

Local Lettings Policy

Charlotte Gardens



Introduction

In June 2023, the Council will complete the development of 20 new homes at Charlotte Gardens, Sutton in Ashfield. The site, located off Midland Road, fills a brown field space between industrial units at Maun Valley and the neighbouring private residential streets.

Officers have made the best use of the available space on what is a tight site, ensuring space standards are maintained whilst maximising the number of new homes built. There is one road into the site and limited green space available on the street for children living in the family homes.

The site includes the following property mix

Number of units	Property type	Occupancy
6	3 bedroom house	4/5 person (max 3 children)
6	2 bedroom house	3/4 person (max 2 children)
4	1 bedroom ground floor flat	1/2 person
4	2 bedroom first floor flat	2/3 person (max 2 children)

During the Planning stage concerns were raised by residents about the impact of the scheme on the local community and the need to ensure we maintain a balanced and sustainable community. Particular concerns included the impact of maximising the occupancy of each home and worries about anti-social behaviour.

What is a Local Lettings Policy?

Section 166A(6)(b) of the 1996 Housing Act enables housing authorities to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories, provided that overall, the authority is able to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of section 166A (3). This is known as a Local Lettings Policy (LLP).

The Council's Homefinder Lettings Policy states:

11.1.1 A Homefinder landlord may, for specific management reasons advertise a property, or group of properties under a Local Lettings Policy. For example, a Local

Lettings policy may be introduced to address issues such as child density, anti-social behaviour or community cohesion.

11.1.2 When a local lettings policy is to be implemented it will be made public on the Homefinder website. All local lettings policies will take into account local factors such as, the size and composition of the housing register, the stock profile, and the supply and demand of vacant properties.

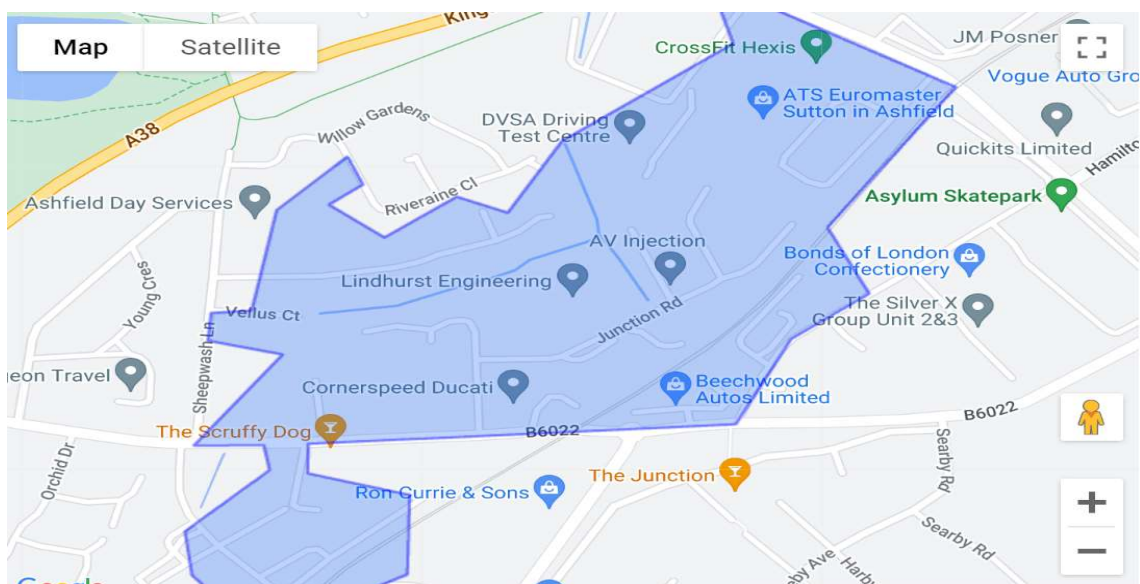
11.1.3 The Homefinder Project Group will be notified of all local lettings policies.

Rationale for using a LLP

It is important to recognise the impact on the local community when letting a significant number of properties for the first time in a location like Charlotte Gardens. A LLP should take account of these concerns and balance them with the need to ensure those in most need are prioritised for rehousing.

Getting specific demographic data relating to the surrounding area and their occupants is difficult, in part because it is only the 2 neighbouring streets that are directly affected. We know that the 2 streets, Leander Close and Mowlands Close contain private family homes, typical 2 and 3 bedroom detached and semi-detached houses. From talking to residents and the local Councillor we know that employment levels are high, that ASB and levels of crime are perceived as being low and that residents have pride in their street and the local area.

In respect of census data, Charlotte Gardens and the 2 neighbouring streets fall within with wider Sutton in Ashfield East E00173368 area, the map below outlines the area in question.



The 2011 data indicates 397 residents living in 164 households, with 2.4 persons per household and a low population density of 16.9 people per hectare. 203 out of 285 adults were economically active, of whom all but 5 were in employment. Of the 82 economically inactive residents 48 were retired.

Police crime information shows a below average number of crimes within 1 mile of Leander Close and Mowlands Close, this is in keeping with the view of the area held by Council's Community Protection Team.

In respect of the site itself, we have already commented on the high density of properties, the access arrangements and limited open space. Consideration must be given to occupancy levels and ensuring that whilst we make the best use of the available properties, we do not maximise the occupancy of every unit.

Terms of the LLP

The following LLP criteria is to apply to the first lets only.

- 50% of new homes will be let to applicants where at least one member of the household is in employment (min 16 hours and long-term contract) or who is making a community contribution*
- 2 bedroom first floor flats – a maximum of 30% of vacancies will be let to families with 2 children.
- 2 bedroom houses –a maximum of 50% of vacancies will be let to families with 2 children.
- 3 bedroom houses –a maximum of 50% of vacancies will be let to families with 3 children. Due to the size of the homes, families with more than 3 children will not be considered as eligible.
- An applicant will not normally be considered if they or any other person included on their application
 - has relevant unspent criminal convictions or
 - has had enforcement action taken against them in respect of anti-social behaviour within the last 3 years or
 - is unable to provide satisfactory references for accommodation they have resided in during the last 5 years.

* Community contribution is defined as an applicant or household member who does voluntary work for at least ten hours per month in Sutton in Ashfield and has done so for at least six months continuously.