

Local Lettings Policy for Springfield, Thatto Heath **December 2022**

1. Introduction

This Local lettings policy for Springfield covers the allocation of 30 properties at a new development to be built on the site at Springfield, Thatto Heath.

The scheme will consist of:

- 14 x two bedroom houses
- 10 x three bedroom houses
- 5 x two bedroom bungalows
- 1 x three bedroom bungalow

This policy will run from handover scheduled for December 2022 until December 2023. A review of the Policy will be held after twelve months in consultation with St Helens Borough Council and local residents.

The purpose of this Policy is to balance the requirement to re-house people in housing need with the requirement to ensure appropriate use of the scarce type of bungalow accommodation within the borough. By establishing a "Local lettings policy" Torus will seek to maximise the use of this type of accommodation.

2. Background

The Homelessness Act 2002 enabled housing authorities to introduce flexibility into their letting policies. Local Lettings Policies were introduced as a targeted approach to implement additional flexibility to existing Choice Based Lettings Schemes which cover wider geographical areas and a range of differing estates. Local Lettings Policies enable properties to be allocated to applicants meeting the particular needs of an area. Addressing specific shortfalls at a neighbourhood level helps build and sustain balanced communities bringing them up to a similar level of other similar neighbourhoods.

With this local lettings policy, we aim to identify tenants who will settle and contribute to the local community both socially and economically. The LLP takes into account the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation where St Helens is ranked as 40th most deprived area out of 317 local authorities in the country. Thatto Heath was ranked within the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. In order to improve the position with regards to deprivation, and economic deprivation in particular we are proposing a percentage of properties are allocated to those applicants who are working or in education/training whilst the majority are allocated to those in most need. This should hopefully bring increased economic activity to the area and increase aspirations of local residents.

3. Allocations

Allocations for the houses will be made using St Helens Borough Councils choice based letting scheme "Under One Roof".

Allocations for the bungalows will be made using a panel approach – see Appendix for eligibility criteria.

4. Priority for re housing

Torus will give priority to the following groups:

Houses

40% will be allocated to applicants who are in full or part time paid employment or full time education/ training where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay the rent. This will aim to improve the position with regards to deprivation, and economic deprivation in particular we are proposing a percentage of properties are allocated to those applicants who are working or in education/training whilst the majority are allocated to those in most need. This should hopefully bring increased economic activity to the area and increase aspirations of local residents.

60% will be allocated to applicants who are not in employment

Bungalows

See Appendix for eligibility criteria. The eligibility criteria will be implemented however exceptional cases and circumstances may be raised at the panel and considered for rehousing.

And who also have a local connection to Thatto Heath in the first instance.

Applicants with a local connection to St Helens will be considered next and then those without any local connection will be considered once the lists with a local connection has been exhausted

Local connection will be defined as applying to applicants who fall into the following categories:

- The applicant has resided in Thatto Heath / St Helens by choice for at least 3 of the last 5 years.
- The applicant or their family has settled employment in Thatto Heath / St Helens (e.g. employed for more than six months).
- Has close family relatives (e.g. parents or children) who currently reside in Thatto Heath / St Helens
- Has special circumstances that gives rise to a local connection e.g. provides or receives care and support to or from someone within Thatto Heath / St Helens.

5. Process

- At the point of lettings all applicants must have provided all proofs required and requested, or their expression of interest will not be considered.
- Applicants will also be required to undergo checks in relation to how they have managed previous tenancies and if any action has been taken for Anti-Social Behaviour. Any applicant who has had an unsuccessful tenancy previously or had action taken for anti-social behaviour may not be considered for a property on this development

6. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed after 12 months to ensure it meets the needs of the following:

- Residents living on the new development sites
- Savings to aids and adaptations in respect of bungalow allocations
- Surrounding Community
- Best practice and legislation
- The housing market in St Helens
- St Helens Borough Council's strategic housing needs.

7. Allocation policy

All other aspects of the allocation process will be carried out in accordance with Housing Allocation Policy

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