

AFFORDABLE HOMES NOMINATION POLICY – DISCOUNTED SALE MARKET HOUSING

1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy – Discounted Sale Market Housing ('the Policy') is to contribute to the creation of sustainable communities, through ensuring that a proportion of affordable homes for sale, within new private developments, are allocated to those people in the greatest need, in a fair and transparent manner.

2. BACKGROUND

In order to take advantage of the opportunities presented through the inclusion of affordable homes for sale within new, private sector developments, the District Council of Chester le Street ('the Council') is obliged to have a nominations policy in relation to those homes which have in accordance with Local Plan requirements been built as affordable homes.

The Council will publicise the availability of discounted sale market housing affordable homes and will invite applications from those persons who consider themselves suitable for the discounted sale market housing.

The Council will maintain a list of suitable applicant(s) 'Nominees' and will provide the names of eligible Nominees to those persons responsible for disposing of the affordable home(s).

The Council will provide the names of Nominees in accordance with any terms outlined in any contract or agreement to those persons responsible for disposing of the affordable homes(s).

Nothing in this Policy will require the Council to provide finance or financial advice for the purposes of enabling residents to purchase properties under this scheme.

The Policy will adhere to the principles of the Human Rights Act and is subject to the Data Protection Act.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible to as a Nominee the Applicant(s) must:

- Live in the District of Chester-le-Street, unless there are insufficient Applicants from the District for the number of Nominees required;
- Be aged 18 or over;
- Not be subject to immigration control under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 unless granted refugee status or exceptional or indefinite leave to remain with no conditions or limitations;
- Not be guilty of previous unacceptable behaviour which makes them unsuitable to be a Nominee (for example be subject to an ASBO or of a previous Possession Order);
- Be able to demonstrate and evidence that they have a local housing need in line with the following points matrix:

NEED	POINTS
Single person living with friends or family	5
Couple living with friends or family	10
Single adult or couple with one or more children	20
Family with child under 11 living above the ground floor	5
Current property without inside toilet	10
Current property without bath or shower	10
Current property without hot water	10
Current property without heating	10
Current property without kitchen	10
Shortage of bedrooms	10 points for each bedroom short
Victim of domestic violence, sexual or racial harassment or witness or victim of crime	20
Need to move to access specialist medical treatment, employment, training, or educational opportunities	10
Key worker (ie NHS staff, teacher, police, prison service, probation service, fire / rescue service)	15

4. IMPLEMENTATION

The strategic housing team within the Council are responsible for implementation of the policy.

The strategic housing team will pass on the details of successful Nominees to the developer of the new property, subject to the Nominees meeting the eligibility criteria above, and with priority given to those with the most points according to the points matrix above.

Nominations will be made on the following basis:

- 1 bedroomed properties: single people;
- 2 bedroomed properties: single people, couples or households with a maximum of 2 children (under the age of 11 if mixed sex), or with children who do not live with them but have regular access;
- 3 bedroomed properties: households with 2 or more children or households with 3 or more single adults;
- 4 bedroomed properties: households with 3 or more children or 4 or more single adults.

In the event of any changes to circumstances, at any point up to the completion of the purchase of the property, which might have a material effect on the points to which an Applicant qualifies, the Applicant must inform the strategic housing team at the Council of those changes. Prior to nomination, the Council will amend the points allocated to the Applicant. Between nomination and completion, the Council will reserve the right to do so.

Applicants will have the right to appeal to the Head of Regeneration against any decisions made by the Council relating to eligibility or points allocations.

5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The policy will be evaluated, both in terms of impact in contributing to its policy goal of contributing to sustainable communities, and in terms of the way in which it is implemented, on a regular basis, through contact with samples of Nominees to affordable housing and outstanding Applicants.

The Policy will be re-assessed on an annual basis, or more regularly if necessary, and will if necessary be amended to take into account the results of the evaluation process outlined above, as well as any changes in any relevant legislation, Council policy or procedure.

6. COMPLAINTS

Complaints can be made at any time through the Council's Complaints and Compliments process.