

# Lettings Plan for Riverside, Braintree

## 1. Introduction

Braintree District Council (BDC) and CHP have agreed to enter into a lettings plan for new housing schemes. The lettings plan for Riverside, Braintree is intended to ensure that the development has a good housing mix of residents and household sizes that will ensure sustainability and enable the formation of a great community there.

The use of lettings plans to achieve this end forms a part of both CHP's Corporate Plan and the Council's Affordable Housing Strategy but the primary policy under which these allocations are made is CHP's lettings policy. This is because CHP own the homes and take the lead in shortlisting, arranging viewings and letting the properties.

This plan has been prepared for first lets to Riverside, Braintree and relates to priorities for letting the new social rented properties there.

Braintree District Council has 100% nomination rights to the initial lettings. The scheme was enabled by significant investment by the Council. Applicants to new homes will be required to have a connection to the Braintree District as set out below:

- Their only or principle home is within the boundaries of the Braintree District; *or*
- They were placed in specialised housing which is not available in the District, but had a local connection previously through residence; *or*
- They (not a member of their household) are in permanent paid work in the sub region *or*
- They have a son, daughter, brother, sister, mother or father, who is over 18 and lives in the District, and has done so for at least five years before the date of application.

These conditions follow the same principles as those that apply to the Gateway to Homechoice sub-region through section 6.6 of the Allocations Policy. When people originally apply to the Council's Housing Register they are asked to provide documents that prove where they live, so we will not need to check these details again. Applicants relying on connections because of work, previous residence or local family members will be asked for evidence of their connection.

Any subsequent letting after first let will be subject to the existing Service Level Agreement between CHP and BDC. Currently, all new homes are advertised through the 'Gateway to Homechoice' system: [www.gatewaytohomechoice.org.uk](http://www.gatewaytohomechoice.org.uk)

## 1. Principles of the lettings plan

Since 2009, all vacancies in social rented housing in the district have been let through the 'Gateway to Homechoice system. The system features details and photos where possible of all the available housing each week. People who are registered can click on the property they are interested in to indicate they would like to move to there and the property is normally let to the household with the highest priority who have been waiting the longest. The new homes will be advertised on the same system but the advertisements will indicate that there are special conditions for the lettings of these homes and will link to this document on the Council's website.

CHP will ensure that when making allocations to the houses at least 25% of the new tenants will have successfully managed a social housing tenancy including tenancies in temporary accommodation provided by the local authority for 12 months prior to their housing on the scheme. **Our aim is to make sure that the new community has a proportion of people who have a proven track record of managing the responsibilities of a social housing tenancy previously.**

When large housing schemes are first built, there is a risk that all people of similar age, with similar aged children completely dominate the housing scheme. Over time, as the community matures, the ages begin to spread out and a greater balance is achieved. **Our aim is to try to achieve a mixture of different ages of adults and children right from the first lettings.**

The Council's allocation policy gives households priority for housing for a variety of reasons. For single households, this is often because the person needs support to manage their tenancy. In blocks of flats, CHP has found that a very high concentration of tenants all with support needs can lead to problems between the tenants and their neighbours. **We will therefore limit the proportion of flats let to people whose priority arises because of their need for support.**

Details of how we intend to achieve these aims is set out below.

## 2. Property Details

This Scheme has a total of 44 social rented homes, plus an additional 9 flats if a bid for funding is successful. The composition of these properties is as follows:

Number of homes	Unit Type	Max number of persons per property	Comments
5	One bed flats	2	
9	One bed flats	2	Subject to funding bid
4	Two bed flats	4	
2	Two bed flats	4	Adapted wheelchair homes to be direct let

15	Two bed houses	4	
11	Three bed houses	5	
2	Three bed houses	5	Adapted wheelchair homes to be direct let
5	Four bed houses	7	
<b>53</b>			

The social rented houses have parking spaces for each property and an additional w.c. located on the ground floor.

The social rented flats have one allocated parking space or car port. The social rented flats only have one w.c.

The proposed lettings plan only deals with the homes that are not adapted. The adapted homes are modified to meet the mobility needs for specific households and are therefore not advertised on the Gateway to Homechoice system.

The 5 x four bed houses are excluded from the lettings plan. This is for 3 main reasons:

- The 5 homes are spread out around the site and so do not cause the same concern as the greater concentration of 2 and 3 bed homes; *and*
- The amount of choice of four bed homes is much less than the other house-types in the District so many applicants will have waited a long time and we want to house those that have been waiting longest in the highest band.

### 3. Lettings Plan - Houses.

The objective of this lettings plan is to ensure there is a mix of residents within the Riverside development as you would expect to find in an established community. We believe this can be achieved by ensuring there are a percentage of residents living on the scheme who have previously successfully managed a social housing tenancy.

CHP will ensure that when making allocations to the houses at least 25% of the new tenants will have successfully managed a social housing tenancy including tenancies in temporary accommodation provided by local authority for 12 months prior to their housing on the scheme.

CHP will accept applicants with two children if they are of different sexes into the 3 bedroom 5 person houses as this will allow for family growth.

To ensure sustainability of tenancies, it is necessary to ensure that household compositions are mixed and to achieve a balanced community.

To do this CHP will select applicants on the shortlist in priority order according to the age of the lead or joint tenant as follows:

House Type	No. of homes	Household Profile
2 bed houses	15	5 households will have lead or one joint tenant under 25 years old. 5 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 25

		years old 5 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 40 years old.
3 bed houses	11	4 households will have lead or one joint tenant under 25years old. 4 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 25 years old 3 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 40 years old.

To achieve a balance CHP will endeavour to apply the conditions set out above. However, to ensure there is a balance between sustainability and addressing the housing needs that exist within the Gateway to Homechoice Housing Register, CHP will in the first instance attempt to find a suitable household within the same band as the lead applicant on the shortlist. If this is not possible then CHP will go to the next priority band to find a suitable family composition. If this is still not possible then CHP will obtain the closest possible match from the applicants in the highest band on the shortlist.

#### 4. Lettings Plan - Flats.

The objective of this lettings plan is to ensure there is a mix of residents within the Riverside development as you would expect to find in an established community. We believe this can be achieved by ensuring there are a percentage of residents living on the scheme who have previously successfully managed a social housing tenancy.

CHP will ensure that when making allocations to the flats that at least 25% of the new tenants will have successfully managed a social housing tenancy (including tenancies in temporary accommodation provided by local authority for the 12 months prior to their housing on the scheme.

To ensure sustainability of tenancies, it is necessary to ensure that household compositions are mixed and to achieve a balanced community.

House Type	No. of homes	Household Profile
2 bed flats	4	1 household will have lead or one joint tenant under 25 years old. 2 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 25 years old 1 household will have lead or one joint tenant over 40 years old.
1 bed flats	5	2 households will have lead or one joint tenant under 25years old. 2 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 25 years old 1 household will have lead or one joint tenant over 40 years old.
1 bed flats (subject to grant funding availability)	9	3 households will have lead or one joint tenant under 25years old. 3 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 25

		years old 3 households will have lead or one joint tenant over 40 years old.
--	--	---

Residents of the flats are not permitted to have any pets.

**5. Households with Support Needs**

There will be no more than 10% of households with support needs. For these nominees, a supported housing needs assessment and appropriate support package to be in place at the time of the nomination and for the foreseeable future past the tenancy commencement date.

**6. Anti Social Behaviour**

If any nominee has a history of Anti Social Behaviour then CHP reserves the right to reject the applicant in line with good practice. Where necessary CHP will take up references from previous landlords and undertake criminal record checks

**7. Rent Arrears.**

If a nominee has a history of Rent Arrears then CHP reserves the right to reject the applicant in line with good practice. Where necessary CHP will take up references from previous landlords and confirm that the arrear figure is £500 or under and that a payment plan has been in place and kept to for at least 6 months prior to housing on the scheme.

Signed:..... Date:.....

Name: ..... Position: .....

For and on behalf of Braintree District Council

Signed:..... Date:.....

Name: ..... Position: .....

For and on behalf of CHP.