



Local Lettings Policy for Kingsway House, Warrington **October 2023**

1. Introduction

This Local Lettings Policy has been written to cover the allocations of Torus properties for rent on the refurbished block at Kingsway House, Warrington. This site offers views of the River Mersey and is well placed for local schools, transport links and local amenities of Latchford village.

This refurbished high-rise block is made up of a total of 53 properties over 9 floors, all of which are for social rent plus service charges. In order for the refurbishment works to take place, thirteen tenants were moved out temporarily. These tenants have the right to choose if they wish to return to Kingsway House.

This Local Lettings Policy covers the allocations of the remainder of the 53 properties which consist of 17 x 1-bedroom apartments and 36 x 2 bedroom apartments.

The policy will run for a period of 12 months commencing from first let and first-hand overs are expected in January 2024. After this period, Torus will review the policy in consultation with Warrington Borough Council and Elected Members.

2. Background

The Homelessness Act 2002 enabled housing authorities to introduce flexibility into their letting policies. Local Lettings Policies were introduced as a targeted approach to implement additional flexibility to existing Allocations Schemes, which cover wider geographical areas and a range of differing estates. Local Lettings Policies enable properties to be allocated to applicants meeting the needs of an area. Addressing specific shortfalls at a neighbourhood level helps build and sustain balanced communities bringing them up to a similar level of other similar neighbourhoods.

The scheme aims to contribute to the overall sustainability of the area by helping to identify suitable tenants, who will settle and contribute to the local community, ensuring tenancies are sustainable for the long term.

To achieve this, we need to rehouse a good balance of tenants and a healthy mix of people with different lifestyles. On the whole however, the content of our local letting schemes do not diverge from the overall principles of the allocation scheme and we remain committed to rehousing people in need.

It is our intention, with the support of this local letting scheme, to offer 100% of the available properties for nomination via Under One Roof.



We are committed to creating sustainable neighbourhoods and want all our tenants to be able to live happy, healthy and full lives. We understand a local letting policy in isolation will not achieve this aim and that a joined-up approach across all services within Torus is required.

3. Allocations

All allocations will be in line with Warrington Borough Councils Allocations Policy via Under One Roof, using the following local lettings criteria. Applicants will be considered in band and date order.

4. Priority systems and housing need

Torus will consider the following applicants who have a local connection to the Warrington area as outlined in the policy:

- A minimum of 50% of the 1 bedroom apartments and a minimum of 50% of the 2 bedroom apartments will be allocated to applicants who are in employment, either full or part time

All applicants will be subject to an Affordability Assessment to make sure that applicants can afford the rent and other costs of the tenancy. Torus reserve the right to not make an offer to an applicant who is unable to afford the property irrespective of their housing need.

Two Bedroom Apartments

The following family types will be considered in the first instance

Families with children over 11 years of age

In the first instance priority will be given to those applicants who will fully occupy the property. In the event of being unable to achieve full occupation then we will consider under occupation subject to affordability checks.

One Bedroom Apartments:

Applicants over 30 years of age will be considered in the first instances

5. General Terms

Ground floor apartments will be allocated in the first instance to those applicants who have an assessed need for ground floor accommodation.

Applicants who are unable to self-evacuate will not be considered. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEPS) will be carried out prior to letting the property. (**Appendix A**)

No dogs will be allowed in the properties due to the communal areas within the building.

6. Process

All of the properties to rent on the development will be let at a Social Rent plus service charges.

The provision of 1 reference will be requested. If an applicant has held a tenancy, then references will be requested from either the current or previous landlord and any offers may be overlooked if references are not provided or are unsatisfactory. However, all applications will be considered on an individual basis in this respect.

Prospective tenants must complete a pre tenancy interview including financial assessment / benefits check to establish their financial status and suitability for the scheme. This approach is standard practice for Torus.

Applicants with support needs where no support package is in place will be encouraged to accept support. If a tenancy has failed previously due to support issues the offer may be withdrawn if applicant refuses to accept a support package.

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

7. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed after 12 months to ensure it meets the needs of the following:

- Residents living on the new development sites
- Surrounding Community
- Best practice and legislation
- The housing market in Warrington
- Warrington Borough Council's strategic housing need



8. Allocation policy

All other aspects of the allocation process will be carried out in accordance with Torus Allocation Policy.

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