be flexibility in the allocation of properties to allow Landlords to make best use of stock and so direct away from this policy in cases of strategic interest where direct offers may be used as per LAT and Direct offer policies. *(Examples of such cases include major repairs/ adaptations/ special-guardianship needs that would logically take priority over less urgent requirements.)*

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. Landlords of the respective developments will be responsible for the allocation of properties.
- 5.2. BCC Housing Options will be responsible for assessing rehousing applications and agreeing the banding of an applicant.
- 5.3. BCC Housing Options will carry out allocations audits after each scheme / development has been successfully allocated. Outcomes and anonymised data regarding the successful applicants will be shared with the Lockleaze Neighborhood Trust (LNT) in accordance with [The Data Protection Act 1998](#) and BCC's own data protection protocols.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1. This Policy will be reviewed every twelve months following the first allocation using this policy.
- 6.2. Landlords may also monitor the effects of the policy separately to ensure that it is fair and that the criteria are still appropriate and fit for purpose. Any such concerns to be raised during the annual review.
- 6.3. The Annual Review will base decision-making on fact-based evidence as much as possible and is detailed in APPENDIX A
- 6.4. In the event that the 2021/2022 review of the current Bristol Housing Allocations Policy determines a more comprehensive approach to Local Lettings Policies, the implications of such changes on this particular policy will be discussed and integrated as part of the first Annual Review.

APPENDIX A: ANNUAL REVIEW

The Purpose

Objectives of the Annual Review of the Local Lettings Policy are:

- to assess the extent to which its objectives are being fulfilled,
- to address any issues that may have emerged during the previous 12 months,
- to assess whether there are grounds on which the continued application of the policy on developments where the first let has been completed may be warranted,
- similarly, to assess whether the continued application of the policy on the first let of vacated 3+ bed BCC properties being vacated by residents moving to new build social and affordable properties may be justified
- to decide whether the continued application of the policy for current and future planned new build developments is justified
- to propose amendments that may be required to address any of the above.

The Forum

The Forum for the Annual Review shall comprise:

- The BCC Cabinet Member for Housing or their designated nominee.
- The Manager of the Department responsible for the Bristol Housing Allocations Policy (Currently Andrew Corp)
- The Bristol City Council Lettings Manager (Currently Joanne Marchant)
- Up to four representatives from the Lockleaze Neighborhood Trust and / or Community Representatives
- Representatives of the Providers responsible for applying the Local Lettings Policy in Lockleaze. (For example, the Lettings Managers of these organisations)
- Representatives of Community Led Housing Developments responsible for applying the Local Lettings Policy in Lockleaze (For example, XYZ)
- The person/s responsible for the ongoing management and maintenance of the Local Lettings Policy
- BCC Minute Taker

The Input

Inputs to the Annual Review will include at least the following with additional input being supplied where this is deemed to be relevant to the attainment of objectives or to issues being raised:

- Reporting of allocations made using the policy since inception / since the last review
- Reporting of any issues identified in applying the policy or as a result of applying the policy (e.g. complaints)
- The most recent housing register statistics available against the BS7 postal code (or another way of localising the data specifically to Lockleaze should this become available in the interim)
- Information regarding any changes made or proposed to the over-arching Bristol Housing Allocation Policy that might affect or impact on the Local Lettings Policy

The Process

Timing: Annually from date of first let using this policy

Venue: TBA : Currently online

Agenda:

Report back on Lettings in line with the policy

Issues Raised

As per inputs above

Chair: Housing Supply Manager

Decision-making: Dependent on the issues / proposals raised. Proposed amendments may require EQIA / HSLT or other involvement.

BCC will raise awareness internally ahead of the review:

- HSLT - with a view to expediting any decisioning process that may be required.
- Other to be agreed at the time (e.g. Specialist Advisors – with a view to drafting proposed amendments)

Similarly, the Community and Community Lead Housing organisations may need to prepare for any community consultation that may be required as a result of the Review.

As with the development of the original policy the intent is that issues be resolved in a collaborative and mutually respectful manner.