

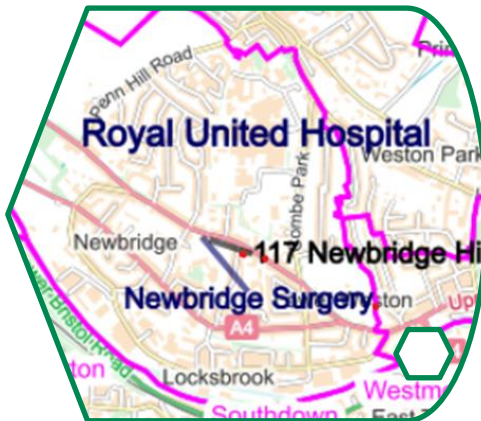


# Housing Services

## Newbridge Hill Local Lettings Policy

Local lettings policies are additional policies made under the allocation scheme, "Homeseach policy". They address housing management issues and public policy concerns that relate to specific locations and developments in Bath & North East Somerset.

# 2022



This policy explains how additional lettings criteria will be used when letting new housing at 117 Newbridge Hill Bath.



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# Housing Services

# Newbridge Hill Local

# Lettings Policy

**This policy explains how and why additional lettings criteria will be used when letting new housing at 117 Newbridge Hill Bath**

# 2022

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# 1 New Housing Development 117 Newbridge Hill

This policy concerns the allocation of newly developed Council Housing at 117 Newbridge Hill in the electoral ward of Newbridge in the City of Bath.

## 2. Local Lettings Policies (LLP's). what they are?

[Section 166A\(6\)\(b\) of the 1996 Housing Act](#) enables housing authorities to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories, provided that overall, the authority is able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of section 166A (3). This is known as a LLP.

The Allocation of Accommodation: Guidance For local authorities (2012, as amended) states that local authorities can use:

‘local lettings policies to ensure that specific properties, or a specified proportion of properties, are allocated to households in particular types of employment where, for example, skills are in short supply.’

The Homesearch Allocation Scheme states:

‘We use local lettings policies (LLP's) to address housing management issues and public policy concerns. Letting criteria will be more restrictive, only applicants who meet the letting criteria will be entitled to bid for the properties. We will not permit these schemes to dominate the overall letting scheme, and decisions to allow a scheme will be made by the Team Manager, in consultation with the Cabinet Member.’

Reasons given in the Homesearch Scheme are as follows

- To create, or protect, balanced and mixed communities
- To meet housing need of a particular cohort
- To create community cohesion on newly developed housing estates
- To tackle low-demand areas or reduce incidents of anti-social behaviour.

There are currently a number of LLP's in operation, these are available to view on the Homesearch website, <https://www.homesearchbathnes.org.uk> . Policies need to be supported by evidence/neighbourhood profile, set objectives, timescales, consider monitoring and review as well as a review of equalities considerations.

## 3 Neighbourhood and Property Profile

Newbridge is a residential ward on the western edge of the city of Bath. There is an industrial area in the South which borders the River Avon. The property is located between the Combe Park and Newbridge area of the ward, with the City's major hospital (Royal United Hospital) situated in the north-east bordering Weston and Lansdown. There is good access to health care



- The development provides seven flats across four floors of the property, there is no lift in this 19<sup>th</sup> century conversion. There is considerable variation between the size and layout of the flats. The lower floor flats have higher ceilings and larger plan areas. Flats on the first and second floor flats are smaller.
- There are two, two-bed flats and five one-bed flats. These are all general needs.
- Three flats have exclusive outdoor areas. There is dedicated parking for each flat to the rear of the building, each with charge points for electric vehicles.
- There will be communal services provided to tenants, including ground maintenance, external lighting, cleaning of communal areas, and accessible windows.

## **4. Rationale for using LLP / Objectives**

### **Health Workers Working in the Newbridge ward**

The policy seeks to “Meet the housing need of a particular cohort”, specifically Health Service workers working in the area. The area of Newbridge contains Royal United Hospital (RUH) to the North of the new housing as well as a substantial health centre next to the Newbridge Hill development. Information obtained, including from the National Census and the Royal United Hospital shows that employment in the National Health Service is dominant in this area, employing over 4,800 staff on the RUH site.

Our data from the RUH shows that there is a very high demand for housing from lower income NHS workers in the area, and that there is actually very little social housing within the Newbridge ward. To meet this demand for housing and to assist the local health authority to engage staff, the properties will initially be targeted towards NHS staff working in the area. Apart from benefiting these keyworker staff who need local housing, there will be wider benefits for the local community. Health Services to the community can be at risk when local staff are not available to fill posts and this policy should, in a small way address this.

A second community benefit is that having local staff will contribute to a reduction in commuting and emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>. The site is very conveniently located next to the Health Centre and the RUH, where walking to work will be a sensible option.

### **Creating Community cohesion**

We recognise the importance of giving preference to people in the most housing need whilst creating balanced and sustainable communities. We also appreciate the length of time some people, who have lower housing need (Group C), have been waiting on the Homesearch Scheme. Newly built developments, in which flats are allocated at the same point in time, need to have regard to these aims and have a balanced approach. Placing too many people with higher level needs in the building could result in the property becoming unsafe and impact negatively on the community. Newbridge Hill is the first new development of Council owned and managed property for over twenty years. Currently the Council are building capacity to manage their own Council Housing, including specialised staff. It is therefore intended that if sufficient Health Service staff are not identified for the accommodation, then applicants with lower priority need will be considered.



This is likely to identify applicants who will have lower Housing Management needs and require less interventions by staff. The table to the rear of this document shows that last year, only 24% of lettings went to group C applicants. Seven properties out of a predicted annual allocation of five to six hundred lettings is not disproportionate will not dominate the allocation scheme, and will be an opportunity for applicants in group C.

We will consider people across the Grouping Structure and may decide to allocate to people not in the reasonable preference categories. Priority will be given to health professionals who meet the objectives laid out in this policy. In the unlikely event, there is insufficient interest, then applicants with lower housing need who have the earliest effective date will be considered, in accordance with Homeseach Scheme. People who have a history of antisocial behaviour, evicted or received warnings for breach of their occupancy agreement or have displayed threatening, violent or otherwise unreasonable behaviour within the last two years will be considered to be unsuitable for these properties.

## **5. What we will do**

- The properties will initially be marketed with the additional lettings criteria, To be initially eligible for these properties, you will need to be, National Health Service Staff working in the electoral ward of Newbridge. For the purposes of this policy, these individuals will be defined as ‘key workers’.
- If we do not identify suitable National Health Service staff, we will then re-market the properties on Homeseach, for applicants in Group C only.
- If we identify other NHS staff working in the Newbridge ward if the properties are re-marketed to group C applicants, if they are deemed suitable tenants, we will give them priority above other non-NHS staff in group C.

## **6. How we will do this**

- All prospective tenants will be assessed to consider their suitability to be a tenant in the new development. This assessment will include affordability, previous history of successful tenancies and behavioural issues.
- All the properties in the new development will be marketed through the Homeseach website, for a minimum of two weeks
- Initially properties will be marked with the additional criteria, For Key workers, to be eligible for these properties, you will need to be, National Health Service Staff working in the electoral ward of Newbridge.
- Applicants who are working for the NHS in the district\* will then be prioritised by group, A/B/C and by waiting time in accordance with Homeseach Scheme.
- If we are not able to identify sufficient NHS staff to take up these properties, then the properties will be marketed again on the Homeseach website specifically to group C only.
- If on this second marketing of the properties further NHS staff working in the Newbridge area are identified, they will still be given priority over those who do not.

- Again, those interested in the tenancies in Group C, will be considered in effective date order as per the Homesearch Policy.

\*NHS staff working in the area. To meet these additional lettings criteria, we would expect applicants to be in substantial, paid, permanent employment for the National Health Service, and that the employment takes place substantially within the ward of Newbridge.

## **7. Timescales & Monitoring**

The Plan will commence October 2022 and apply to all initial and subsequent lets. The plan will be reviewed annually, commencing a year after the first lets are made. The review will consider all information on selection outcomes including information on applicants who were unsuccessful. The review will be carried out by Housing Services but will incorporate the views of another independent BANES Housing Agency. We will monitor the outcomes of this lettings plan and the impact on groups/characteristics.

## **8. Equalities & Equality Impact Assessment**

All applicants will be considered individually. Housing Services will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and provide evidence for the reason for refusing accommodation to an applicant.

An Equalities Impact assessment has been carried to consider the impact of the policy.

Except for the additional lettings criteria laid out in this Local Letting Plans, Housing Services will comply with the Homesearch Allocation Scheme.

Housing Services will ensure that this scheme does not dominate the Homesearch Allocation Scheme and that overall, the scheme gives reasonable preference to those in the statutory reasonable preference category.

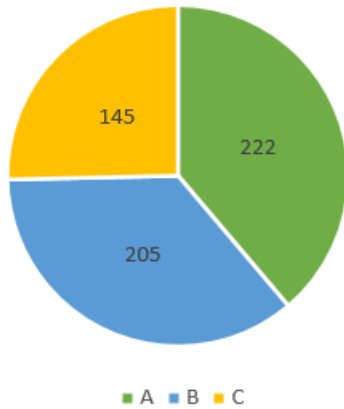
## **Allocations 2021-2**

The table below shows the split of allocations between the three priority bands, A, B, C for 2021-2022. During the year, there were a total of 572 applicants rehoused. Groups A and B are applicants who were awarded reasonable preference, the table is showing that for this year, 74% of applicants housed through Homesearch had reasonable preference.



Allocations by Group 2021

Total: 572 pa



<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	
An EIA has been undertaken.	
<b>Name and role of Officers completing the EIA</b>	Mike Chedzoy Tom Hugo
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2022