

# **LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN**

## **WEAVERS ARMS, ROCKWELL GREEN, WELLINGTON**

**This is a Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) local lettings plan for the Weavers Arms development scheme.**

**Weavers Arms is a purpose built scheme which contains 26 properties, of which 24 will be social housing properties and 2 shared ownership properties owned by TDBC comprising a mixture of types including 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows, 6 x 2 bedroom houses, 4 x 3 bedroom houses, 1 x 4 bedroom house and 12 x 1 bedroom flats. The properties will be constructed to current building regulations and will be considerably cheaper to run than an older property.**

### **Background**

Weavers Arms is situated within the village of Rockwell Green which is west of Wellington.

The broad aim of the scheme is that TDBC will construct and retain ownership of the new homes for rent but also offer 2 properties for purchase as shared ownership. Weavers Arms is being constructed on TDBC owned land next to existing Council owned properties which are part of a well-established general needs housing scheme.

### **Objectives of this Lettings Plan**

The objectives of this lettings plan are:

- TDBC to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility in meeting the needs of housing applicants; and
- To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and in harmony with their neighbours and in which families can grow.

### **The Area – Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green**

Weavers Arms has been built on local authority land next to an existing council owned housing. The nearest Primary School is situated within the existing housing scheme approximately 200 metres away, the nearest Secondary School is approximately 800 metres away. There is a Public House in the village, the nearest shop is only 200 metres away. There a daily bus service into Wellington and Taunton Town centre.

## The Scheme

Weavers Arms is a scheme of 24 TDBC owned and 2 shared ownership properties. The properties will be constructed to current building regulations and will be considerably cheaper to run than older properties.

The stock break-down for the rented properties is as follows:

Property Type	TDBC affordable weekly rent
10 x 1 bed flat	£88.00
2 x 1 bed flat (wheelchair user)	£89.60
3 x 2 bed bungalow (wheelchair user)	£127.94
4 x 2 bed semi detached house	£120.00
4 x 3 bed semi detached house	£138.40
1 x 4 bed house	£148.00
2 x 2 bed semi detached house	Shared ownership 2.75% Open Market Value

There will be 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows suitable for wheelchair users, 6 x 2 bedroom, 4 x 3 bedroom, 1 x 4 bedroom houses and 12 x 1 bedroom flats of which 2 will be suitable for wheelchair users, these will be let to persons who have a recognised need for this type of accommodation.

## Tenancy Type

All of the applicants accepted into the scheme will be granted either an Introductory or Secure social housing tenancy by TDBC dependent on the household housing history.

## Lettings

TDBC is committed to advertising as many of the vacant properties as possible, on this scheme, through the Choice Based Lettings system. Adverts on vacant properties will give information on who will be eligible to apply for the properties.

## Exclusions

For households that have a history of persistent tenancy breach for anti-social behaviour or other types of tenancy breach within the last 2 years (as described in 31.7 of Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy) for example:

- If existing or previous tenancy conditions have been broken for which there are statutory grounds for possession e.g. rent arrears or anti-social behaviour; and
- the applicant or a member of their household have committed acts of physical violence against staff or other residents the housing provider may decide they are not suitable as a tenant and will not consider them for a tenancy for a defined period.

Furthermore, in such cases we will assess applications using criteria such as:

- That the household will be safe and secure;
- That the household's quality of life will not be adversely affected;
- The quality of life for people already living in the area won't be adversely affected; and
- Where appropriate, the household will continue to positively engage with support agencies.

If it is assessed that a household does not meet these criteria, they will not be allocated a property on the scheme for the period of the local lettings plan.

For existing Registered Providers or council tenants, their present accommodation must be in good decorative condition.

For all applicants a landlord's reference will be required.

### **Allocations**

Priority will be given to applicants who have a local connection (as described in 6.4 and 7.4 of the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy) to the following areas:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Rockwell Green
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Wellington (without)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Langford Budville
- 4<sup>th</sup> Wellington
- 5<sup>th</sup> Nynehead
- 6<sup>th</sup> West Buckland
- 7<sup>th</sup> Remainder of Homefinder Somerset

In an effort to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility in meeting applicants needs the following target allocations will be applied:

Three of the properties (1 x 3 bed house, 1 x 2 bed house, 1 x 2 bed bungalow) will be let to existing TDBC households who are returning decants from properties demolished to allow construction of the scheme.

The remaining 21 properties will be let to Homefinder applicants who express an interest by bidding on properties on the scheme.

### **Note:**

- Property adverts will give information on who will be eligible to apply for a property. For example, if the property is labelled for older people the advert will state that only applicants above a certain age will be eligible. An adapted property suitable for someone in a wheelchair will be labelled to say that applicants must require such a property.

## **Underletting of general needs properties:**

It is our intention to only underlet properties when we are unable to let them to households that can make full use of the available bed space

1B/2P – let only to couples or single households.

2B/4P – let only to couples with child/children or single adult with children.

3B/5P – let only to couples or single adult with children.

4B/6P – let only to couples or single adult with children.

### **Note:**

- Due to Welfare Reform Legislation applicants who are underlet properties will have to demonstrate that they can afford to pay their full rent.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Careful monitoring of property allocations and the management of the scheme will routinely take place as part of an ongoing process. A number of areas will be monitored to ensure that this lettings plan is operating in the most effective way. Areas to be monitored may include:-

- A new tenancy visit will be conducted within 4-6 weeks of tenancy start date to capture feedback from new tenants.
- Number of expressions of interest for each property.
- Profile of those expressing an interest (e.g. transfers, disabled, BME, older people).
- Number of offers accepted first time.
- Number of properties re-advertised due to difficulty in letting.
- Average void rate.
- Number of nuisance and ASB complaints.
- Rent arrears.