

Local Lettings Plan (LLP) for Kings Hill phase 5 (sites 5.2 & 5.3)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This plan applies to the 84 homes in Kings Hill (59 provided at affordable rents and 25 as shared ownership homes) provided by MHS homes group (MHS):

Tenure/unit type	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	Totals
Affordable rent	20	34	5	0	59
Shared ownership	6	14	1	4	25

There is no lift provision

There are level access to bathrooms for all ground floor flats.

Shared ownership share purchases will start from 25%.

- 1.2 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) has nomination rights to the rented properties managed by MHS and this Local Lettings Plan (LLP) is designed to support sustainable letting on the development and balance maximising meeting housing need whilst seeking the prevention of potential management problems.
- 1.3 There may be exceptional circumstances in which TMBC and MHS agree to allocate a home outside of this LLP.
- 1.4 This LLP gives priority to applicants with a local connection to the immediate area of the development, those with a local connection to Kings Hill ward and East Malling, West Malling and Offham ward will have highest priority. This plan will also aim to achieve 50% of lettings to economically active households to prevent a concentration of residents wholly dependent on welfare benefits.
- 1.5 Commercial vehicles cannot be parked on these two developments. Residents will not be able to park a white van or any commercial vehicle at their home, or within the residential area of this development. There is a requirement not to park any heavy goods vehicle, commercial vehicle, caravan, boat trailer or other similar type of vehicle on any part of the property, other than a garage.

2.0 Choice Based Letting Scheme

- 2.1 All affordable homes will be advertised by MHS via Kent HomeChoice (Choice Based Letting (CBL) scheme). For first let, this will be as early as possible prior to handover of the scheme. Advertisements will clearly state a Lettings Plan applies giving priority to applicants with a local connection to the immediate area.
- 2.2 Applicants wishing to be considered for homes, including existing tenants seeking a transfer, must be included on the Council's housing register. When vacant properties are advertised, applicants should bid in the usual way on Kent HomeChoice. A shortlist of applicants will be produced when the bidding cycle closes and prioritised as set out below. The highest priority applicant will usually be offered the property.

3.0 Prioritisation criteria

- 3.1 There are two considerations that will inform the prioritisation of households for the allocation of properties in the following order *excluding any accessible ground floor flats*:

- A) Local connection
- B) Economic activity

Ground floor accessible flats will be considered using the above prioritisation criteria and medical need for a ground floor accessible home. Households with a need for accessible accommodation who also meet prioritisation criteria A or B will be prioritised for these homes. Next priority will be to those with a medical need for an accessible home, regardless of meeting criteria A or B.

- 3.2 A) Local connection

Priority will be given to households with a local connection to Kings Hill ward and East Malling, West Malling and Offham ward, in line with the definition of local connection in the Council's Housing Allocation Scheme.

Households in temporary accommodation (TA) will have their local connection considered based on their last settled accommodation before placement in TA, or through family. This is to ensure they are treated fairly, regardless of where they are placed in TA.

- 3.3 B) Economic activity

This plan aims for 50% of homes to be let to economically active households; where the lead or joint applicant is permanently employed or in work-based training.

Applicants will be required to evidence their employment or training information to MHS as part of the offer and pre-tenancy checks.

- 3.4 Ground floor accessible flats will be prioritised for households with a medical need for accessible ground floor homes. Prioritisation criteria A and B will be applied to prioritise households with a medical need for ground floor. If there are no such households or the shortlist has been exhausted, the properties will be prioritised for any household with a medical need for an accessible ground floor home.

If there are no suitable households with a medical need for an accessible home the remaining homes will be allocated in the same way as the other flats, with criteria A and B applying in the first instance.

4.0 Shortlisting

- 4.1 MHS's Lettings Team will contact households who have placed a bid for a property to check and verify if they meet any of the criteria outlined in this plan and assign priority in the order set out in 3.0 in consultation with the Council's Housing Solutions team.

This may be before the end of the bidding cycle to speed up the process, but it must be made clear to household that this is an information checking discussion and it not an offer of housing.

- 4.2 In the event of two or more applicants sharing top priority in line with the criteria in this lettings plan, registration date will be used to determine priority.

5.0 Allocation Process

- 5.1 Homes will be allocated as follows:

- MHS will notify the Council when shortlisting is complete and provide evidence of the shortlisting process for verification purposes
- MHS will invite the applicant at the top of the shortlist for interview and to view the home
- Applicants will need to provide any information requested, and confirm they meet MHS's criteria as outlined in their Lettings Policy

- 5.2 MHS will allocate the homes in line with this local lettings plan and TMBC's Housing Allocation Scheme.

- 5.3 Applicants will be offered a starter tenancy, Assured (non-shorthold) periodic tenancy in line with MHS' Tenancy Policy. Applicants who are transferring from a Registered Provider or Local Authority will be offered an agreement with the same security of tenure (those with an Assured or Secure tenancy will be given an Assured [non-shorthold} Tenancy).

6.0 Intermediate housing - approach to shared ownership sales

6.1 All homes will be advertised by MHS online and prioritisation will be informed by government policy and local connection to TMBC.

6.2 There are two considerations that will inform the prioritisation of households, in the following order:

A) Households awarded priority for Help to Buy under any relevant government policy or guidance and capital funding criteria in place at the time of sale/re-sale (for example serving military personnel and former members of the British Armed Forces honourably discharged in the last two years and households who are existing rented social housing residents (housing association and local authority)).

B) Local connection

Priority will be given to households with a local connection to Kings Hill ward and East Malling, West Malling and Offham ward.

Secondary priority will then be given to households with a local connection to the rest of the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling.

Local connection criteria will be in line with the definition of local connection in the Council's relevant affordable home ownership policy or in the absence of such policy as follows:

For Shared Ownership sales you have a local connection if you:

- currently live in the borough and have lived here for at least the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years; or
- are permanently employed (full time or part time) in the borough, or need to move into our borough in order to take up an offer of permanent employment; or
- have close family members (parent, step-parents, brothers/sisters including step siblings, adult children (aged over 18) and *grandparents* who currently live in the borough and have lived here for at least the last five years.

6.3 If there are no interested eligible buyers with a local connection, homes may then be sold to any household eligible for Shared Ownership in line with such Government criteria as may be in place at the time of sale/re-sale.

6.4 At the point of first sale, a period of three months will be made for prioritisation of households with a local connection to TMBC; three months will be from the point the home/s are actively marketed and available to view/a show home available. At first sale the show home may be a similar property within the development if one isn't available in the block where the homes are to be provided.

For re-sales, priority will be given to any households with a local connection within the marketing period alongside the Help to Buy criteria for any interested buyers.

7.0 Review Process

- 7.1 This lettings plan has been drawn up in partnership between Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and MHS Housing. Both parties are positive about the principles of the lettings plan and are keen to see successful long-term lettings achieved at the new scheme.
- 7.2 This Local Lettings plan will be reviewed annually and any amendments will be agreed by both parties. MHS will collect household data to enable compliance with the principles of this agreement to be monitored and will share this with Tonbridge and Malling Council annually. The review may consider:
- Turnover of vacancies
 - Failed tenancies and the reasons for failure
 - Households accessing or needing support services
 - Anti-social behaviour and its impact
 - General tenant satisfaction
 - Any changes to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council or MHS's policies.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Signed by:



Names (s): Eleanor Hoyle

Designation: Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental

Date: 16 April 2024

MHS Homes Group

Signed by:



Names(s): Louise Humphrey

Designation: Company secretary

Date: