

LOCAL LETTINGS PLANS

This document has been put together to balance the issues of sustainability within the City whilst at the same time provide for transparency within the Choice Based Lettings system, Derby Homefinder.

To achieve long-term sustainability and achieve all of the key performance indicators Derby Homes must strive to achieve a well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.

To achieve the longer term objectives Derby Homes and Derby City Council must first address the current issues on estates within the City. The Best Value Review of Front Line Housing Services and Sustainable Estates identified three key estates within the City where low demand and sustainability must be addressed as a priority. These estates are Osmaston, Cowsley and Old Sinfyn.

Following the city-wide implementation of Derby Homefinder the definition of low demand has now become questionable. When advertised, properties in all areas of the City are generating interest. However, closer scrutiny reveals that many applicants are either unsuitable in terms of balancing the community or are not interested due to the fact that the interest has been lodged on their behalf (homeless).

Local lettings plans attempt to strike a balance between ensuring vulnerable applicants are assisted and the need for the stability that other families with less social need can bring to the community.

COWSLEY/OSMASTON/OLD SINFIN

These estates suffer from poor reputation within the City. Traditionally applicants have not indicated these amongst their preferred areas of choice and therefore the demographic make-up of the area tends to consist of low-income, high-dependancy groups. Crime and fear of crime on the estates is high in general terms when compared with the rest of the City.

Partnership working on these estates has started to improve the situation, however, this work must be allowed to continue to generate any hope of long term sustainability to ensure we prevent the repetition of serious problems in the longer term. Through sensitive lettings we have started to turn things around,

new tenants are now remaining in their homes for longer, abandonment has reduced as has the levels of criminal activity within the wider area.

The local lettings plans must be viewed in the wider sense of planning out crime at the heart of the problem this fits in with wider corporate strategies enveloped within the Derby City Partnership, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and New Deal for Communities action plans.

HOTSPOTS

As well at the above named estates there are 'hotspots' across the City which from time to time may require 'temporary' lettings plans.

NEW INITIATIVES

Derby Homes have now commenced management agreements with other landlords within the City. Where the management of new property is taken over by Derby Homes there will very often be associated management problems that need to be addressed. Where there are high numbers of void properties the initial allocation of these properties will be subject to a local lettings plan that will aim to achieve the long-term sustainability if the immediate and wider area.

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN FOR OSMASTON/COWSLEY/OLD SINFIN

- Where there is sufficient reason to believe that an individual (household) may have a negative effect on community stability Derby Homes will seek references as to the suitability of that individual (household). References will come from appropriate sources that may include former landlords, partner agencies and existing Derby Homes records.
- Where an applicant has not previously held a tenancy in their own right the applicant will be required to give their agreement to Derby Homes seeking assurance from relevant agencies as to their ability to maintain a tenancy. Floating Support will be offered where it is felt appropriate to enable applicants to secure and maintain a tenancy.
- Young people, and in particular young single females are vulnerable in the above areas if they do not have family support based within the area. Where such support does not exist, or can not be provided through floating support applicants that fall into this category will not be eligible. The definition of young people is classed as persons under the age of 25 years.
- Although the above relates to young single females young males are also vulnerable, in particular where they have not previously held a tenancy in their own right. In cases of young males under the age of 25 who have no experience of sustaining a tenancy any offer of a tenancy will be subject to acceptance of floating support.
- Child density within these areas continues to be an issue, from time to time properties within these areas will be advertised specifically with a view to redress the balance.
- To address socio-economic issues on these estates we will attempt to create a diverse, cohesive and vibrant community by

encouraging occupation by people in employment. For 20% of lettings on these estates we will seek applicants who are currently in stable employment.

- Given these estates are already accepted as being socially less desirable than other areas of the City, no more than 30% of available housing will be offered to homeless applicants. Homeless applicants should not be forced to live in lesser demand areas.

HOTSPOTS

Certain areas of the City, will from time to time give rise for concern. Where this is the case Local Managers will highlight concerns to their Area Manager.

Applications for Hotspots will be authorised by the Area Manager and forwarded to the Housing Options Centre Manager. Reviews will take place on a six-monthly basis at meetings between Derby Homes and Derby City Council.

Current applications are being prepared for –

Brittannia Court

Gerard Street – over 30 years of age and priority given to applicants in employment.

Terry Place/Booth Street

Oak Tree/Elm Tree Avenue