

Local Lettings Policy

Carleton Meadows, Penrith

Updated February 2023

Eden District Council acquired 62 properties from Heart of Cumbria Limited in January 2023, all of which are situated on the Carleton Meadows Estate in Penrith. Further properties are currently in the pipeline and when the development is completed there will be 81 properties in the Council ownership. The properties are let on an affordable rent, based on the local housing market.

This local lettings policy was approved in September 2018 when the properties came into the ownership of Heart of Cumbria Limited and has been updated to recognise the change of ownership whilst retaining and applying a local lettings policy for the development to meet the needs of the area.

The policy is aimed at addressing sustainability and community issues. Eden District Council will seek to ensure the allocation of the properties is able to contribute to building sustainable communities.

The policy aims to assist in sustaining the local market town and rural communities and in supporting people with a local connection to the area to retain their links. The policy will assist members of the community and people who may be priced out of the local housing market particularly where there is a need by reason of employment, circumstances or connections to live in Penrith or near to a specific location in the District.

The policy will seek to enable key workers to find the appropriate and suitable accommodation they need in or near to Penrith. Key workers are those who are employed in public services in the District and those who have specific skills which are identified as being in need and in short supply in the District which are required to facilitate and enable business activities. In all cases a key worker must meet the criteria set out in the relevant Section 106 Agreement (as appended to this policy).

The policy will aim to reduce the likelihood of anti-social behaviour occurring, prevent nuisance or annoyance to other occupiers on the development and promote effective and sustainable communities.

In letting properties, using the County's choice based lettings system Cumbria Choice, Eden District Council will take account of:

- a) the nature of the property and the number of people for whom it is appropriate;
- b) the Section 106 criteria set out in the appendix;
- c) the ability of the potential tenant/s to pay the proposed rent and meet all of the financial obligations of the tenancy;
- d) the extent to which the potential tenant is unable to meet the financial obligations of purchasing a property or renting a property at market value, which is suitable to the needs of the proposed household in Penrith and the District of Eden. The inability to meet the financial obligations may be short or long term;

- e) priority being given to people with a local connection who are in need of accommodation or who work in Penrith or the district of Eden and who require to be reasonably near to a place of employment or who wish to retain links with the local community by reason of family connections, employment or any other relevant circumstances;
- f) the needs of the prospective tenants and any urgency in securing accommodation and in particular:
 - any current occupation of a property which is unsatisfactory, insanitary or overcrowded and as such does not reasonably meet the needs of the individual / s and their dependants;
 - any need to move due to any medical or welfare circumstances;
 - any need to move to or in the area because of hardship.
- g) the desirability of creating balanced, mixed and stable community in the Carleton Meadows area.

Eden District Council will seek to achieve a balanced and mixed group of people to occupy its properties which reflects, appropriately, the demographic make-up of the District. The aim is to help to create a stable community on the Carleton Meadows estate which will comprise owner/occupiers and tenants on a new, relatively large development. Allocations of housing may be made to create mixed-income communities. Allocations to key workers could bring economic and social benefits to the area. Individuals and households may add social and economic value to an area and the allocations can take account of this factor.

The properties will be let on 12 month Introductory Tenancies, which will become Secure Tenancies subject to compliance with the conditions of the Tenancy Agreement.

Eden District Council will assess the affordability of homes and the applicants' means.

Applicants with convictions for any serious offence or any drugs offence may be excluded from the offer of a tenancy. This also applies to applicants who have had action taken against them due to anti-social behaviour, persistent non-payment of rent, any breach of the tenancy conditions or have an outstanding housing debt. Each case will be considered on its own merit.

Vacancies for properties will be advertised on Cumbria Choice and the shortlist of applicants will be assessed having regard to the criteria set out in this policy. Records will be kept of all decisions.

A person who makes a false or misleading statement in connection with an application will not be accepted or considered for the tenancy of a property.

Eden District Council is committed to ensuring that its policy and procedures in letting a property are applied impartially. Eden District Council will give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and foster good relations between people. Eden District Council will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. Eden District Council will have due regard to its responsibilities under the Equality Act.