

Local Letting Scheme  
Poets Park  
Liverpool 3

## **Background/ Introduction**

The Poets Park development is located very close to the City Centre, situated on one of the main gateways to the city on Great Homer Street, and will be adjacent to the expansive new retail and housing development known as Project Jennifer.

The development falls within the North Housing Management area and the Everton Ward which also is on the boundary of Kirkdale Ward. Both fall within the most deprived areas in England. An extract from the Ward Profiles (produced by Liverpool City Council in Autumn 2012) which includes data from the 2001 Census and Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010, is attached at Appendix B.

The site consists of 38 x 2 bedroom houses (seven of these houses are designed for 3 person families), 11 x 3 bedroom houses, and 2 x 4 bedroom houses.

This development is close to the City Centre, the Everton Park leisure centre, the newly-opened Notre Dame school, which includes a state of the art library, North Liverpool Academy, another relatively new school, and the huge new Project Jennifer complex, which will include a large Sainsbury's supermarket and the new improved Great Homer Street market. It is also within walking distance of Everton Park, a new health centre which will be provided as part of Project Jennifer, and places of worship including St. Anthony's Church.

Tenancy sustainability is crucial to this area and it is for this reason we are extending local lettings to this development.

## **Demand/current letting potential**

There are currently 15,132 people registered on Property Pool Plus (PPP) which is the City Council's Choice Based Letting Scheme and used by LMH to allocate our vacant properties. PPP's data has been based on the City's designated Neighbourhoods and not the management areas of the individual Housing Associations. It is not possible, therefore, to extract demand information for LMH's North area or Everton Ward. However, an analysis has been produced for the North area using demand by the postal codes 3, 5 and 6 and this can be summarised as follows:

## Total Demand

Band	City Demand		Liverpool 3		Liverpool 5		Liverpool 6	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>Urgent</b>	289	2%	9	2.5%	19	2.5%	13	1%
<b>High</b>	4360	28%	161	48.5%	223	31%	339	29.5%
<b>Medium</b>	3763	24%	68	20%	177	24.5%	278	24.5%
<b>Low</b>	7178	46%	98	29%	302	42%	516	45%
<b>Total</b>	15590	100%	336	100%	721	100%	1143	100%

- Overall there are 2200 applicants who are currently living in Liverpool 3, 5 and 6, who are registered on PropertyPool Plus. This represents 14% of the total demand.
- Demand from the Urgent Band is low across the City and we are therefore proposing higher percentage targets to the High and Medium Bands. We are anticipating a robust demand for such a prestigious development, particularly in such a popular location, particularly from applicants in full employment.

## BME Demand

Ethnic Origin	City Demand		Liverpool 3		Liverpool 5		Liverpool 6	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
<b>White</b>	12361	79%	255	76%	643	89%	847	74%
<b>BME</b>	1154	7.5%	26	8%	21	3%	145	13%
<b>Unknown</b>	847	5.5%	15	4.5%	27	4%	49	4.5%
<b>Other</b>	1164	7.5%	38	11%	25	4%	95	8%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	64	0.5%	2	0.5%	2	0%	10	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	15590	100%	336	100%	721	100%	1146	100%

- Demand from white applicants living in L3, 5 and 6 is similar to the total demand while demand from applicants from the BME varies within each ward when compared to the City demand. We are hoping that by targeting 10% of the properties to BME applicants it will help to redress some of the imbalances that currently exist within each ward.

## Aims of the Local Letting Scheme

A local lettings scheme introduces flexibility into agreed allocation policies and the purpose of this local letting scheme for Everton is to achieve a balanced community and sustainable tenancies. To help us achieve this we will aim to:

- Create a stable environment and feeling of safety and wellbeing within the estate;
- Reduce void turnover by improving the quality of the living environment and reducing anti social behaviour using robust processes and partnerships.

### **Divergence from the standard policy**

The local letting scheme for this estate differs from our principal Allocation Scheme in the following ways:

- All of the properties on the development will be let at affordable rents (market rates) but any existing LMH tenant with protected rights who accepts a tenancy will keep these rights;
- Applicants with criminal records or a record of anti social behaviour may be rejected if there is concern their activities have not abated and will these properties or surrounding estate. This will be subject to information provided through a police check and any offer will be subject to information obtained via these arrangements;
- Where necessary, supporting information for applicants will be sought from a wider range of sources than usual to establish evidence of previous anti social behaviour or rent arrears.
- The provision of 2 excellent references is a requirement and any offers may be overlooked if this information is not provided;
- Prospective tenants must attend a pre tenancy interview and financial / benefits check to establish applicants' financial status and suitability for the scheme. This approach is being adopted because of both the rent levels and Welfare Reforms;
- Applicants with support needs will only be accepted with a recognised support package ;
- In the event there is insufficient demand from genuine two bedroom applicants, the seven 3 person two bedroom houses will be made available for households comprising of applicants who describe themselves as being part of a couple who are able to confirm they have the necessary finance in place to pay the rent;
- Priority will be given to key workers, residents in full employment or full time education (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay rent).

- Applicants will be required to sign the **Good Neighbour Agreement (Appendix A)**.

The individual circumstances will be taken into account, but as a general rule, applicants with a history of any of the following serious criminal offences or anti social behaviour will not be considered:

- Prostitution (includes convictions for loiter/solicit for purposes of prostitution, tenant/occupier allowing premises to be used as a brothel for prostitution, living off immoral earnings, woman controlling prostitution);
- Robbery (includes convictions for robbery and assault with intent to rob);
- Violent crime (includes convictions for murder, manslaughter, wounding and assaults);
- Drug trafficking offences (includes convictions for production of controlled drugs, supply of controlled drugs, possession with intent to supply controlled drugs, allowing premises to be used for use of controlled drugs);
- Domestic Burglary (includes convictions for burglary of dwelling houses and aggravated burglary dwellings);
- Racially Aggravated offences (includes convictions for racially aggravated assaults, criminal damage and harassment);
- Vehicle crime (includes convictions for theft of vehicle, theft from vehicle, unauthorised take of motor vehicle, aggravated vehicle take, vehicle interference);
- Domestic Violence.

### **Selection Process**

All allocations will be subject to the agreed criteria and all properties will be advertised via PPP. Future voids will continue to be advertised on PPP advising applicants that a local letting scheme is in place and applicants will be required to satisfy the strict criteria already specified. We will continue to give priority to suitable applicants in accordance with the appropriate banding and date order system.

Applicants will be invited to attend a formal interview before an offer is made when the local letting criteria and any additional checks that may be necessary, will be discussed in detail. During this interview, applicants will be

required to demonstrate they understand their responsibilities as a tenant to respect their neighbours and are capable of maintaining and sustaining their tenancy.

To help us achieve the letting criteria, the following targets will be applied:

<b>Band</b>	<b>Sub Band</b>	<b>Proposed target</b>
<b>Urgent</b>	Homeless	2%
	Health/Welfare	
	Regeneration	3%
	Overcrowd x 2	9%
<b>High</b>	Health/Welfare	10%
	Overcrowd x 1	15%
	Disrepair	2%
	Under occupied	25%
<b>Medium</b>	Health/Welfare	4%
	NP Homeless	
	Intentionally homeless	
	Family/friends	20%
<b>Low</b>	Employed	10%
	Not employed	

- Properties will be advertised on PPP and allocations governed strictly by LMH’s own allocations scheme. The agreed % targets specified by LMH and LCC will assist the local circumstances and needs which LMH are looking to address by this local lettings plan.
- 60% of properties will be targeted towards those applicants in full time employment or education or training (where they can demonstrate they have sufficient finance to pay the rent).
- Priority will be given to those applicants who can demonstrate full occupation of the property.
- 10% of the properties will be targeted to BME applicants (this will assist LMH in working towards its committed target of BME applicants) and will help to redress some of the imbalances that currently exist.

**In the event there is insufficient demand:**

Applications from families in the priority bands, who can provide 1 good reference, will also be considered.

## **Consultation**

In developing this policy, we have consulted with the local Tenants and Residents Association, Community Groups, Ward Councillors, Liverpool City Council, and they will continue to be involved in the ongoing monitoring and review.

- Pre Advertisements about the development will be posted at all LMH reception areas and website to promote the scheme and invite interest from residents who currently have registered applications and can demonstrate housing need.

## **Managing the Policy**

All new tenants will be visited within 4 weeks of their tenancy date to complete the settling in visit and will receive further home visits by LMH staff after 3, 6 and 9 months to determine their suitability to continue with the tenancy. During the visits, the following will be discussed:

- any issues raised by the tenant and/or any support needs;
- any tenancy matters including the rent account, any complaints/ASB, property damage;

## **Intended Outcomes**

It is intended that by implementing changes to the way allocations are carried out and to allow a change of tenure within the area, the aims of the policy will be met and this will help us to create a more balanced and sustainable community.

We will monitor and review the policy every twelve months, using the following as indicators of the success:

- Turnover of voids
- Numbers of offers to let a property
- Average void period
- Rent loss
- Average length of tenancy
- Anti Social Behaviour



- Customer satisfaction survey

## **Approved**

(Director of Housing and Customer Services)

(Date)

## **Reviewed**

.....  
(Director of Housing and Customer Services)

.....  
(Date)

**Poets Park  
Good Neighbour Agreement**

**Aims**

Residents in Poet's Park believe that everyone has a right to live in a clean, tidy and peaceful environment.

This agreement sets out what residents and LMH as the landlord are committed to do to make this happen.

We are all different and need to be tolerant of each others' lifestyles. This agreement aims to provide a set of common principles and standards that we can all meet, in order to achieve a neighbourhood where

- we are happy to live and get along with our neighbours
- we respect each other
- we are given support and good services from our landlord and other partner agencies working in the area

**Purpose**

By signing this agreement, residents, LMH and partner agencies are committing to the well-being of the estate and understand that a 'Good Neighbour' approach and tolerant attitude is needed from everyone.

We will make a united stand against anyone who does not respect their neighbours, their environment, their homes or the law. This community will succeed if we all work together.

- Preventing problems happening in the first place;
- Stating what is and is not reasonable behaviour to anyone who wants to move to the estate;
- Not tolerating crime, nuisance, harassment, or anti social behaviour;
- Supporting residents and witnesses who work with us to tackle and prevent nuisance and harassment;
- Taking all complaints of anti social behaviour seriously and dealing with them sensitively, appropriately and as confidentially as possible;



- Helping and encouraging you, as residents, to sort out problems between yourselves.

Poets Park  
Good Neighbour Agreement

- Working closely with other agencies to deal with the whole of the problem;
- Making empty properties safe and secure as quickly as possible and acting promptly when residents report properties empty ;
- Not tolerating wilful damage, neglect or vandalism anywhere on the estate;
- Making sure every resident enjoys the right to peaceful enjoyment of their home;
- Using all the legal tools and powers we have to tackle nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

As a resident of Poets Park, I agree that looking after this estate is not just the landlord's responsibility; what I do is also vital.  
I want to live in an area which is clean, tidy and safe, and where neighbours treat each other well.

**As a resident of Poets Park I am committed to:**

- Respect other people whatever their age, background or lifestyle and being considerate about how my lifestyle may affect others, within my home and the local community;
- Showing tolerance and reasonableness before complaining; and talking to my neighbour to resolve issues in the first place
- Not break the tenancy conditions or the law;
- Letting children play. If children harass or disturb others then complaints are justified and parents must be reasonable in their response;
- Not dropping litter or dumping rubbish and will make sure that my rubbish is properly bagged and put out for collection on the allocated day;
- Not allowing damage to the property of other residents, or areas of this estate, including graffiti;
- Not playing loud music late at night, or at other times to the annoyance of my neighbours or other residents;
- Reporting incidents of nuisance or crime;
- Watching out for other people and their property and keeping a look out generally to help make this estate a safe place to live;
- Making sure that the front of my home and communal areas are kept clean and tidy so that visitors to the estate can see that we care about where we live;



- Keeping my dog/pets under control at all times. I will clean up after my dog/pets and will not let it bark/make noise to the annoyance of other residents.

Poets Park  
Good Neighbour Agreement

**By signing this agreement, I accept responsibility for myself, visitors to my property and any other household members.**

I agree with these standards and will abide by them

Name .....Signature .....Date .....

Name .....Signature .....Date .....

Signed on Behalf of LMH .....

Date.....

## Appendix B

### Population

- The current population of the Everton ward fell by 10.7%, (1,619 residents) between 2002 and 2010 to the current level of 13,555 people. This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest population fall in Liverpool, and is a common trend throughout North Liverpool. This area has been subject to a massive housing clearance programme, but this will not explain fully the reason for this exodus, there are other contributory factors.

### Deprivation

- Everton tops the LCC Deprivation Indices chart for overall deprivation. Everton shows an extremely high level of overall deprivation with almost the entire ward (97.6%) of the ward falling into the most deprived 5% of neighbourhoods nationally.
- More than four fifths of the ward (84.5%) is in the most deprived 1% of areas nationally.

### Household Income

- Household incomes are the lowest in all 30 Liverpool wards at £22,400 and are considerably lower than the city wide average.

### Child Poverty

- Half of the ward's children are (52.9% or 1,625 children) are living in poverty. This is the second highest child poverty rate in all Liverpool wards.

### Housing

- Everton has an oversupply of terraced properties which now have limited demand and many have been abandoned.
- Over half (55.7%) of all residential properties are socially rented, in relation to a city average of 26.7%.
- Nine out of 10 dwellings in Everton are in Council tax band "A"
- 6.7% of all properties are vacant. This is almost twice the city average, but is explained in part by regeneration initiatives currently underway in the ward.

## **Crime**

- At 139.7 crimes per 1,000 population, in Everton overall crime levels are higher than the city average (99.3 per 1,000 people);
- There were 49 more crimes in Everton in 2011/12 than there were in the previous year.
- There is however a fall in the longer-term crime rates for Everton.

## **Unemployment**

- Worklessness and benefit levels are a key issue for the ward. The unemployment rate is 38.6%, almost twice the Liverpool average of 21.9%, (and over three times the national rate of 12.3%) with 3,302 workless residents.
- The highest percentage of unemployed residents(1,979) are claiming Incapacity Benefit / Employment Support Allowance, which is a stark reflection on health issues in the ward ( benefits named may have changed since Ward profile collated in Autumn 2012).
- There are also a very high number of lone parents claiming benefits in the ward.
- Everton also has a JSA claimant rate of 11.0%, which is the third highest in the city, and is on the rise.

## **Health**

- The Standardised Mortality Ratio is the third highest of all Liverpool wards.
- There are 70% more cancer deaths in Everton than in England.
- Life expectancy in below the Liverpool and national averages
- Residents of Everton live four and a half years less than the average person in the United Kingdom.
- There is also a high concentration of smokers in Everton.

## **Education**

- In 2011, 86.8% of pupils resident in Everton achieved 5+ GCSE's A\* - C in all subjects, which is just above the Liverpool average of 83.9%;
- In the same year, 45% of Everton pupils achieved 5\*A-C GCSE's including English and Maths, which is an improvement but remains below the city-wide average of 55.0%
- Persistent absence rates remain a huge problem in the ward.

(Extract from the Ward Profile for Everton (produced by Liverpool City Council Autumn 2012)