

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN

Rainbow Way, off Seaward Way, Minehead



The Aims and Objectives

For Somerset Council to create a sustainable and balanced community, whilst contributing to meeting varying housing needs of applicants who are included on the housing register.

To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and harmoniously and with a commitment to helping to create and maintain a vibrant community.

Whilst the lettings plan is designed to afford the best possible chance of creating and maintaining a stable and safe community, Somerset Council is committed to meet housing need in the area. However, the existence of the lettings plan may mean that vacancies will not always be allocated to the applicant who can demonstrate the greatest housing need. Applicants with a lower priority may be considered for any allocation if their housing may help to maintain a stable community.

This Local Lettings Plan is intended to cover both the first lets of these properties and any subsequent relets.

The Area – Rainbow Way, off Seaward Way, Minehead

The Rainbow Way development is situated to the east of Minehead town centre close to the A39 and Butlins holiday camp. The site adjoins Minehead Cricket Club and is accessed via a roundabout on to Luttrell Way from Seaward Way which also serves a new Premier Inn hotel, Brewers Fayre and the Minehead Community Hospital as well as adjoining the sports pitches for West Somerset College to the southwest of the site. A bus stop is available approximately 2 minutes' walk to the south with services into the town centre, Taunton, Porlock and Bridgwater.

The Scheme

The scheme comprises of 54 properties in total all are Affordable Rented Homes.

No.	Type	Beds	Pers	size m2
17	Flat	1	2	50
15	Flat	2	3	61
1	Flat (wheelchair adapted)	2	3	70
2	Chalet Bungalow (wheelchair adapted)	2	4	79
10	House	2	4	79
5	House	3	5	93
2	House	3	5	99
2	House	4	6	121
54	TOTALS	102	177	4099

Tenancy Type

Affordable Rent, set as 80% of open market rent, capped a Local Housing Allowance. Affordable Rent includes service charges.

Adaptable Houses

There is one 2 bed ground floor apartment, and two chalet bungalows with disabled bathroom and bedroom on the ground floor, and a further able-bodied bedroom upstairs. The adaptable homes will be advertised and labelled appropriately on Homefinder Somerset.

The Council Lettings Team will inform the District Occupational Therapist (OT) Team of the forthcoming new homes, so they can encourage their clients to register on Homefinder Somerset with the appropriate banding and eligibility criteria appropriately highlighted.

At the point of advertisement, the Lettings Team will notify the OT to ensure that their priority need clients are able to bid on the homes.

The need for this type of property will supersede local connection unless a resident with local connection has been identified as requiring said adaptable home.

Lettings Criteria

The vacancies will be advertised through Homefinder Somerset, the Choice Based Lettings system. The property advertisements will stipulate a Local Lettings Plan is in place and summarise which households will be given preference.

To achieve and maintain community stability, bids will be sought in respect of applicants in order to try and maintain a good mix for the community taking into account economic status, scheme layout and household size, age and make-up.

There are 17 x 1 bedroom flats on this development. In the first instance allocations to these flats will be organised to ensure a mixture of tenants to include:

- Those in employment or voluntary work
- gold band applicants
- silver or bronze bands with a preference to those where there is an accepted homeless duty.

We aim to make best use of our housing stock; therefore, houses are unlikely to initially be under occupied.

All these homes will be let at Affordable Rent.

Local Connection

Preference will be given to applicants with a local connection to Minehead.

A local connection is defined in priority order as:

1. Ordinarily resident within the Parish of Minehead
2. Strong local connections with the Parish of Minehead including
 - a. having a Close Family Association and/or
 - b. any periods of ordinary residence not immediately before the date upon the Affordable Housing Unit becomes vacant and/or
 - c. permanent employment in Minehead
3. Immediately prior to the allocation of an Affordable Housing Unit have been ordinarily resident or have a Close Family Association or permanent employment within the adjoining parishes of Minehead Without, Selworthy, Wootton Courtenay, Timberscombe and Dunster
4. Any person registered on the Homefinder Somerset Register. If there is no one available on the Homefinder Somerset Register any person approved in writing by the Development Enabling Specialist (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld)

Exclusions

Any refusals will be made in accordance with the Council's Lettings Policy.

On completion of the advertisement cycle, the successful applicant will be assessed by the Council officer. All applicants will be required to answer specific questions relating to their past conduct and that of household members. The Council will require applicants consent to contact previous landlords or other agencies in relation to their application. Criminal records may be checked for new applicants though spent convictions won't be taken into account.

1. Any internal transfers applying through Homefinder Somerset, must have a clear rent account and no current breaches of their tenancy.
2. Substance misuse is recognised as a major contributing factor in anti-social behaviour. Recent substance misuse maybe considered as reason for refusal.
3. Applicants recently evicted from a registered provider or Local Authority will not be considered.
4. If an applicant has support needs, an up-to-date support plan must be in place.

Equality & Diversity

The lettings plan is intended to work alongside the equal opportunities policies of the Council. It should ensure that the assessment and nomination process does not discriminate against households on the grounds of gender, race, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, age or disability and enables applicants with diverse needs to access accommodation on this scheme. The aim is to ensure that the community at Rainbow Way reflects the diversity of the community within the Somerset area.

Monitoring and review

Careful monitoring of the bidding process and the management of the scheme will take place six months after the first allocations have been made. Monitoring will include:

- Number of refusals of offers and reasons
- Number of transfers out of the area being requested and the reason for this
- Number of re-lets

This will enable us to:

- Identify trends and common complaints
- Consider the overall success of the lettings plan
- Make changes to the lettings plan if required

Name.....Louisa Hill.....

PositionLead Specialist , PRS access, Temporary accommodation and
Homefinder.....

Signature.....Louisa Hill.....

Date.....30/03/2023.....

On behalf of Somerset Council