

Crosslinks, Swindon - New Build Lettings Plan

Background

This development is part of a Barratt Homes development at Upper Stratton, Swindon. GreenSquare will have 22 properties - 15 for affordable rent and 7 for low-cost home ownership.

The properties comprise of 9 X 1 bedroom flats, 3 X 2 bedroom houses, 2 X 3 bedroom houses and one 4 bedroom house. There is a mixture of tenure on the development, with a large number of privately owned properties.

The first three affordable rent properties are due for completion at the beginning of February 2018, with the remainder through May and June.

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.

The Lettings Process

All applicants will have a housing need in accordance with the Swindon Homebid allocations policy. Nominated applicants will be subject to a Housing 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.

Consideration of the benefit cap and the impact on rent affordability may mean the four bedroom property proves hard to let. Following the first bidding cycle, if no suitable applicants are identified, the property will be 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

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 are free of addiction.
- Applicants with a history of anti-social behaviour will only be considered if they have successfully held a tenancy for the last 2 years. 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 for the tenancy to 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.

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