

## **An introduction to the proposed Local Lettings Plans**

### **What is a Local Lettings Plan?**

A Local Lettings Plan [LLP] is a formal agreement allowing the council to vary the criteria by which some of its housing is let in order to meet local need. Local Lettings Plans can apply to a block of flats, estate, neighbourhood or to certain types of property.

### **What must the council do in order to have LLPs?**

The council must show there is a need for the plan. This includes a clear statement as to what we hope the plan will achieve and why we think this is the best way to achieve that objective.

We need to consult with partner Residential Social Landlords [RSLs] and people the LLP is likely to affect.

We need to undertake an equalities impact assessment to ensure the plan does not unjustly discriminate against any particular group[s].

We must review all our LLPs regularly.

### **Does the council have any LLPs now?**

The council has various arrangements in place allowing variation in lettings arrangements for certain property types and locations. Some of these arrangements were formally adopted; others have developed through custom and practice. However, as we have not until now followed a formal process, these cannot be classified as LLPs. That is why we are reviewing these arrangements and proposing formal LLPs.

### **What arrangements are in place now?**

There are age restrictions on letting property in some blocks. Some flats cannot be let to people under 50, others not to people with children under 10 or 11.

### **Are any new LLPs proposed?**

Yes.

#### **General Needs Housing**

**Priority for working households for up to 25% of lets in the more deprived neighbourhoods.** Some areas of the city have a high proportion of unemployed or otherwise benefit dependent residents. In order to create greater community balance and increase local economic prosperity, it is proposed to let some vacant property to households where at least one adult is in paid employment for a minimum of 16 hours a week. This will not mean working households are prioritised outside bands, as allocation will still be within the existing priority bands.

For example, if 50 people bid for a property, 10 of whom are in band A, then the property will go to the person in band A with the earliest priority date who is working. This is proposed on a pilot basis in order that the impact can be carefully analysed and assessed.

#### **People who need to move within the same block**

Where someone needs to transfer because they would not be able to use stairs in an emergency, then it is proposed that they are given priority to move to a lower floor within the same block in order to retain support networks. It is anticipated fewer than 20 such lets will be necessary each year. This is proposed on a pilot basis in order that the impact can be carefully analysed and assessed.

### **Sheltered Housing**

The proposals for sheltered housing include giving people who need to move within the same block priority, and easing restrictions on the letting of two bedroom sheltered flats which are sometimes difficult to let using standard eligibility criteria. It also allows people over 60 who would benefit from sheltered housing with a carer who is under 60 to move into sheltered housing. These proposals are based on requests from tenants, and have the full support of the Sheltered Housing Action Group and other community groups we consulted.

### **Did we consult?**

Yes. We consulted our Registered Social Landlord [RSL] partners, community groups, people on the Housing Register and current council tenants.

### **What about blocks for people aged over 50?**

There are many blocks in Brighton and Hove where property is only let to people who are 50 or older. We are speaking to residents and other stakeholders, and hope that a report about these blocks will be presented to HMCC in October 2009. In the mean time, these will continue to operate as blocks for people over 50 years of age.

### **Any Questions?**

Please contact Helen Clarkmead, Head of Housing Management.

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