

Local Lettings Initiative for downsizing scheme at Lincoln Court CYC new build and refurbishment scheme, York

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The development to which this LLI relates is a 35 apartment, independent living community on the west of the city of York area, in Westfield Ward. The development has 15 new homes and 20 refurbished properties
- 1.2 The properties are all social rented homes for residents aged 60+. All of the apartments are 1 bedroomed properties, some with open plan kitchen/ living rooms and others with separate kitchens and living rooms. There are a number of fully wheelchair accessible properties.
- 1.3 Lincoln Court has been fully modernised with a large communal lounge, meeting spaces, a salon, mobility aid store, a lift and a number of relaxing communal spaces and a communal garden area.

2.0 Aims of the LLI

- 2.1 To create a scheme that is sustainable through initial allocations
- 2.2 To operate a downsizing scheme using the apartments, which will make better use of existing stock. The scheme aims to support under-occupying social housing tenants living in the City of York to move into a high-quality new build flat, releasing a family house for re-let.

3.0 Downsizing objectives

- 3.1 Within the City of York there is a well-evidenced need for two and three bedroom family houses however, there are many barriers making it difficult for under-occupying households who wish to move to a smaller home to do so notably, a lack of suitable smaller homes in the nearby area; removal and related costs and the need for practical support during the move.
- 3.2 The extended and refurbished scheme at Lincoln Court in Westfield will deliver one bedroomed properties for residents aged 60+. The site lies in an area which is well served by a good range of local facilities, shops and bus services into the city. All of which have been identified in recent research to be important for older residents. As such it offers a rare opportunity through a local lettings plan to promote downsizing and release much needed family accommodation.

- 3.3 It is intended to use the apartments to offer a move for primarily under-occupying social tenants.
- 3.4 There may be on occasion when allocations will be given to applicants under 60 that have been assessed as having an need for ILC, these will be assessed & authorised by the specialist housing advisor for suitability

4.0 Letting Initiative

- 4.1 All of the properties built on this site will be advertised through the North Yorkshire Home Choice lettings scheme*.

* The exception to this will be any properties that have been designated for returning individuals and those with specific identified unmet needs. An example of this will may be people with complex disabilities and / or needs where these needs cannot be met or not substantively met in other available properties or properties potentially available in a reasonable timescale.

A Direct Let request will be made to the Head of Housing:

- with full details of the case and inability to meet needs elsewhere for consideration
- no less than two weeks before advertising of the identified property where no major adaptations are needed
- As early as possible in the development process where major adaptations or specific design is needed.

Households referred must meet the general criteria of the NYHC policy or the allocations policy that replaces this for social housing.

- 4.2 All applicants (in the first instance) will be required to have a local connection to the following wards within the City of York local authority area:

Acomb
Westfield
Holgate
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe

- 4.3 An applicant will be deemed to have a local connection if they satisfy any of the following criteria in relation to the four wards:
- Currently live in the area and has been resident for at least 6 out of the last 12 months; or
 - Has lived within the area for at least 3 years out of the last 5 years; or
 - Has a close family member residing in the area that has done so for the last 5 years. (mother, father, adult son, adult daughter, adult brother, adult sister); or
 - Has an essential need to live close to another person, to provide or receive care or support, in the area, and who has been resident for the last 5 years,

- 4.3 If no applicants meet the criteria set out in 4.2 above then applicants with a **wider local connection** to the City of York local authority area will be considered if they satisfy any of the following criteria:
- Currently live in the area and have been resident for at least 6 out of the last 12 months; or
 - Has lived within the area for at least 3 years out of the last 5 years; or
 - Has a close family member residing in the area that has done so for the last 5 years. (mother, father, adult son, adult daughter, adult brother, adult sister); or
 - Has an essential need to live close to another person, to provide or receive care or support, in the area, and who has been resident for the last 5 years,
- 4.4 If no applicants meet the criteria set out in 4.3 then applicants living in the North Yorkshire Home Choice area will be considered.

5.0 Prioritisation for downsizing

- 5.1 For apartments priority will be given (in the first instance) to downsizers.
- 5.2 All applicants (in the first instance) for apartments must be:
- a) downsizing households and all household members must be aged 60 or over
 - b) the maximum size household for a one bedroom apartment is 2 persons
- 5.3 Downsizing households will be prioritised in the following order:
- a) Release of a 3 bedroom house in the four wards stated above
 - b) Release of a 2 bedroom house/Flat in the four wards stated above
 - c) Release of a 4+bedroom house in the four wards stated above
 - d) Release of a 3 bedroom house in other City of York Council wards
 - e) Release of a 2 bedroom house/Flat in other City of York Council wards
 - f) Release of a 4+ bedroom house in any City of York Council ward
- Shortlisting will be in accordance with NYHC, allocations procedure (Banding – Need – Debt - Time)
- 5.4 If no applicants meet the downsizing criteria set out in 5.2 a) then households that meet criteria 5.3 b) and 5.3c) will be considered
- 5.5 Within a)-f) above and the tenant age criteria, applicants will be ranked in accordance with the NYHC policy.
- 5.6 Applicants must meet other NYHC policy criteria for transfers such as not being in breach of their tenancy. However, in accordance with the NYHC policy an exception may be made for rent arrears which have solely arisen because the tenant is under-occupying the property and is affected by a reduction in Housing Benefit because of their under-occupation. This would be agreed between CYC and the current landlord, providing the new tenancy is affordable.

5.7 Health and well-being and other housing needs of the applicants will be taken into account when considering requests for and accommodation on a specific floor level

5.8 The same criteria will apply to future lets, and the scheme will be reviewed after 5 years.

6.0 Houses selection criteria

6.1 Bids will be accepted as normal and a shortlist created of bidders as per NYHC policy.