

# **Badbury Park, Swindon - New Build Lettings Plan - Nov 2018**

## **Background**

Badbury Park is a large new housing development, situated three miles west from Swindon town centre. It is well connected to road services and in easy reach of both the M4 and A34. There are good bus links to the town, railway station and local services, including the hospital.

There is a mixture of tenure on there with a large number of privately owned properties on the estate. GreenSquare currently owns 49 affordable rented properties on the development comprising of:

- 12 x 1 bedroom flats;
- 11 x 2 bedroom houses;
- 17 x 3 bedroom houses; and
- 9 x 4 bedrooms houses.

## **Further acquisitions**

Continuing development in the area means the social housing in this area will increase.

9 x 1 bedroom flats which were originally ear marked for LCHO but due to lack of market sales will convert to affordable rent tenures. These properties (1-9/125 Hommington Avenue) are located in an area surrounded by private owners and are completed to a high internal standard beyond the usual scope of affordable housing, i.e. built in appliances and high spec kitchen/bathroom. In principle agreement with SBC is for these to be allocated for key workers and a separate nominations agreement will be developed in due course.

GreenSquare is acquiring 2 x 3 bedroom houses in March 2019, with future plans for more properties in 2019/2020.

## **Objectives of the Lettings Plan are to:**

- Ensure the new residents integrate well to form a cohesive, safe and sustainable community;
- Residents have a high level of satisfaction with their homes and neighbourhood;
- Minimise turn over and reduce voids; and
- Ensure that the needs of local residents and the wider community are reflected within the development.

## **Current Estate Management Issues**

There has been some ASB, involving drug / alcohol. We had a few individual households causing a problems and one tenancy ended with eviction for ASB. Minor issues relating to problems with visitors using allocated property parking spaces are being monitored and have largely been resolved.

## **The Lettings Process**

All applicants will have a housing need in accordance with the Swindon Council allocations policy. Nominated applicants will be subject to a Housing and Support Needs Assessment, including a rent affordability check. All applications will be assessed in accordance with the GreenSquare lettings policy.

Properties will be advertised using the criteria set out in the lettings plan.

Applicants may be interviewed by a GreenSquare Housing Officer and/or Tenancy Sustainment Officer as part of the allocation assessment process.

Following the first bidding cycle, if no suitable applicants are identified, the properties will re- advertised with the option to consider those with a three bedroom need, who can demonstrate they can afford the rent. However, priority will be given to applicants with a four bedroom need. Following two rounds of adverts, the properties may be advertised more broadly. Applicants identified through this method must have a demonstrated local connection to Swindon BC.

Local connection to Swindon BC means:

- Resident within the Borough of Swindon for two years or more
- Have a close relative living in the Borough of Swindon for two years or more
- Be employed within the Borough of Swindon

Properties which are wheelchair accessible / lifetime homes or adapted facilities, will be clearly marked as such on the adverts, with preference given to applicants with a demonstrated need for modified housing.

New tenants will be offered starter tenancies, except where they already hold a secure or assured tenancy.

## **Assessment considerations:**

- A minimum of 50 percent of applications need to be allocated to economically active households.

- Applicants with any history of problematic drug or alcohol use, will only be considered if they have successfully completed a programme of treatment or can demonstrate they have been free of addiction for at least 12 months.
- Applicants with a history of anti-social behaviour will only be considered if they have successfully held a tenancy for the last 2 years And we are provided with satisfactory references. This is consistent with GreenSquare policy. We would need full disclosure of past activities so we can effectively assess and manage the risk.
- Applicants with mental health issues require a full disclosure of any such issues in order that we can undertake a risk assessment to establish appropriate support is in place and will continue for a minimum of 12 months and that the tenancy will be sustainable.
- The ground floor flats will be prioritised for applicants needing ground floor / accessible accommodation.
- Police checks may be carried out as necessary to ensure that we reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour.
- Allocations for flats 1-9/125 Hommington Avenue for will be made to applicants on the key worker housing register.

This lettings plan applies to the initial letting only and will be reviewed in 12 months' time to assess the housing outcomes.