

Local lettings policy for properties which have been “de-sheltered”

Context

Following a review of sheltered housing in Babergh and Mid Suffolk a decision has been made to “de-shelter” a number of properties from April 2017. Existing tenants in those schemes who wish to move to a property which will continue as sheltered housing are prioritised for vacancies. However a number of tenants do not wish to move and have chosen to stay in their current property without the support provided in sheltered housing.

Aims of the policy

The aims of the policy are to:-

- Ensure that the environment remains suitable for the residents who have chosen to stay
- Ensure that vacancies can be allocated in a timely manner

Schemes to which the policy will apply

This local lettings policy will apply to vacancies which occur in any of the 186 properties which from April 2017 will no longer be sheltered.

Babergh Schemes

- Angel Street, Hadleigh*
 - Ash Street, Boxford
 - Bradfield Avenue, Hadleigh*
 - First Avenue, Sudbury
 - Grimwood Corner, Sudbury
 - Hill House, Bildeston
 - Inkerman Terrace, Hadleigh*
 - Spring Street / Lane, Lavenham
 - Tayler Close, Hadleigh
- * schemes which have been de-sheltered as vacancies occur since 2005

Mid Suffolk Schemes

- Albert Close, Rickinghall
- Millars Close, Walsham le Willows
- Richer Close, Badwell Ash
- School Close, Norton
- St Georges Road, Stowlangtoft
- St Nicholas Close, Rattlesden
- Tacon Close, Eye
- The Orchard, Felsham
- Victoria Gardens, Wattisfield
- Woodlands Close, Thurston
- Bungalows previously attached to sheltered schemes at
Hartismere House, Laxfield,
Jubilee Court, Stowupland,
Hurstlea Court, Needham Market
Elizabeth Court in Eye

Gateway to Homechoice Allocations Policy

Babergh and Mid Suffolk are part of a choice based letting scheme called Gateway to Homechoice. The allocations policy sets out the categories of applicant who is entitled to most bungalows:-

- Applicants who are over 60
- Applicants of any age who have a medically assessed need for a bungalow
- Applicants who are over 40 and who will release a property in need (for example those who are under-occupying a social tenancy)

Section 167 (2E) of the 1996 Housing Act enables housing authorities to allocate accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories.

Owner –occupiers are eligible to join the housing register but are placed below other applicants in the lowest priority band (Band E). They are not usually offered a tenancy except low demand sheltered accommodation.

Criteria for allocation of de-sheltered properties

This local lettings policy amends and adds to criteria for letting bungalows in the Gateway to Homechoice allocations policy and will also apply to flats which were formerly sheltered. Applicants for vacancies in former sheltered schemes will need to meet the following requirements:-

- Over 60 years of age or
- Over 40 with a medically assessed need for a bungalow or
- Over 40 and releasing a property in need and
- A quiet and settled lifestyle and
- No history of anti-social behaviour from themselves or close family members
- No history of drugs / alcohol issues
- Have no relevant offending history, which would deem them unsuitable to live in the scheme

Applicants who satisfy the above criteria and who have children can be considered for two bedroom vacancies (subject to section 6.5 of the Gateway to Homechoice allocations policy “Parents with staying access to dependent children or shared residency orders”).

Owner occupiers can be considered for de-sheltered properties only if the property has been advertised twice and no suitable tenant has been identified.

Review

The need for a continuation of the policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will take account of any issues relating to new tenancies, the number of allocations made and the percentage of remaining residents who were initially sheltered tenants.