

THURROCK COUNCIL

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN

**First lets for new Council
properties built within existing
Thurrock Council housing estates**

1.Introduction

This local lettings plan sets out the criteria to be followed when allocating all newly developed Council properties as infill within existing Thurrock Council housing estates.

It only applies to first lets – all subsequent lets will be made in line with the Council's usual allocations process.

2.Objective

The objective of this local lettings plan is to maintain balanced and sustainable communities. This is particularly relevant to sites where the development is part of a rededication of the land, in contrast to a completely new development on previously unbuilt or brown field sites. Inserting new developments with a concentration of properties can destabilise a community and therefore it is important to ensure that a high number of the new tenants are already part of the community.

3. Allocation

3.1.Properties

75% of the properties within the new development will be allocated in line with section 3.2

25% of the properties within the new development will be allocated in line with the Council's usual allocations process.

3.2.Qualification

Tenants will only qualify for the 75% allocation if they meet all of the criteria in A,B,C and D

- A. Tenants must hold a current Thurrock Council secure tenancy – introductory and demoted tenants will not be eligible

AND

- B. Tenants must meet Thurrock Council's criteria for joining the housing transfer list as laid out in the Housing Allocations scheme:

- Tenants with rent arrears or other outstanding housing related charges (such as re-charges for previous works) will not be eligible
- Where a tenant has breached their tenancy agreement, or has otherwise managed their tenancy in an unacceptable manner, they will not be eligible

AND

C. Tenants must live in a property, rented to them by Thurrock Council, which is situated within the designated boundary of the scheme

AND

D. Tenants must pass a transfer inspection of their current property

3.3. The designated boundary

The designated boundary described in 3.2 will vary from scheme to scheme and will be agreed by the Director of the Housing Service

3.4. Prioritising applicants for the 75% quota

All tenants who wish to be considered for the 75% quota will be required to register their interest in the scheme. Details for registering an interest will be widely advertised

The allocations team will assess the following in line with the housing allocations scheme and allocate the properties accordingly, outside of the usual Choice Based Lettings (CBL) process:

- Size and type of property needed by the household
- Number of bedrooms required in line with the bedroom standard
- Any mobility or adaptation needs
- Any age criteria that applies

Where there are more tenants expressing an interest than properties available, tenants will be prioritised according to the amount of time they have lived consistently within the designated boundary.

Where a tenant has been living at more than one property within the designated boundary, the combined time will count, provided they have lived within the designated boundary continuously leading up to their current tenancy.

For example:

- A tenant, who had lived in property A within the designated boundary for 10 years and then moved to their current property B within the designated boundary 5 years ago, will have a combined time of 15 years.
- A tenant, who has lived in property C within the designated boundary for 30 years, and then moved to property D outside of the designated boundary for 3 years, and then moved back to their current property within the designated boundary for 2 years, will have a combined time of 35 years.

However, where the development is specifically designed for older people and/or those with disabilities or dementia, prioritising applicants for the 75% quota would be undertaken by the Extra Care panel (consisting of both housing and social care professionals) that would assess each case and determine which has the higher need for the accommodation.

3.5. Property quotas

- 75% of first lettings will be for current Thurrock Council tenants, who meet the criteria in 3.1 and 3.2
- The remaining 25% of first lettings will be allocated via the Councils Housing allocations scheme in line with the usual processes i.e. through Thurrock Choice Homes (TCH)
- A mixture of property sizes and floor levels will be made available for each group.
- Properties will be allocated to households who have a need for the number of bedrooms provided, as determined by the Housing Allocations schemes' bedroom standard.
- These provisions only apply to the first lettings.

3.6. Miscellaneous

Where there would be a joint tenancy and only one tenant meets the age criteria the Allocations team would determine whether or not a joint tenancy could be issued, taking into account factors such as the age difference, disabilities, etc.

Where applicants are downsizing from a larger Council property the current rules regarding downsizing incentives would apply.

4. Monitoring

When a new development of Council properties within an existing estate is identified they will form the list of applicable properties which qualify for the local lettings plan.

Where a new development has properties which have been specifically adapted for residents with disabilities, these will be allocated outside of the local lettings plan via the Councils' usual allocations process, in order to ensure that such properties are matched to those with a disability and need for adaptations.

The local lettings plan will only be used for first lettings; any subsequent re-lettings will be made through the Councils Housing allocations procedures.

Notification of how properties have been allocated will be provided via the Councils usual scheme of notification via the Choice based lettings process.