

Introduction

This consultation report is setting out the responses to a proposed Local Lettings Plan for 119 new homes in the Wingspan Development. A Lettings Plan sets out a localised and one-off set of rules for allocating these homes which varies with the Housing Allocation Policy.

Under the current policy, these homes would initially be let to nearby social tenants through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme (NMS) and then through the Housing Register – that is, by applicants Band and then waiting time.

The proposed Lettings Plan has four significant differences: -

- **The homes would only be available to those who are over 55 years old.**
This is the key aspect of the scheme and consultation. As such, this was the most common issue raised in the comments.
- **The homes would not initially be offered to existing tenants within the NMS catchment area but instead offered to existing tenants who are either under-occupying or who need an adapted home.**
The NMS was only mentioned in one of the comments, and that respondent was against the scheme. This is not unexpected as though potential NMS tenants were contacted directly about the Lettings Plan as these tenants have recently had offers of other homes in the development and so are unlikely to be losing out.

As with the existing arrangements, it is proposed that all homes would then be offered through the housing register albeit with the minimum age criteria.
- **Any offers of homes can be refused without penalty unless there are homes remaining after all Band A and B have had an opportunity to bid for them.**
The voluntary nature of the offers was not mentioned in any comments.
One respondent seemed to mistakenly believe that the Council would be forcing older tenants to move to these homes which is not the case.
- **Any homes left after Band A and B have had an opportunity to bid for them will be offered to eligible applicants in Temporary Accommodation as a compulsory direct offer rather than Band C applicants.**
Although many comments and the survey suggested that these homes should be offered to those in Temporary Accommodation, there were no comments on this part of the Lettings Plan.

The consultation

The consultation ran for 6 weeks from Monday 24 February to Monday 7 April 2025. Emails were sent to those who would be affected by the Lettings Plan. This comprised of

- (a) those who were in the NMS catchment area and so would not be offered these homes (40 tenants)
- (b) those who were looking for a home with 1 or 2 bedrooms and in Band A and Band B. Applicants in Band C were not contacted as they would be very unlikely to receive an offer (3,380 applicants).

Respondents were asked for their opinion of the Lettings Plan and two key aspects of the plan.

Appendix B - Consultation Report

- the minimum age that should be applied (with the option of “no minimum age”) and
- which priority groups the homes should be offered to.

Respondents were also asked which age band they were in and their socio-economic status. However, due to an administrative error, they were not asked other demographics. Consideration was given as to whether the survey should be completed again to capture this information but given the low level of response to the original survey and an anticipated lower response from a second survey, it was felt that inclusion of these questions would be over-sensitive to individual responses and so of limited statistical value.

Responses

Overall Response

There were 751 hits on the survey site (22% of those who were contacted) and 130 responses (3.8%). Only 108 of these respondents expressed an opinion on the overall scheme, with 22 not submitting a response to this question. Of those who did respond, there was strong support for the scheme with 65% either happy or satisfied. However, there was also 31% of respondents who were unhappy or dissatisfied with the scheme.

| All Responses | Happy | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Unhappy | Answers | No response |
|---------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------|---------|------------|-------------|
| Responses | 15 (14%) | 50 (46%) | 10 (8%) | 26 (20%) | 7 (5%) | 108 (100%) | 22 |
| Total | 65 (60%) | | | 33 (31%) | | | |

Responses by National Identity

Due to an administrative error, respondents were asked for their National Identity rather than their ethnicity.

Of those who selected a National Identity other the British, 68% approved of the scheme answering 'Happy; or 'Satisfied' compared to 25% who were against. Approval of the scheme was also high for those who selected British with 57% supporting the scheme compared to 27% against. Support was similar for those who did not provide an answer with 60% supporting the scheme.

| National Identity | Happy | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Unhappy | Answers | No response |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Other/Mixed | 21 (53%) | 6 (15%) | 3 (8%) | - | 10 (25%) | 40 | 22 |
| British | 15 (45%) | 4 (12%) | 5 (15%) | 3 (9%) | 6 (18%) | 33 | - |
| No Answer | 14 (40%) | 5 (14%) | 2 (6%) | 4 (11%) | 10 (29%) | 35 | 22 |
| Total | 50 (46%) | 15 (14%) | 10 (9%) | 7 (6%) | 26 (24%) | 108 | 11 |

Responses by Age

Analysis by age the age of respondents showed higher levels of support from older respondents as expected. Support for the scheme fell significantly though for those under the age proposed for the scheme (55 years old). However, there continued to be a majority in favour for all ages except those aged 21 to 40 where 46% were either 'dissatisfied' or 'unhappy' with the proposals compared to only 38% in support.

Appendix B - Consultation Report

| Age Group | Happy | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Unhappy | Answers | No response |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 21 to 40 | 5 (19%) | 5 (19%) | 4 (15%) | 10 (38%) | 2 (8%) | 26 (100%) | 3 |
| 41 to 50 | 3 (14%) | 12 (57%) | 3 (14%) | 3 (14%) | - | 21 (100%) | 2 |
| 51 to 55 | 1 (11%) | 4 (44%) | 1 (11%) | 2 (22%) | 1 (11%) | 9 (100%) | 2 |
| 56 to 60 | 1 (17%) | 5 (83%) | - | - | - | 6 (100%) | 5 |
| 61 to 65 | 2 (22%) | 7 (78%) | - | - | - | 9 (100%) | - |
| 66 or older | - | 4 (80%) | - | - | 1 (20%) | 5 (100%) | - |
| No age given | 3 (9%) | 13 (41%) | 2 (6%) | 11 (34%) | 3 (9%) | 32 (100%) | 10 |
| Total | 15 (14%) | 50 (46%) | 10 (9%) | 26 (24%) | 7 (6%) | 108 (100%) | 22 |

Responses by Education

Response to the proposed Lettings Plan was sharply divided by the level of qualifications obtained by the respondent with those with 2 A' Levels, a degree or a professional qualification 49% in favour and 46% against compared with 88% of those with lower or no or a foreign qualification being in favour and 5% being against.

Support was mixed among those who preferred not to provide details of their educational qualifications with 48% in favour and 45% against.

| Highest Educational Qualification | Happy | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Unhappy | Answers | No response |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| No formal qualifications | 2 (18%) | 8 (73%) | (0%) | 1 (9%) | - | 11 | 1 |
| Other qualifications e.g. other work & foreign qualifications | - | 5 (83%) | 1 (17%) | - | - | 6 | - |
| Level 1 e.g. 1-4 GCSEs or equivalent qualifications | 3 (25%) | 7 (58%) | 1 (8%) | 1 (8%) | - | 12 | 1 |
| Level 2 e.g. 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent | 1 (25%) | 1 (25%) | 1 (25%) | 1 (25%) | - | 4 | 1 |
| Level 3 e.g. 2 or more A-levels, HNC, HND or | 1 (8%) | 3 (25%) | 3 (25%) | 4 (33%) | 1 (8%) | 12 | - |
| Level 4 or above e.g. first or higher degree, professional | 1 (8%) | 4 (33%) | - | 5 (42%) | 2 (17%) | 12 | 1 |
| Prefer not to say | 4 (36%) | 6 (55%) | 1 (9%) | - | - | 11 | 3 |
| Did not answer | 3 (8%) | 16 (40%) | 3 (8%) | 14 (35%) | 4 (10%) | 40 | 15 |
| Total | 15 (14%) | 50 (46%) | 10 (9%) | 26 (24%) | 7 (6%) | 108 | 22 |

Responses by Benefit Status

Response to the proposal was much stronger among those who were claiming a benefit with 71% supporting the scheme and 19% against. This contrasted to 38% support from those who were not claiming a benefit (and 50% against).

Among those who did not provide an answer on their benefit status, those for and against the scheme was evenly matched at 48% for and 45% against. Four respondents selected 'prefer not to say' with one in favour and two against.

| Benefit Status | Happy | Satisfied | Neutral | Dissatisfied | Unhappy | Answers | No response |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Not claiming a benefit | 3 (38%) | - | 1 (13%) | 2 (25%) | 2 (25%) | 8 (100%) | 5 |
| Claiming a Benefit | 28 (52%) | 10 (19%) | 6 (11%) | 1 (2%) | 9 (17%) | 54 (100%) | 2 |
| No answer | 19 (44%) | 4 (9%) | 3 (7%) | 3 (7%) | 14 (33%) | 43 (100%) | 15 |
| Prefer not to say | - | 1 (33%) | - | 1 (33%) | 1 (33%) | 3 (100%) | - |
| Total | 50 (46%) | 15 (14%) | 10 (9%) | 7 (6%) | 26 (24%) | 108 (100%) | 22 |

- Minimum age

Appendix B - Consultation Report

| No minimum age | 50 years old or over | 55 years old or over | 60 years old or over | 65 years old or over | Unsure / no answer | Answers | No response |
|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------|-------------|
| 37%) | 18 (15%) | 19 (16%) | 21 (17%) | 11 (9%) | 7 (6%) | 121 | 9 |

Although the largest age selection was against any minimum age with 37% selecting this option, 57% of respondents selected one of the four ages offered indicating support for the scheme's principal feature. Those who are against a minimum age included all bar five of the 33 who were against the scheme but also 14 of the 65 who were in support of the scheme.

- Who should these homes be offered to?

Support for the scheme's proposals to prioritise existing tenants in larger homes was not well supported with only 15% agreeing. The most popular group to be offered these homes were those living in temporary accommodation and Band B. This is in line with the proportion of people who received an invite to take place in the survey.

| Which of the following groups should be offered these homes? | Number | % |
|---|--------|-----|
| Applicants in living in Temporary Accommodation | 65 | 50% |
| Applicants in Band B | 45 | 35% |
| Applicants in Band A | 33 | 25% |
| Social tenants who need an adaption | 29 | 22% |
| Social tenants who will move from a family home | 20 | 15% |
| Social tenants in same size home & do not need an adaptations | 7 | 5% |
| Other | 33 | 25% |
| Applicants who been waiting over 5 years | 1 | 1% |
| Applicants who live in unsuitable accommodation | 1 | 1% |
| Households with family members who are disabled | 1 | 1% |
| Mothers with children in temp accommodation | 1 | 1% |
| Anyone on the housing list | 1 | 1% |

- Individual Comments and emails.

Respondents were invited to make comments on the proposal within the survey with around a third (37) doing so.

Those who were against the proposed Lettings Plan were twice as likely to submit an individual response. There were also a further 12 respondents who used the response to set out their own situation with equal support for and against the scheme.

The most common comments stated that they believed that the scheme should be open to all ages, though some of these comments were related to the homes being offered to other groups rather than specifically to younger people. The second most popular theme was support for the homes to be given to those who might release a family home. This contrasts with the lack of support for this group in the survey section on who should be offered the homes.

Appendix B - Consultation Report

| Comment | For | Mixed | Against | Total |
|---|------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Against the age criteria | | | 6 | 6 |
| It will free up larger homes | 4 | 1 | | 5 |
| Should be offered to all those who need adapted home | | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| Design/Location | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Should be offered to those in temporary accommodation | | | 4 | 4 |
| Supporting older people | 4 | | | 4 |
| Should be offered to all | | 2 | | 2 |
| Bigger homes should be built instead | | | 1 | 1 |
| Forced to move / should be no age limit | | | 1 | 1 |
| Only under occ and need adaptations | 1 | | | 1 |
| People being forced to move | | | 1 | 1 |
| Should be a mixed site | | 1 | | 1 |
| swap instead | | 1 | | 1 |
| Allocation Policy in general | | 1 | | 1 |
| Total | 10 | 8 | 19 | 37 |

Respondents were invited to make comments on the proposal within the survey with around a third (37) doing so, and to respond by email with 46 doing so. Of those who emailed, the vast majority (28) of responses were setting out their own circumstances with no comment on the proposed Lettings Plan. Of the remaining 18 emails, these were split evenly between those for and against the proposal.

For six of the nine people who were against the scheme, their main concern was that they felt the homes should be available for anyone and, in all but two cases, then setting out their own circumstances. Of the remaining three respondents, two felt that the scheme would be creating segregation of communities and the last felt that the scheme did not provide on-site support.

For those who were in favour, the main reasons for supporting the scheme were split between those who agreed with housing specifically for older people and those who believed it would release more family homes.