

ANGUS COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES SERVICES COMMITTEE
19 JANUARY 2016
HOUSING LETTINGS PLANS REVIEW

BACKGROUND

The Council currently shares a Common Allocations Policy for the allocations of its Council housing with Hillcrest Housing Association and other partners. This has been in existence since 2008 and it supports the partnership between the landlords under the banner of the Angus Common Housing Register.

The Neighbourhood Services Committee at its meeting on 11 April 2013 approved the new common allocations policy. As part of the common allocation policy, the housing division have local letting plans, which allow for some local flexibility within each local circumstance.

LETTING PLANS

The letting plan initiatives for each of the towns are shown on the attachments below:-

Appendix 1 - Arbroath Plan

Appendix 2 – Brechin Plan

Appendix 3 – Carnoustie Plan

Appendix 4 – Forfar Plan

Appendix 5 – Kirrimeuir Plan

Appendix 6 – Montrose Plan

Appendix 7 – Monifieth Plan

As there has been an ongoing theme of continuing letting plan initiatives for more than one year at a time for the different areas, it seems sensible at this time, to move to a biennial review of the letting plans instead of annual. This will allow initiatives to bed in and for longer term benefits to be seen from these.

The local letting initiatives have seen successes for in reducing void rent loss for our properties from 1.83% in 2013 to the current 1.27% at September 2015. Previous and continuing initiatives included making good use of Facebook for “immediate to let” properties and dealing with cases affected initially by the “bedroom tax”.

Contact for further information:
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Arbroath Letting Initiatives 2015/16

Area	Letting Initiatives	Expected Outcomes
Cliffburn and Hayshead –	Allow letting within the area as a priority to meet demand.	Increase turnover in this area to meet demand
Timmergreens –	Undertake a full assessment of the area and expenditure over the last three years to determine suitability of stock for the longer term.	Make recommendations within assessment for creating a sustainable asset within the area and creating places where people wish to live
Timmergreens	Continue to market accommodation within the area to applicants using methods like Facebook and consider shorter term lets.	Reduce void rent loss within this area and create sustainable community
All Stock	Where there is a particularly small bedroom within a property, we will look to ensure that this is allocated in such a way that only one person is using this room.	Make best use of stock and bedroom size to accommodate needs of household.
Bedsit	Decorate fully this accommodation at allocation to encourage acceptance of offers	Reduce offers of this type of accommodation being refused.
Cairnie	Approach under-occupiers of accommodation within this area to consider smaller accommodation.	Make best use of stock.
New Build flats at Millgate Loan	Maximise turnover from the new build accommodation and also assist applicants affected by welfare reform.	Allocations to these flats will be made to applicants who are currently under-occupying and affected by welfare reform.
Sheltered Housing all sizes and types	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus	We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.
New build	Offers to be made initially to	Create a chain of

Accommodation	existing tenants, who are inadequately housed with no rent arrears and that maintain good tenant relations. Where there are no tenants of this type, this will be widened out to existing tenants with no rent arrears and that maintain good tenant relations.	allocations to increase turnover of housing within the area.
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Brechin Letting Initiatives 2015/16

Area	Property Size and Type	Issue	Letting Proposal
All areas	One bedroom properties	<p>The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high with 70% of applicants on the waiting list for mainstream housing in Brechin requiring this size of accommodation; as a result the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is recognised that some existing tenants residing in a one bedroom property may also have an aspiration for and be able to afford to live in a larger property</p>	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as meet the demand to one bedroom properties we will consider single people and couples who are Angus Council tenants, living in a one bedroom property and wishing to move to a two bedroom property provided that the tenant:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is unlikely to receive an offer of housing under the current allocation policy ➤ Is not currently residing in sheltered or supported accommodation. ➤ Following a move to a large property will not be currently affected by the under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013. ➤ Can evidence they are able to afford the additional rent payments by

			<p>completion of a financial assessment prior to allocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is not in arrears at their current tenancy. ➤ Their current tenancy has been maintained to an acceptable standard. ➤ Has kept to the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements over the past 12 months. <p>In order to increase the supply of one bedroom properties, tenants may also be offered additional assistance through the tenant's incentive scheme.</p>
All areas	Two bedroom properties	<p>The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high with approximately 69% of applicants on the waiting list for Brechin requiring this size of accommodation; as a result the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is however recognised that</p>	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as reduce the demand on our one bedroom properties we will consider single applicants and couples where they would normally only qualify for a one bedroom property under the current allocation policy providing that the applicant/s:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following a move

		<p>some applicants on the waiting list for a one bedroom property in line with the current allocation policy may have an aspiration for and be able to afford an additional bedroom.</p> <p>The demand for two bedroom properties is significantly lower than the demand for one bedroom properties with only 16% of applicants currently on the waiting list for mainstream accommodation requiring this size and of that 16% only 6% have an actual housing need for this size of accommodation.</p>	<p>to a larger property will not be affected by the under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can evidence they are able to afford the additional rent payments by the completion of a financial assessment. ➤ Can evidence they have previously managed a tenancy successfully. ➤ Does not require housing support to be able to maintain a tenancy. ➤ Has no previous housing related debt with Angus Council.
All areas	Two bedroom properties	There are occasions in Brechin where no waiting list exists for 2 bedroom properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Offer and enhanced decoration allowance for difficult to let properties of up to 100% of the normal amount to those applicants being offered through the normal allocation policy.
All areas	All sizes and types	In Brechin there are a number of tenants with	To create balanced and sustainable communities we

		more than one bedroom and affected the changes in housing benefit regulations meaning that they are liable to pay either 14% or 25% of their weekly rent charge.	will:- ➤ Give priority to those tenants who want to move to a smaller house that are affected by the changes in housing benefit.
All areas	Sheltered Housing all sizes and types	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus	We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.
Brechin Central	All sizes and types	Brechin is a very hilly community to reside in and the town centre can be difficult to access for some people who may have a medical or support need.	To create balanced and sustainable communities we will:- Give priority to those applicants who may have a medical or a support need and require being close to the services and amenities of the town centre in the first instance.

Carnoustie Letting Initiatives 2015/2016

Letting Initiative	Expected outcome
Identify mismatch of supply and demand	Continuation of use of information to inform supply to be created, when opportunities exist.
Increase allocations within Carnoustie to applicants that require transfers where applicants are overcrowded or under-occupying. The final allocation in the chain being made to an applicant who is homeless or has a specific medical need	Maximise housing allocations and increase turnover of allocations
Sheltered Housing all sizes and types (All areas)	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus. We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.

Forfar Letting Initiatives 2015/2016

Area	Property size and type	Issue	Letting proposal
All areas	3 x beds and over	We have a small number of larger properties and turnover is minimal.	To stimulate turnover we will: Review the housing circumstances of all those living in properties with 3 or more bedrooms and where appropriate, encourage tenants to consider their housing options. Not financial but we will provide assistance with removals etc.
All areas	All sizes and types	In Forfar there are around 160 Council households who have more bedrooms than they need and will be affected by the changes in housing benefit regulations. Around 113 tenants in Forfar have to pay 14% of their rent and another 25 will have to pay 25% of their rent commencing April 2014.	To maintain <i>sustainable</i> communities we will: Give priority to those wanting to move to smaller houses that are affected by the changes in housing benefit.
All areas	One bedroom properties	The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high for mainstream housing in Forfar and as a result	To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as to meet the demand for one bedroom properties we will consider

		<p>the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is recognised that some existing tenants residing in a one bedroom property may also have an aspiration for and be able to afford to live in a larger property.</p>	<p>single people and couples who are Angus Council tenants who are living in a one bedroom property and wishing to move to a two bedroom property provided that the tenant:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is unlikely to receive an offer of housing under the current allocation policy ➤ Is not currently residing in sheltered or supported accommodation. ➤ Following a move to a large property will not be currently affected by the under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013. ➤ Can evidence they are able to afford the additional rent payments by completion of a financial assessment prior to allocation. ➤ Is not in arrears at their current tenancy. ➤ Their current tenancy has been maintained to an acceptable standard.
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			<p>➤ Has kept to the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements over the past 12 months.</p>
All flats with a close	All types and sizes	New tenants do not have to tools to clean the close area/stairs when they move	To improve the quality of life for all our tenants: we will supply a starter pack including bucket, mop and bleach when we let flats where there is a close. This will give tenants the tools to take pride in their close and clean it as required.
Chapelark	29 properties for rent: 18x 1 bed flats, 6 x 2 bed flats, 1 x 3 bed flats and 4 x 4 bed new build townhouses	Chapelark was previously a school and has been designated for regeneration We want to make Chapelark sustainable and a place that people are proud to call home.	To create <i>balanced</i> and <i>sustainable</i> communities we will: Allocate properties in line with our new build criteria and to promote a balanced and sustainable community we will let 50% of properties to households who are in work.
All areas	Sheltered Housing all sizes and types	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus	We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.
Viewmount	All sizes and types	Block 1-24c has been designated a regeneration area and we anticipate it will	To maintain <i>sustainable</i> communities we will: Continue to work with the established

		<p>be demolished in late 2015. Angus Council and our ACHR partners are permanently rehousing all the tenants who live in the block at present.</p> <p>Turnover of properties on the remainder of Viewmount are above the average for the rest of Forfar.</p> <p>We want to continue to reverse this for the rest of the area to make it more sustainable and a place where people want to live.</p>	<p>tenants and residents group to enhance the physical and community elements and estate management of the area by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining estate standards/rules • holding bi-annual estate walkabouts <p>To stimulate demand we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offer a decoration allowance enhanced by 50% and/or • give two weeks free rent
The Glens	1 bed properties	<p>This incentive has been a success in decreasing antisocial and criminal activity in the area as there may have been a link to the number of lets to younger applicants.</p>	<p>To create <i>balanced</i> and <i>sustainable</i> communities we will:</p> <p>Not allocate properties to those under 25.</p> <p>To stimulate demand we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. over a decoration allowance enhanced by 50% and/or 2. give two weeks free rent.

CALEDONIA HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Difficult to let properties	Offer incentives such as carpets/white goods. This is a discretionary arrangement dependant on the property and the number of refusals
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HILLCREST HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Manor Court

To allocate to people of similar age groups to create balanced and sustainable communities.

Kirriemuir Letting Initiatives 2015/2016

Area	Property size and type	Issue	Letting proposal
All areas	2 bed properties	There are occasions where no waiting list exists for 2 bed properties.	To stimulate demand we will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. advertise properties as immediately available to let but will allocate according to need 2. allocate properties to applicants who only need one bedroom 3. offer an enhanced decoration allowance of up to 100% the normal amount.
All areas	All sizes and types	<p>In Kirriemuir there are around 33 Council households who have more bedrooms than they need and will be affected by the changes in housing benefit regulations.</p> <p>They are liable to pay either 14% or 25% of their rent commencing April 2013.</p>	<p>To maintain sustainable communities we will:</p> <p>Give priority to those wanting to move to smaller houses that are affected by the changes in housing benefit.</p>
All areas	3 beds and over	We have a small number of larger properties and turnover is minimal.	<p>To stimulate turnover this year we will:</p> <p>Review the housing circumstances of all those living in properties with 3 or more bedrooms</p>

			<p>and where appropriate encourage tenants to consider their housing options</p> <p>Not financial but we will provide assistance with removals etc</p>
All areas	One bedroom properties	<p>The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high with 59% of applicants on the waiting list for mainstream housing in Kirriemuir requiring this size of accommodation; as a result the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is recognised that some existing tenants residing in a one bedroom property may also have an aspiration for and be able to afford to live in a larger property.</p>	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as to meet the demand for one bedroom properties we will consider single people and couples who are Angus Council tenants who are living in a one bedroom property and wishing to move to a two bedroom property provided that the tenant:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is unlikely to receive an offer of housing under the current allocation policy ➤ Is not currently residing in sheltered or supported accommodation. ➤ Following a move to a large property will not be currently affected by the under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013. ➤ Can evidence they are able to

			<p>afford the additional rent payments by completion of a financial assessment prior to allocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is not in arrears at their current tenancy. ➤ Their current tenancy has been maintained to an acceptable standard. ➤ Has kept to the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements over the past 12 months.
All flats with a close	All types and sizes	New tenants do not have to tools to clean the close area/stairs when they move	To improve the quality of life for all our tenants: we will supply a starter pack including bucket, mop and bleach when we let flats where there is a close. This will give tenants the tools to take pride in their close and clean it as required.
All areas	Sheltered Housing all sizes and types	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus	We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.

Montrose Letting Initiatives 2015/16

Area	Property Size and Type	Issue	Letting Proposal
All areas	One bedroom properties	<p>The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high with 63% of applicants on the waiting list for mainstream housing in Montrose requiring this size of accommodation; as a result the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is recognised that some existing tenants residing in a one bedroom property may also have an aspiration for and be able to afford to live in a larger property.</p>	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as to meet the demand for one bedroom properties we will consider single people and couples who are Angus Council tenants who are living in a one bedroom property and wishing to move to a two bedroom property provided that the tenant:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is unlikely to receive an offer of housing under the current allocation policy ➤ Is not currently residing in sheltered or supported accommodation. ➤ Following a move to a large property will not be currently affected by the under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013. ➤ Can evidence they are able to afford the additional rent payments by completion of a

			<p>financial assessment prior to allocation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is not in arrears at their current tenancy. ➤ Their current tenancy has been maintained to an acceptable standard. ➤ Has kept to the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreements over the past 12 months. <p><i>In order to increase the supply of one bedroom properties, tenants may also be offered additional assistance through the tenant's incentive scheme.</i></p>
All areas	Two bedroom properties	<p>The demand for one bedroom accommodation is extremely high with approximately 63% of applicants on the waiting list for mainstream housing in Montrose requiring this size of accommodation; as a result the waiting times are also considerable.</p> <p>It is however recognised that some applicants on the waiting list for a one bedroom</p>	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities as well as reduce the demand on our one bedroom properties we will consider single applicants and couples where they would normally only qualify for a one bedroom property under the current allocation policy providing that the applicant/s:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Following a move to a larger property will not be affect by the

		<p>property in line with the current allocation policy may have an aspiration for and be able to afford an additional bedroom.</p> <p>The demand for two bedroom properties is significantly lower than the demand for one bedroom properties with only 22% of applicants currently on the waiting list for mainstream accommodation requiring this size and of that 22% only 13% have an actual housing need for this size of accommodation.</p>	<p>under occupancy provisions of the Welfare Reform Act 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can evidence they are able to afford the additional rent payments by the completion of a financial assessment. ➤ Can evidence they have previously managed a tenancy successfully. ➤ Does not require housing support to be able to maintain a tenancy. ➤ Has no previous housing related debt with Angus Council.
All areas	All sizes and types	In Montrose there are a number of tenants with more than one bedroom and affected the changes in housing benefit regulations meaning that they are liable to pay either 14% or 25% of their weekly rent charge.	<p>To create balanced and sustainable communities we will:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Give priority to those tenants who want to move to a smaller house that are affected by the changes in housing benefit.
All areas	Sheltered Housing all sizes and types.	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus	We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.

Monifieth Letting Initiatives 2015/2016

Letting Initiatives	Expected outcome
Identify mismatch of supply and demand, especially for the landward areas as there has been a number of refusals in this area.	Analysis to be completed for landward areas.
Sheltered Housing all sizes and types.	There is currently a review of our older person accommodation across Angus. We will consider the results of the consultation process and allocate housing in accordance with the outcomes and recommendations from this process.