



# Local Lettings Framework



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## 1. Management Information

Date Framework approved	January 2010
Replacing/Updating	New
Next Review Date	
Drafted by	Noreen Fallon
Responsible Director	Jackie Perry
Circulation list	Available to all staff electronically on NiNet

## 2. Framework Statement

We continuously seek sustainable solutions to improve people's lives and to create safe and pleasant neighbourhoods. We also have a responsibility under the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 to introduce policies aimed at preventing incidents of Anti Social Behaviour. Local lettings and the use of Starter Tenancies in geographical neighbourhoods are two of the ways of meeting this responsibility. As a landlord we realise the requirement to balance the needs of new tenants and the interests of existing tenants.

This framework aims to:

- set out when adjustments will be made to the main Lettings Policy to meet specific local issues;
- comply with current legislation and good practice including the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003;
- develop a consistent approach to the management of our neighbourhoods;
- contribute to sustainable, diverse and balanced communities.

## 3. Framework Aims and Key Objectives

Our aim and objectives of this framework are summarised as follows:

- to operate a Local Lettings framework to help tackle identified areas of low demand and Difficult to Let areas.
- to maintain the stability of established areas.
- to create balanced communities that residents choose to live in.
- to comply with all relevant legal requirements and to fulfil all agreed contractual obligations with Local Authorities and other Registered Social providers.
- to address issues of Anti Social Behaviour and harassment.
- to protect the interests of existing tenants by seeking to prevent or reverse social decline.
- to encourage community stability and cohesion.

## 4. Links to Group Values and Business Plan

This framework links to our 7 customer promises and the business plan objective of Homes, Neighbourhoods and Enterprise by aiming to:

- ensure our homes and neighbourhoods do not fall into decline due to demand and anti social behaviour issues;

- improve community safety by addressing particular issues related to specific areas;
- create great places to live through cohesive balanced communities;
- ensure maximum investment is received on existing homes by reducing costs due to criminal damage.

## 5. Local Lettings

The option to use local lettings policies can only be used with prior consent of the Senior Management Team in defined geographical areas or categories. In the main, the majority of the lettings policy will apply but local lettings will include additional criteria that will be considered when lettings properties in order to address specific local issues within a neighbourhood.

Where such a framework is adopted there must be:

- evidence of anti social behaviour. This can be repair costs relating to criminal damage due to ASB, evidence of decline in neighbourhood e.g tenancy turnover and any other crime / ASB related figures.
- clear aims and objectives which have been agreed in advance by the Neighbourhood Director.
- a limited time period for use, set at the outset;
- an Equality Impact Assessment completed for all areas proposed;
- consultation with the Local Authority and other RSLs working within the neighbourhood to ensure that applicants meeting the criteria on their lists are not excluded;
- monitoring, review and reporting systems in place;

### 5.1 Evidencing need for Local Letting Agreements

When seeking to introduce local letting agreements, a report must be submitted to the Senior Management team covering the following.

- Stock turnover levels
- Average relet times for the area compared to average relet time for the area as a whole
- Current demand for the area
- Number of refusals before a property is accepted
- Number of ASB cases within the area
- Repair costs related to ASB damage
  - Indices of deprivation

The procedure to be followed for approval of Local Letting Agreements is summarised at Appendix 1.

## 5.2 Sensitive Lets

For cases where 'one off' sensitive lets need to be made, consent should be sought from the Neighbourhood Director. When considering a sensitive let, the balance within the community and any problems that they have previously experienced should be considered. The criteria may include:

- a mix of household sizes to give a balanced community;
- age of the potential tenant;
- employment status, or
- convictions.

The reason such criteria would be used is to aid neighbourhood sustainability and for the benefit of those residents who have experienced serious ASB in the past.

## 6. Service Standards

The following standards, agreed with customers are in place for this framework:

- All local lettings will be reviewed annually with a formal review of the impact of the policies reported 3 yearly to the Managing Director with delegated Board approval to agree local lettings.
- Consultation will take place in the neighbourhood prior to the introduction of a local lettings policy.

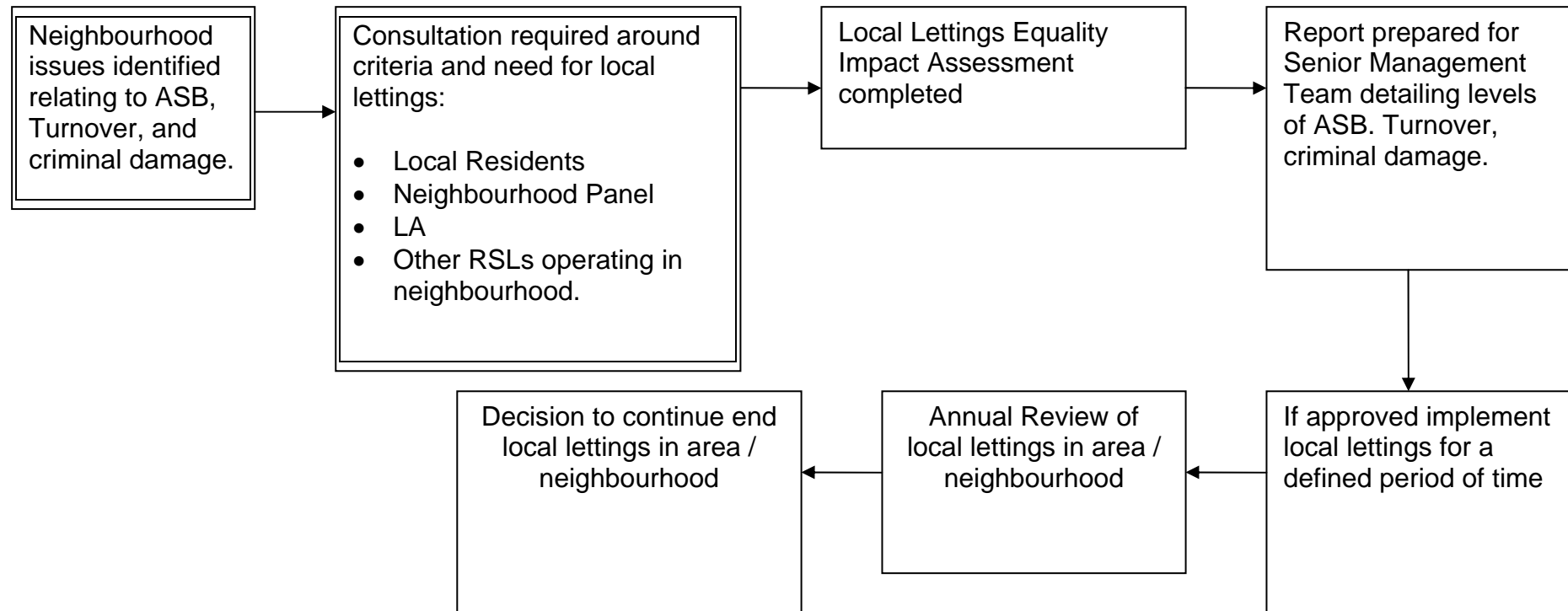
## 7. Performance Management

For this policy, the following KPIs are in place:

- Measures of levels of ASB
- Property turnover
- Average relet times
- Repair costs due to criminal damage.



## 8. Local Lettings Process Map



## Appendix 1 - Local Lettings Procedure

### 1. Clear Objectives

Each Officer involved in the introduction of local lettings must be able to demonstrate the need to adopt this approach. To do this, a detailed report must be produced for Senior Management Team for approval. A template for the report setting out the data required to support the implementation is set out in Appendix 2.

### 2. Control Measures

In order to establish the need for Local Letting agreements, various measures will need to be looked at. There must be evidence of the need to protect the interest of existing residents, or help prevent social decline. This will involve evidence of management problems (e.g. no waiting list for a period, tenancy turnover rates, incidents of Anti-social behaviour), which may be supported, by evidence derived from further investigations via questionnaires. These will be dependent upon the nature and scope of each individual Local Lettings agreement.

### 3 Consultation

Before developing a local lettings agreement, consultation is required with customers and the relevant Local Authority. This will need to take place in a range of forms dependent upon the nature of the individual Local Letting agreement. Local Authorities must always be consulted in particular regard to nomination rights.

Consideration should also be given as to whether there are particular development / planning agreements in existence that may require 'change of use' permission. An Equality Impact Assessment must be carried out in order to assess the adverse impact the agreement may have on customers.

### 4. Approval

Local Lettings agreements must be approved by the Neighbourhood Director.

### 5. Monitoring and Review of Local Lettings agreements

At the outset, a time period should be agreed for each Local Letting agreement, however in some cases, such as an age restriction scheme, these may not be time limited as once approved would remain the same e.g. over 55 schemes.

The use of Local lettings policies should be reviewed each year by the neighbourhood teams. See Appendix 3. A review of the impact of the policies should be reported, at least every 3 years to the Managing



Director with Board delegated authority and the Neighbourhood Panels for a decision on whether to continue.





## Appendix 2– Report for approval of local lettings

# Senior Management Team



## Neighbourhoods

Contact

Tel:

Email:

## Local Letting Area

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for a local letting scheme in (insert area) to help us achieve a balanced community, sustainable tenancies and reduce the level of anti social behaviour.

### 2 Background

(Here, set the scene of reasons why local lettings are required along with a breakdown of the area profile)

Include:

- location of properties
- description of properties - how many units
- Age profile of residents
- Average length of tenancies

### 3 Supporting Data & Evidence

Here, set out the supporting evidence. Include:

- Stock turnover levels
- Average relet times for the area compared to average relet time for the area as a whole
- Current demand for the area
- Number of refusals before a property is accepted
- Number of ASB cases in the areas
- Repair costs related to ASB damage
- Indices of deprivation

### 4 Conclusion

(Review period to be included)

### 5 Links to Business Objectives

The proposed local lettings framework links to our 7 customer promises and the business plan objective of Homes, Neighbourhoods and Enterprise by aiming to:

- ensure our homes and neighbourhoods do not fall into decline due to demand and anti social behaviour issues;
- improve community safety by addressing particular issues related to specific areas;
- create great places to live through cohesive balanced communities;
- ensure maximum investment is received on existing homes by reducing costs due to criminal damage.

## **6 Financial Implications**

## **7 Risk Appraisal**

## **8 Customer & Stakeholder Involvement**

Here say .... In developing this local lettings area, we have consulted with XXXXX – include all who have been consulted. We need to demonstrate that we have consulted as wide as possible.

## **9 Equality Impact Assessment**

Within this section you should:

- confirm that an EIA has taken place and that residents attended the session;
- detail the outcome of the screening process and whether a full EIA was completed;
  - detail any adverse impact identified for any groups;
- confirm what actions have been agreed to react to any adverse impact

## **10 Environmental Impact**

Within this section include the intended environmental impact of the local lettings policy



## Appendix 3 – Annual Monitoring Report

# Senior Management Team



### Neighbourhoods

Contact

Tel:

Email:

## Annual Monitoring Outcome of Local Letting Area

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to review the use of the local letting scheme in (insert area) set up to help us achieve a balanced community, sustainable tenancies and reduce the level of anti social behaviour.

### 2. Background

Summarise here the reasons why the local lettings agreement was introduced.

### 3. Current Position

Provide details on the current, has the neighbourhood stabilised is there evidence of this? Include year of year comparative indicators

Evidence Date	Previous year data	Current position
Stock turnover levels		
Average relet times for the area compared to average relet time for the area as a whole		
Current demand for the area		
Number of refusals before a property is accepted		
Number of ASB cases in the areas		
Repair costs related to ASB damage		

## Appendix 4 – Local Letting Areas

### Existing Local Lettings

Plus dane Merseyside have a number of neighbourhoods / schemes where local lettings apply. These neighbourhoods have been identified and the policy introduced to either address low demand or to address social decline and neighbourhood issues including Anti Social Behaviour. In neighbourhoods where there is low demand properties can be marketed outside of the normal lettings process and in these cases Liverpool City Council do not require us to seek approval for local lettings.

### Sensitive Lettings - Local Marketing

Plus dane have marketed the following properties outside of property pool due to low demand and neighbourhood issues including social decline. This approach was discussed with Liverpool City Council who supported the proposal due to low demand and sustainability issues.

### Merseyside

- Haigh Street Flats – Criteria for these flat is 25 with local connections and employed or working on a voluntary basis. The block had previously experienced high instances of anti social behaviour and was eventually emptied and some refurbishment work with extra security measures carried out.
- Field Street – Due to demand issues due to high levels of anti social behaviour sensitive lettings have been carried out in Field Street. Adverts state local connections due to high turnover in the street.
- 4 Bed Estate Everton - A degree of under occupation can be considered to help promote a more balanced community.
- Sunningdale (Halebank) – Local lettings have been carried out here on the 14 new build units to assist with the decant programme in Castlefields. The properties came into Plus Dane ownership in July 2008. This is a private Barratt estate with the rest of the properties being privately owned.

### Cheshire – Local Connection Agreement – Macclesfield & Langley

Within the Langley and Macclesfield area applicants are nominated by CPP and must demonstrate a local connection to the village. In addition, the parish council must be consulted on the vacancy.

### Starter Tenancies

Starter tenancies have been introduced on a geographical basis to address Anti Social Behaviour issues. The starter tenancy policy outlines the consultation process for the introduction of starter tenancies in a neighbourhood.

Starter Tenancies have been introduced in the following neighbourhoods:

## Merseyside

- Windermere Green (agreed at stock transfer)
- West Everton
- Bedford Street South
- Bedford Queens
- Westmorland
- Runcorn
- Pinehurst
- Hornby stock L13
- Gemini / Capricorn Close Bootle
- New Servite non sheltered stock

## Cheshire

<b>Congleton:</b>	Bromley Farm Estate Brunswick Street Flats
Ellesmere Port:	Hallwood Walk
Winsford	Saville Court