

## **DRAFT Redwing & Turnstone Lettings Plan**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Haringey has an ageing population. The Council wants to expand the range of homes available to older residents beyond the current offer of sheltered housing. The Council's engagement with older residents has shown a strong demand for accessible, safe, and secure homes which can be occupied for many years.
- 1.2 Wingspan is a high-quality development of 272 new council homes located in Tottenham Hale. The Council believes that the 119 one- and two-bedroom homes located in Redwing Court and Turnstone Court within the development are particularly suitable for older residents looking for accessible, safe, and secure homes. The Council is therefore seeking to put in place a Local Lettings Plan that will ensure these homes are let to people who are 55 years old or older.
- 1.3 To achieve this aim, this Lettings Plan sets out the eligibility criteria for both the initial and subsequent lets of these homes apart from up to ten of the initial lets as set out in 5.4. This Lettings Plan also sets out the Priority Order in which these homes will be offered.
- 1.4 Re-lets of each property will then be allocated in line with the Housing Allocations Policy but will also be subject to the eligibility criteria set out in this Lettings Plan.
- 1.5 This Lettings Plan will be implemented instead of the existing Neighbourhood Moves Scheme which offers homes to nearby Council tenants. As this Lettings Plan also makes offers to these residents, the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme will not be applied even to homes left vacant after this Plan has been implemented.
- 1.6 This Lettings Plan will not apply to the other 153 homes on the Wingspan development which will be let in line with the Council's Allocations Policy and initially through the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme.

### **2 Eligibility for the homes in Redwing Court & Turnstone Court.**

- 2.1 All Applicants, including those nominated by the Council under 5.3 below, must also meet the following criteria (unless there are no suitable candidates as set out in 2.2).
  - The lead applicant (who will be the tenant) must be 55 years old or older.
  - Other people on the application must be: -
    - at least 55 years old and/or
    - receiving carers allowance for care provided to the lead applicant, and currently living with them for 12 months, or
    - receiving carers allowance for care provided to the lead applicant where the care provided cannot easily be provided from an alternative address, or
    - The partner of someone receiving carer's allowance as described above so long as this does not create over-crowding.
    - Children of the applicant(s) or carer cannot be included unless they are also carers.
  - The applicant or household members cannot currently be a tenant of a Sheltered Housing or Good Neighbour Scheme.

## **Appendix C: Redwing & Turnstone Lettings Plan**

- For homes with two bedrooms, the applicant must either be a social tenant moving from a larger property and/or a household who need two-bedrooms. This can include a live-in carer.
  - For homes with a wet room, the applicant (or a member of their household) must have a medical need for these adaptations.
  - Applicants (or a member of their household) must not have caused any antisocial behaviour or have significant rent arrears as set out in Appendix 1 and 2.
  - Applicants cannot have an alternative offer of rehousing. Applicants who have been offered and accepted alternative housing elsewhere are expected to take up those existing offers. Similarly, household members who have accepted alternative housing are also expected to take up those offers and may be removed from the application which in turn may affect the applicant's eligibility and/or property allocation. Refusal of alternative offers will not reinstate the applicant's or household member's eligibility unless the alternative property was unsuitable or if there are exceptional circumstances.
- 2.2 In the event that there are homes remaining unlet after the implementation of this Lettings Plan, the Council may disapply some of the above criteria to let the final homes. Where this is needed, the Council will sensitively select potential tenants to ensure that these offers do not undermine the purpose and intended character of the scheme. These lets will be made by direct offer.

### **3 What the Applicant will need to do.**

- 3.1 To be eligible for this scheme, the applicants either have a live Housing Application or must complete a new Housing Application.
- 3.2 Existing tenants/licensees must surrender their current accommodation with vacant possession and return the keys to their landlord by midday of the day their new tenancy starts.

### **4 Who may be included on the application form.**

- 4.1 When determining the size of the home applicants need, the Council (or Housing Association) will only consider household members who are:
- at least 55 years old and are a partner of the applicant; or
  - are (at the time of application) a carer for the lead applicant (or other household member) who is receiving carer's allowance for care provided to the applicant and either living with the applicant for 12 months or providing care which could not be provided from an alternative address.
  - The partner of someone receiving carer's allowance as described above so long as this does not create over-crowding.

### 5 Priority for new homes in Redwing Court & Turnstone Court

- 5.1 Applicants will be given priority in the order set out on the next page. Where there is more than one household in a group, priority will be determined by the applicable order within that sub-group. Where there is more than one household following this priority order, priority will be given to the applicants with the earliest effective date on their housing waiting list where applicable, and then to the applicant with the longest current tenancy.
- 5.2 Applicants will only be offered homes appropriate for their assessed housing need unless there are exceptional circumstances or where they are Social Tenants moving to a home smaller than the home they currently occupy. Offers will not be made where this would lead to over-crowding.
- 5.3 Up to ten homes will be reserved for households nominated by Housing Related Support and approved by the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel.
- 5.4 The remaining homes will be offered in the following order.

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**Group 1: Social tenants choosing to move to a smaller home &/or who need a walk-in shower or other adaption not available in their current home.**

Offers will be made in the following order.

- a) the number of bedrooms in their current home (with higher priority to those in larger homes), and then to
- b) those aged 65+ first then 55+

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**Group 2: Applicants in Band A of the Housing Register & choosing to move.**

Offers will be made in the following order.

- a) those who need an adaption (e.g. a level access shower\*), and then to
- b) those aged 65+ first then 55+

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**Group 3: Applicants in Band B of the Housing Register & choosing to move.**

Offers will be made in the following order.

- a) those who need an adaption (e.g. a level access shower\*), and then to
- b) those aged 65+ first then 55+

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**Group 4: Applicants in Temporary Accommodation who are eligible for these homes but have not voluntarily accepted an offer through Group 3.**

Offers will be made in the order of the applicant's place on the Housing Register and will be deemed to be a final offer.

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**Group 5: All other Social Tenants**

Offers will be made in the order of the applicant's place on the Housing Register and then those with the oldest tenancy start date.

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\* or other adaption not available in their current home

Social Tenants are taken to mean Secure tenants of the Council or Assured Tenants of Registered Providers with which the Council has a Nominations Agreement. This term does not include those who are licensees of their current home or living there as a temporary accommodation placement.

Housing Register is taken to mean the register for general needs tenancies and does not include those who are on the waiting list or Sheltered and/or Good Neighbour homes unless they are also on the general needs housing register and/or an existing Social Tenant.

### 6 Administration

## **Appendix C: Redwing & Turnstone Lettings Plan**

- 6.1 The Council will set a deadline for applications. Eligible applicants will then be matched to available homes with priority set out in this Lettings Plan.
- 6.2 Offers of a tenancy will be made to the oldest person on the application either as a sole tenancy or, if they prefer, as a joint tenancy to couples where that partner is also at least 55 years old. Couples include those who are married, in a civil partnership, or who are living as if they were.
- 6.3 Carers will not be allowed to become a joint tenant unless they are partners of the oldest applicant and at least 55 years old.
- 6.4 Offers will not be made if the Ashley Road scheme is in an area which is unsafe for the applicant, and/or where the properties are unsuitable.

For example:

- Applicants who have been given or are in the process of requesting priority to move out of the Wingspan area due to a threat of violence will not be able to move to a new home in this scheme.
- Applicants who need to move to a particular location to be close to a specific support provider will not be able to move to Wingspan unless that specific provider is close to the scheme.

<b>7 Discretion</b>
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- 7.1 This policy cannot cover every eventuality, and the Council reserves the right to make offers outside of the Scheme in exceptional circumstances.

<b>8 Housing Allocation Policy</b>
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- 8.1 The terminology used in this document is based on the current Housing Allocations Policy.
- 8.2 The Council will soon be consulting on a new Housing Allocations Policy which may change the names of Bands and or other terminology which will be reflected in this document when that policy is approved and implemented.
- 8.3 Any lets made will be in accordance with the Allocations Policy in force at the time of the offer.

<b>Appendix 1: Antisocial behaviour</b>
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8.4 The applicant cannot have:

- caused any significant and/or persistent anti-social behaviour connected to the applicant's current or previous tenancies or where legal action is being taken by the Council, a Housing Association, the Police, or other authorities in the last two years. The decision on what constitutes significant antisocial behaviour will be at the discretion of the applicant's current housing officer.
- committed any other tenancy breach which has warranted a Notice of Seeking Possession in the last two years or where a Notice to Quit has been served. Notices of Seeking Possession may be disregarded if they have been withdrawn or if the housing office is satisfied that the breaches have been resolved and unlikely to reoccur.

8.5 Breaches of tenancy (including rent arrears) may be disregarded where the Exceptional Rehousing Decisions Panel has agreed that there are exceptional circumstances why these may be disregarded.

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### Appendix 2: Rent Arrears

- 8.6 Applicants must not have rent arrears, court costs or former tenancy arrears at the time of the move unless they meet the exceptions set out.
- 8.7 Applicants who have debts owing to the Council or Housing Association will be allowed to apply for a move through the Scheme. However, unless there are exceptional circumstances, applicants with debts will not receive an offer unless:
- The debts are less than 6 weeks rent of their current net rent liability (and less than £1,000) and those debts have been reducing over the last 3 months through regular payments made by the applicant.
  - The debts are more than 6 weeks of their current net rent liability (or more than £1,000) and the applicant has been making regular payments for 12 months according to an agreed repayment plan.
- 8.8 Arrears caused by delays in the payment of Housing Benefit may be disregarded if Housing Benefit confirm that the payment is imminent.

Debts considered include.

- Arrears on their current tenancy
- Unpaid arrears on a former Council or Housing Association tenancy account including those due for temporary accommodation.
- Unpaid court costs owed to the Council or Housing Association connected to their current or former tenancy.