



Local Lettings Policy for UK-Armed Forces Personnel

North East Lincolnshire Council

Shoreline Housing Partnership Ltd.

1. Purpose

Local Lettings Policies, under s166A of the Housing Act 1996, enable Local Authorities and their housing partners to allocate certain accommodation to defined groups, in order to meet specific needs or achieve specified housing management or policy objectives.

The Government's Armed Forces Covenant strongly encourages Local Authorities to take account of the needs of serving or former Service personnel when framing their allocation policies, and to give sympathetic consideration to the housing needs of family members of serving or former Service personnel .

In support of the aspirations of the North East Lincolnshire Community Covenant (NELCC) we wish to provide the opportunity for UK armed services, veterans and their families to access new affordable housing in the Borough in order to meet their particular housing need and promote the resettlement of Service personnel in the Borough.

2. Local Lettings Policy

1. **Scope:** This policy will apply to the first lettings by Shoreline Housing Partnership (SHP) of newly acquired properties. This could include both those developed by SHP (with or without Homes & Community Agency or other funding support) and those acquired from developers under Planning Act obligations.
2. **Nature:** The policy will be applicable to all property types falling in the scope of 2.1 above and may be made on the basis of an offer of a tenancy on either an affordable or social rent, or of a shared-ownership or shared-equity purchase, all depending on the nature of the property acquisition in question.
3. **Scale:** This policy will apply to a maximum of 5 (five) such homes per financial year.
4. **Eligibility:**
 - Households must contain either a serving or former member of the UK armed forces (regular or reserve);
 - Households must both successfully register with Home Choice Lincs (HCL) and be assessed as eligible for assistance under both HCL and SHP's relevant policies. When being considered for a social tenancy, eligible households will be prioritised by their assessed housing need and date of registration.
 - Any households presenting to the Local Authority as homeless will be assisted in accordance with the Local Authority's statutory duties, but this

will not preclude them from applying and bidding for housing under this policy.

5. **Relationship with HCL:** The HCL Partnership recognises this proposal as a '*local lettings policy*' for the purposes of the application of HCL policy and consequently such lettings are considered to sit outside the scope of the Common Allocations Policy, although applicants will have to meet the eligibility criteria for registering with Home Choice Lincs.

3. Process

1. When suitable properties become available, the following process will be followed
 - The property will be advertised in the usual manner on Home Choice Lincs. The advertisement will clearly state that priority will initially be given to eligible Service households.
 - At the conclusion of the bidding period, the resulting shortlist will be assessed for Service applicants. Offers will be made first to Service households, ordered by Band (housing need) and their time spent on the housing register in that band. There is no requirement for a local connection to North East Lincolnshire.
 - If there are no eligible Service applicants, the shortlist will continue to be processed in line with Home Choice Lincs policy and procedures.
 - Offers will be made to Service applicants in line with usual SHP practices.
2. In parallel with the process in 3.1 SHP will forward property details to NELCC [Armed Forces Major Events Office] for their promotion of the opportunity.
3. SHP will report annually to both NELCC and NELC on:
 - The number of properties that this policy has been applied to;
 - The number of offers made under this policy, and;
 - The number of lettings and purchases made under this policy.

4. Review

1. The policy will be kept under review by the three partners and may be ended either:
 - With immediate effect by unanimous agreement of the three partners;
 - On three months' notice in writing by any individual partner.
2. For the purposes of the management of the policy the lead persons for each partner are:
 - NELC: Samantha England, Home Options Manager
 - NELCC: Cllr Alex Baxter JP
 - SHP: Rachel Munoz, Head of Housing Management

5. Commencement

This policy is effective from: 1st January 2014.