

Gravesham Borough Council



Local Lettings Plan

Bishops Court St Patricks Gardens, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4BA

1) Introduction

This Lettings Plan sets out the strategy, tools and targets to guide the letting of 22* affordable rent properties at Bishops Court, St Patrick's Gardens, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4BA.

The properties are managed by Gravesham Borough Council and nominations are via Kent Home Choice (Choice Based Lettings Scheme).

The plan is designed to support sustainable lettings in accordance with the Kent Sustainable Communities Protocol.

The aim is to establish a balanced and sustainable community as well as meet housing need whilst preventing potential management problems on the development. It is essential that the social housing scheme is successful and the development is an attractive place where people want to live.

2) Property Type & Tenure Mix

The affordable rented scheme consists of the following dwellings: -

- 7 x 1 bedroom 2 persons apartments
- 1 x 2 bedroom 3 persons apartment (wheelchair)*
- 15 x 2 bedroom 4-person apartments

Schedule of Accommodation

Flat Block	1b/2p	2b/3p	2b/4p
Third Floor			6
Second Floor	2		4
First Floor	2		4
Ground Floor	3	1*	1
Total Units	7	1	15

*wheelchair unit not advertised via the Kent Home Choice Lettings scheme.

3) Objectives of the Lettings Plan:

The following sets out the objectives of the Plan are:

- To establish a balanced community, by letting homes to a mix of applicants and household sizes;
- To achieve a child density and occupancy level that will encourage sustainability, and allow for the children to be best accommodated;

4) Specific Details for Nominations

- a. To allow one person or a couple to reside in a one bedroom flat.
- b. To allow up to 4 people (a maximum of 2 children) to reside in a 2 bedroom 4 person flat which will be advertised for 2-4 people.
- c. For 100% of all properties will be allocated to existing social housing tenants registered on the transfer list in line with the shortlisting criteria outlined in Section 6.
- d. Aim to achieve an even spread of ages for children living in the homes wherever possible and allocation will be subject to the ages of the children taking into account our Housing Allocations Scheme.

5) Nomination Process

All of the affordable rent homes within this development will be advertised via the Kent Home Choice Lettings scheme*. The adverts will clearly state that a Lettings Plan is in operation and will be available for applicants to view.

Applicants wishing to be considered for homes including existing tenants seeking a transfer must be included on Gravesham Borough Council's housing register.

When vacant properties are advertised, applicants should bid in the usual way. At the close of bidding, a shortlist of applicants who have placed bids will be produced. The highest priority applicant that meets the criteria stipulated in the Lettings Plan will usually be offered the property. In the event of two or more applicants sharing the priority band, their registration date order will be used to determine priority.

6) Priority

Gravesham Borough Council will allocate the rented properties and select which applicants will be offered in line with Gravesham Borough Council's Housing Allocation Scheme.

Priority will be given to existing GBC tenants who are under-occupying accommodation, have an immediate need to move due to medical & welfare needs and/or are experiencing major overcrowding. Transfer applications will be subject to tenancy conduct checks and satisfactory property inspection. Further, applicants will be assessed against their compliance with their tenancy agreement conditions.

100% of vacancies will be allocated to the following groups of applicants, in order of their priority on the housing register. The groups, in priority order, are:

- 1) Applicants who are transferring from other GBC Properties.
 - a. Gravesham Borough Council tenants currently residing in St Patrick's Gardens;
 - b. Tenants who are under occupying their current accommodation;
 - c. Tenants that are experiencing overcrowding and/or have a medical/welfare need
- 2) Tenants who are eligible on the housing register for another reason.

7) Shortlisting

Where applicants have expressed an interest in vacant properties by placing a bid, the Council's Allocations Team will verify the case and carry out the following checks:

- a. Applicants and members of the household will not be the perpetrators of serious and/or ongoing nuisance or anti-social behaviour at their current home or had any legal action as a result of nuisance or anti-social behaviour taken against them including a Notice of Seeking Possession.
- b. Applicants will not have been evicted for nuisance or anti-social behaviour from any previous addresses. Discretion may be exercised if the applicant can show that they have over a period of not less than 2 years rectified their behaviour.
- c. Applicants and members of the household will not have a recent criminal conviction which will impact upon the management of the tenancy or the local community. In such instances, a risk assessment will be completed.
- d. Applicants will not be in rent arrears or Council Tax arrears for their current home. If arrears are because of a delay in Housing Benefit such that a Housing Benefit or Universal Credit such that a Housing Benefit or Universal Credit payment is owing equivalent to the whole of the arrears, applicants will need to show this is the case and that they have dealt with their claim appropriately and are paying any estimated contributions (e.g. non-dependent deductions) regularly.
- e. Applicants will not have been evicted for rent arrears from a previous home
- f. Applicants will not have any outstanding or current tenancy notice for any breaches of tenancy

8) Role of Gravesham Borough Council

- a. Validate shortlist of applicants
- b. Carry out the verification of potential nominees
- c. Monitor the Lettings Plan on an annual basis to ensure it remains viable

Gravesham Borough Council

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Position: Director (Housing)

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