



**PEAKS & PLAINS**  
Housing Trust

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# The Trust

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## Local Lettings Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of the Local Letting Policy (LLP) is to allow the Trust to use the allocation process to influence the mix of new households entering a community, to create balanced and sustainable communities.
- 1.2. The Trust has the ability to create LLPs as outlined in the prevailing Allocation Policies of the local authority areas within which we operate. The Trust will only use LLPs in limited circumstances and in consultation with tenants and residents and the local authority.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. Within the Choice Based Lettings scheme, applicants for housing are banded according to the Government's 'reasonable preference categories, which ensure priority is given to those in the greatest housing need.
- 2.2. In order to address specific local housing issues, Peaks and Plains Housing Trust is permitted, however, to develop 'Local Lettings Policies' where additional application and allocation criteria may be applied.

## 3. LEGAL & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1. The Trust's policies and procedures have been designed in line with all current and relevant legislation, which includes:
  - Housing Act 1996
  - Homelessness Act 2003
  - Localism Act 2011
  - Welfare Reform Act 2012
  - The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing In England 2012
  - Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2. The application of this Policy also ensures compliance with the outcomes of the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England, responsibility of the Regulator for Social Housing as outlined below:
  - Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:
    - make the best use of available housing and are compatible with the purpose of the housing.
    - contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities.
- 3.3. We will ensure that any local lettings plan reasonably balances the competing demands of local housing need and desire to address the specific issues on an estate or neighbourhood locality in discussion with the Local Authority. Local lettings policies will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the initial aims.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. A Local Lettings Plan is a set of guidelines and/or criteria governing which households can be allocated accommodation in a specific designated area.
- 4.2. A Local Lettings Plan will be considered by the relevant authority before being applied to properties advertised through the choice-based lettings system.

## 5. OUR POLICY

- 5.1. Peaks and Plains Housing trust may choose to apply a Local Lettings Policy within a specific geographical region, estate, block or across a specific housing type e.g. sheltered housing, with the objective of:
- Creating balanced and mixed communities, including tackling areas of high unemployment, and developing a community of mixed tenure, where possible;
  - Protecting existing stable communities;
  - Reducing void rates and tenancy turnovers;
  - Managing cost of void property and high turnover;
  - Improving community stability and cohesion;
  - Tackling low-demand areas and difficult-to-let estates;
  - Reducing incidents of ASB;
  - Preventing future problems occurring on newly developed estates or in relation to recently modernised properties.
- 5.2. Additional lettings criteria, which may be applied to members of the applicant's household include:
- Priority given to households who can demonstrate community contribution e.g. volunteering, active resident involvement;
  - Age related criteria e.g. priority given to applicants ages 55+;
  - Allowing households to under-occupy where affordability has been evidenced;
  - Restricting families to flats below the third floor;
  - Priority given to applicants with no previous record of ASB/ Gun crime etc;
  - Limiting lets to families with/ without children.
- 5.3. For new build schemes, there will be no evidence of community cohesion problems. In the letting of new build properties the Trust will work in partnership with the prevailing local authority and any s.106 requirements.
- 5.4. A Local Lettings Policy may also be appropriate in an area of regeneration.
- 5.5. The Trust's Executive Team will approve LLPs. In considering the merit of applying a LLP to a locality detail of the reasons the LLP will be set out, e.g. incidence of anti-social behaviour, customer satisfaction and tenancy sustainment.
- 5.6. Following approval by the Executive Team, this will be sent for consideration by the Local Authority before being applied.

- 5.7. The Trust will review all of the LLPs in operation at least annually. As part of the request for an LLP a timeframe for it to be in place will be agreed.
- 5.8. The Trust recognises that the application of a LLP can provide a mechanism to allow greater flexibility in the allocation process. However by its very design in promoting one group of applicants it will reduce priority to other groups of applicants.  
*N.B reduced priority applicant may still be successful if no bids from higher priority applicants are received.*
- 5.9. The criteria for allocation will be made available on all choice based lettings adverts to ensure transparency between customer, Local Authority and The Trust.

## 6. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- 6.1. The Trust will monitor the impact of LLPs to ensure that applicants obtaining affordable housing are from households in housing need through monitoring the Band priority of successful applicants.
- 6.2. Unsuccessful applicants will be given advice and support to apply for accommodation for which they are eligible.
- 6.3. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this Policy.

## 7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1. Requests for consideration of a Local Lettings Policy may come from different sources including, but not limited to:
- Support and Enforcement Team
  - Neighbourhood Team
  - As the result of a review of complaints
  - Section 106 Agreement
  - Regeneration Planning
  - An agency such as the Police.
- 7.2. They will be discussed with the Neighbourhood Manager and the Head of Neighbourhoods and a report compiled to support the request.
- 7.3. A Local Lettings Plan will be reviewed by the Executive Team, and a report will be provided to them by the Head of Neighbourhoods. Information for the report will come from different sources including the Trusts housing management system, data from the local authority and other supporting agencies. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed with each LLP.
- 7.3.1. The Head of Neighbourhoods will ensure that all staff involved in the implementation of this policy and its related procedures are aware of their responsibilities.
- 7.4. Any LLP will be reviewed by the relevant Local Authority before being implemented and annually (where relevant) to ensure that tenant selection is fair, and need is still being met.

7.5. Any LLP in place will be reported to Board at least annually in the Annual Allocations Report.

## 8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1. The Trust Executive management team will receive information on the operation of local lettings schemes and report to Board if appropriate to do so in annual allocations reports.

## 9. CONSULTATION

9.1. The Trust will consult with tenants and residents in the development of this policy and its implementation.

9.2. Peaks and Plains has consulted on the Local Lettings Policy and the attached Equality Impact Assessment with Challenge Group members in November 2023.

## 10. REVIEW

10.1. This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The policy will be reviewed sooner if there are major legal, regulatory or other changes that make this necessary.

## 11. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- 11.1.
- Allocation Policy in conjunction with:
    - Cheshire Home choice allocation Policy and Procedure
    - West Cheshire Homes allocations policy
    - High Peak Home Options
  - Tenancy Policy
  - Equality and Diversity Policy
  - Allocations Policy
  - Allocations Procedure
  - Empty Property Policy

## POLICY INFORMATION

Policy Name:	Local Lettings Policy
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Approved by:	Executive Management Team
Drafted By:	Neighbourhoods Manager
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