

Village Square - Castlefields

The village square plans consist of a mixed development of flats, commercial shop units, a health centre and community centre.

Above the shop units there will be 16 two bedroom flats. Historically where Plus Dane has managed flats above shops there have been problems related to anti social behaviour which has affected demand. This was evident in Kirkby where the flats were eventually demolished.

Halton Housing Trust (HHT) currently manages the waiting list that was originally held by the local authority. The Trust has confirmed that there is healthy demand for two bedroom flats, however this demand is mainly from single men.

We currently manage 6 blocks of 1 bedroom flats at Tanhouse and currently allocate vacant units in the blocks from our waiting list and nominations from HHT. The majority of the applicants/nominations are single men and we have encountered anti social behaviour (ASB) problems in and around Tanhouse. Since April 2008 we have had 8 ASB cases reported on the Brow, 7 of these cases relating to Tanhouse. There has also been criminal activity reported to the Police which has included a stabbing and a physical assault.

Stock turnover has also been affected for the period April 2008 to December 2009. We have relet 18 properties in Tanhouse which equates to 51% of stock in relation to the 35 units. This is a high turnover when compared to the rest of the neighbourhood where we have had 9 lettings in the same period, just 8.2% of the 109 units on the Brow.

Plus Dane therefore proposes the introduction of a local lettings policy for the 16 new units to mitigate potential problems and safeguard the significant investment being made in the new accommodation and local centre.

Local Lettings Criteria

It is proposed that the following criteria are adopted:

- Age – over 25
- Status – Employed or working voluntarily within the community

The Castlefields estate has high levels of unemployment and therefore the employment status criteria will help to address this.

Marketing

Plus Dane currently holds a waiting list and applicants on the list meeting the above criteria will be considered. Plus Dane will also consider other

marketing measures if required e.g. lettings boards, local press or estate agents.

Following the implementation of a sub regional Choice Based Letting system Plus Dane will also advertise the properties through CBL highlighting the criteria.