Guidance

This locally developed Lettings plan is guided by Medway Council’s priorities:

- **Medway: A place to be proud of**
  - A clean and green environment
  - Medway on the Map

- **Maximise regeneration and economic growth**
  - A strong diversified economy
  - Residents with jobs and skills
  - Preventing homelessness
  - Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway’s residents
  - Getting around Medway

- **Supporting Medway’s people to realise their potential**
  - Older and disabled people living independently
  - Resilient families
  - Healthy and active communities
  - All children achieving their potential in schools

This plan is compliant with Medway Council’s Allocations Policy and Rent Setting Policy.
1. Description of sites

Centenary Gardens is a development of 32 homes and the properties consist of:

- 18 x 1 bedroom Lifetime Homes bungalows
- 5 x 1 bed bungalows built to at least full wheelchair standard
- 9 x 2 bed bungalows built to at least full wheelchair standard

2. Aim

The aim of this local lettings plan is to allocate to those in housing need and to create a thriving and sustainable community. It will also aim to assist those households who are under occupying social housing properties and facing financial challenges in terms of rent and tenancy sustainment and thereby moving will release much needed larger social housing stock in Medway for allocation to larger households.

3. Age distribution and child density

To ensure sustainable communities, where children are to share a bedroom, they should be of an appropriate age to ensure that a family does not seek to move from their home within five years due to overcrowding. This will be assessed using the bedroom criteria of the Medway Allocations Policy.

4. Allocation and lettings

All applicants for the wheelchair accommodation will need to have an identified requirement for this type of dwelling, which has been confirmed by supporting medical information. All other accommodation will be let to those with an identified need for either level access living, or a wet room.
To enable social housing tenants who are under occupying their current accommodation to move to smaller accommodation and free up larger social housing properties 50% of the bungalows will be let to Medway Council transfer applicants and social housing transfer tenants using the following criteria:

- Medway Council transfer tenants who are under occupying
- Medway Council transfer tenants
- Social Housing transfer tenants within Medway who are under occupying
- Social Housing transfer tenants within Medway
- Other households

5. Other criteria

- Nominations for transfer tenants will be visited by a Housing Officer prior to a formal offer
- Where the transfer applicants property has not been maintained in accordance with the conditions of the tenancy, the council reserves the right to withdraw an offer
- Applicants and member of the household will not be the perpetrators of serious and/or ongoing nuisance or anti-social behavior at their current home, or had any legal action taken against them including a Notice Seeking Possession
- Applicants will not have been evicted for nuisance or anti-social behavior from any previous addresses. Discretion may be used if an applicant can show that they have over a period of not less than three years rectified their behavior
- Applicants will not be in rent arrears for their current home where a Notice of Seeking Possession has been served because of the arrears. Discretion will be used if the arrears relate to a delay in Housing Benefit payment, where the arrears will be paid in full, once the claim has been processed (evidence will be required)
• Any debts that are owed to the Council must be paid prior to an offer of accommodation, unless the monies owed can be cleared as a result of any incentive payments that may be applicable as a result of moving to smaller accommodation. Details of Medway Councils Tenant Incentive Scheme can be found at the following link.

• Consideration may be given to allocation of property where arrears are evident and tenants can evidence that the arrears are only caused by changes to Housing Benefit as a result of recent Welfare Reform changes due to the bedroom size criteria due to under occupation of the existing tenancy. Any decision will be based on an agreement for a payment plan to be signed by the tenant to clear the former tenancy arrears if rehousing takes place where this situation arises.

• Applicants and members of the household will not be connected to any activity in the use or supply of drugs, or any alcohol or substance misuse

• Applicants and members of the household will not have any outstanding criminal convictions or recent criminal convictions that would impact upon the management of the tenancy or the local community

• Applicants will not have any outstanding or current tenancy notice for any breaches of tenancy

• Any person considered to be in need of support to maintain their tenancy will not be made an offer of accommodation without evidence that support is in place

6. Monitoring

Local Lettings Plans will be monitored on an annual basis and will include:-

Whether the estate of bungalows is now more popular, i.e. monitor it against the original housing management indicators of the defined problems, such as void levels, number of transfer-out requests, turnover rate, refusal rates, occurrences of vandalism and graffiti

• resident satisfaction
• economic status of households against targets and local registered social landlord (RSL) averages, using CORE returns
• Reduction in number of Medway tenants impacted by Welfare Reform benefit changes due to size criteria
• Reduction in number of Social Housing stock properties under occupied.
7. **Responsible Officer**

Overall responsible for effective delivery and monitoring of this plan is that of the Head of Housing Management.

Signed

Dated 4th May 2016

Deputy Leader and Housing and Community Services Portfolio Member

Signed

Dated 9th May 2016

Head of Housing Management

Dated April 2016