

Canal Mews, Nelson Local Lettings Policy



Introduction

Canal Mews is a scheme of 14 one bedroom flats and 1 two bedroom flat in Nelson.

Context

The scheme is relatively isolated being located in a cul-de-sac and alongside the canal. Turnover and demand have been a concern for some time, and recently there have been issues relating to suspected drug dealing and drug use. This is having a further impact on the demand for the scheme. A number of tenants coming through the Local Authority CBL system for properties at Canal Mews are vulnerable, and their lack of resilience and ability to cope with the issues on the scheme are contributing to the high turnover. Great Places has attempted to make a number of physical interventions to improve the tenant's safety and to reduce the antisocial behaviour without success. This policy seeks to focus on attracting more resilient and diverse customers to live at Canal Mews with the intention of reducing tenancy turnover while the existing issues of antisocial behaviour are addressed.

Aims & Objectives

- To create a balanced, sustainable community, with a mix of residents successfully managing their tenancies.
- To reduce the proportion of vulnerable tenants living in the scheme.
- To reduce turnover in the scheme.
- To support the Council in its objectives; in particular;
 - 'Tackle the issue of low demand neighbourhoods'
Pendle Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2008-18
 - 'To develop sustainable neighbourhoods that can retain and attract successful households...'
Pennine Lancashire Housing Strategy 2009-29
- To protect the investment made by Great Places in the area through the delivery of sustainable tenancies.

Rationale

Turnover at Canal Mews has risen steeply from 20% in 2015/16 to 40% in 2016/17. This is significantly higher than the average across general needs homes which is currently around 7.3%. Profiling of the economic status of customers living in the scheme shows that there are no tenants currently in work, and therefore there is clearly an imbalance in the tenants living in the scheme.

What is involved?

This Local Lettings Policy will provide a range of options to improve allocations and lettings outcomes.

Where properties are advertised through CBL priority will be applied slightly differently to the standard allocations policy criteria. Priority will be given to applicants in the following order;

1. Band 3 applicants who have been awarded band 3 priority because they have the Right to Move, a community contribution or a part of the tenant community reward scheme.
2. Band 4 applicants
3. All other applicants in priority order according to the allocations scheme

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This approach is likely to reduce the volume of vulnerable applicants being identified for the scheme, and recognises and reward those applicants who exhibit positive behaviours.

In addition to implementing a different approach to the prioritisation of applicants the neighbourhood team may advertise properties through different platforms in order to maximise the opportunity of finding a suitable applicant, to reach different markets of people looking for homes and to minimise the risk of lengthy void delays. These routes may include Rightmove, the use of letting agents, newspaper advertising, or any other suitable route identified by the team. Properties may also be advertised on multiple platforms simultaneously.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Local Lettings Policy is intended to be a time limited intervention to alter the lettings criteria to redress an imbalance in the community and address the local issues, in this case the low demand and high turnover in the scheme. The average annual turnover and re-let time will be reviewed each year. If the policy is found to have successfully improved performance to be close to or equal to other flats managed by Great Places, or is close to the average performance for homes in Nelson then the policy will be terminated.

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Equality Impact Assessment

1. Is this a key strategic document, major policy or procedure or service change? Examples may include: Homeless Strategy/ Customer Involvement Strategy	YES		NO	
			✓	
2. What impact will your document or service delivery change have on the public or staff, giving particular regard to potential impacts on minority groups? Issues to consider include race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, carers and other socio-economic factors	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	DON'T KNOW
			✓	
3. Please explain your answer: Provide a narrative explaining why you gave the impact rating above.	This policy is intended to be a short term intervention to address specific local issues identified in the policy. The policy only applies to lettings on 15 units and does not specifically exclude any applicant groups, it merely prioritises applicants in a different way.			

1. If, for question 2 you have answered LOW, there is no need to continue to an Equality Impact Assessment.
2. If, for question 2 you have answered DON'T KNOW, please discuss with a member of the EIA Group who can confirm whether an EIA is required.
3. If you have answered YES to question 1, and you have identified MEDIUM or HIGH impact in 2, you should move on to an Equality Impact Assessment and complete the section below:

If you have completed a full Equality Impact Assessment please provide the following:

What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment? (Q10 from the full EIA form)

As a result of these conclusions what actions (if any) will be included in your business actions and wider review processes? (Q11 from the full EIA form)

If you require any help please contact a member of the EIA group:

EIA@greatplaces.org.uk

Policy Approval Date:	
Equality Impact Assessment Date:	24 th August 2017
Safeguarding impact	N/A
Policy Review Date:	Annual
Lead Team:	Customer Services
Level of Authorisation Required:	Director