

**LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN**  
**MARLBOROUGH PARK, SWINDON**  
**WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**  
**SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**&**  
**PLACES FOR PEOPLE**

Marlborough Park is a multi-tenure purpose built development of 616 units of accommodation, within which a total of 13 x 1 bed flats, 11 x 2 bed flats, 9 x 2 bed houses and 3 x 3 bed houses have been developed for social rent .

**Aims and Objectives**

To work with Swindon Borough Council in an attempt to achieve a sustainable and balanced community which can contribute to meeting the varying housing needs of applicants who are included on the Swindon Borough Council housing needs register.

To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and harmoniously and where there is 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, Places for People remains committed to ensuring it meets its statutory obligations in assisting Swindon Borough Council to meet housing need in the area. However, the existence of a 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 an allocation if their housing may help to maintain a stable community.

**The Area – Marlborough Park, Swindon**

Marlborough Park is situated just on the edge of Swindon old Town on Pipers Way. The surrounding area is occupied mostly by existing owner-occupiers. There are schools within close proximity and large amounts of green space for walking and outside play. Good transport links are also easily accessible to Swindon town centre and other shopping areas. The M4 is easily accessible and Europe's largest covered designer outlet village is just a 10-minute drive away and within five minutes drive of Marlborough Park is Coate Water Country Park

In view of the density of accommodation sensitive allocations are required to ensure any anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance etc are kept to a minimum. Consideration will also need to be given to the limited parking accompanying the houses as there is only one space to each property.

**Tenancy Type**

All new applicants accepted onto the scheme will be given Starter Tenancies. The conduct of the tenancy will be reviewed during the initial 12 month period and if no breaches of tenancies are identified then the tenancy will automatically be converted to an Assured Tenancy on its first anniversary.

If any breach of tenancy is identified during this initial 12 month period then a decision may be made to extend the period of the Starter Tenancy or to bring the tenancy to an end.

If a decision is taken to end the tenancy, the tenant has the right of appeal.

**Lettings**

At first let upon handover of the development, Places for People will request 100% nominations. Thereafter 75% of all dwellings becoming available for let will be allocated via Swindon Borough Council's Common Housing Register.

Places for People may establish an Allocations Panel comprising of Officers within the organisation. The Allocations Panel reserves the right to make the final decision on allocating tenancies.

The vacancies will be advertised through Swindon Borough Councils Choice Based Lettings Scheme entitled 'Swindon Home Bid'. The property advertisement will be worded in order to ensure this Local Lettings Plan is in place.

In an effort to achieve and maintain community stability, nominations will be sought in respect of applicants in order to try and maintain the following target allocations.

**The following targets are aspirational and subject to an annual review;**

Households with a local connection to Wroughton	20%
Households from Band A	5%
Households from Band B	75%

Some allocations may be made to those with a local connection to the village of Wroughton where the Council can demonstrate a demand for local residents to be housed in the area.

### **Exclusions**

Applicants with a known history of convictions for criminal or anti-social behaviour in the last 3 years will not be considered for accommodation within this scheme. After this time the prospective customer must be able to clearly demonstrate to our satisfaction that they have had a proven record of no anti-social behaviour or criminal behaviour.

Applicants with known history/convictions of/for drug abuse or drug dealing in the last 3 years will not be considered for accommodation within this development.

Applicants with known history/convictions of/for prostitution or 'pimping' in the last 3 years will not be considered for accommodation within this development.

Nominations will not be considered from those who have a debt outstanding to their existing landlord including present rent, former rent arrears or recharges. Two references will be required.

For existing RSL or Council tenants, their present accommodation must be in a good decorative order.

On receipt of a nomination a home visit will be made by relevant Housing Association staff. All applicants will be required to answer specific questions relating to their past conduct and that of household members. Places for People will require the applicants consent to contact previous landlords or other agencies for confirmation if required.

### **Under-occupation**

In order seek to attain and maintain the base targets contained within the lettings plan under-occupation by no more than one bedroom will be permitted to ensure child density levels do not exceed manageable levels.

In seeking to meet lettings targets, Places for People and Swindon Borough Council acknowledge and agree that some levels of under-occupation of accommodation are likely to occur; wherever possible this will be minimised.

## **Ethnicity**

This lettings plan is intended to work alongside the equal opportunities policies of both Swindon Borough Council and Places for People. It should ensure that the assessment and nomination process does not discriminate against households and enables applicants with diverse needs to access accommodation on this scheme. The overall aim is to ensure that the community at Swindon Road reflects the diversity of the community within the Swindon area.

## **Refusing a Nomination**

Should Places for People refuse a nomination then the case will be discussed with the Local Authority Partner and written reasons for the refusal will be provided, that will be consistent with the overarching objective of achieving a sustainable community and will ensure reasonableness.

## **Monitoring and Review**

Careful monitoring of the allocation process and the management of the scheme will routinely take place as an on going process and as a minimum at every turnover of tenancy in order to identify at the earliest possible time any that might need to be reconsidered in respect of future allocations within the scheme.

The following should be carefully monitored by Swindon Borough Council and Places for People Housing Association

- Number of refusals of offers and reasons
- Number of transfers out of the scheme being requested and the reasons for this.
- Number of Mutual Exchanges out of the scheme being requested and the reasons for this.
- Number and nature of any complaints by residents and third parties
- Number of children housed by age group
- Ethnicity of those housed
- Origin of application
- Number of re-lets
- Reasons why tenants have chosen to leave the scheme

Monitoring of the lettings plan should formally be undertaken by Places for People and Swindon Borough Council on an annual basis. The purpose of the annual review will be to;

- Identify and trends/common complaints
- To consider targets not met or exceeded
- To consider overall success of the lettings plan
- To review and , where considered necessary, set new targets