



Local Lettings Policy - Neasham Rd (all phases excl. Rent to Buy)

The main provision of this local lettings policy will be to allocate these properties through the application of additional criteria.

All applicants will be subject to robust landlord tenancy checks and be expected to demonstrate a continuous commitment in their current or previous accommodation with regards to:

- Keeping their rent account in credit, showing a good history of rent payments over the past five years (or for the entirety of any shorter period if the applicant has not held a tenancy for the past five years).
- If an applicant held a tenancy longer than 5 years ago and any debt was left the applicant will need to demonstrate a proven change in behaviour and a commitment to reduce or clear the debt.
- No evidence of anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance, or criminal behaviour in the past 5 years.
- Being able to show an excellent history of tenancy conduct with no tenancy breaches*.

*If an applicant has not previously held a tenancy, there must be no evidence of anti-social behaviour, criminal behaviour, damage to property or unacceptable behaviour.

The properties will be advertised on the Darlington HomeSearch website where it will be outlined clearly that there is a local lettings policy attached to the allocation of these new homes.

Banding quota

A quota system for all allocations will be in place to ensure all bands have opportunity to apply and to assist us in building mixed and sustainable communities.

The current breakdown of bandings for live applications is as follows (31st January 2025):

Banding	Totals	% of total live applications
Band 1	271	13%
Band 2	268	12%

Band 3	311	14%
Band 4	1278	61%
Total	2071	100%

This shows the highest proportion of applicants are within band 4 which makes up the highest banding, therefore, to assist applicants in this band have an opportunity the banding quota will be as follows:

- Band 1 – 50% - once band 1 is exhausted band 4 will be considered next, then band 2 and then 3.
- Band 2 – 30% - once band 2 is exhausted band 4 will be considered next, then band 1 and then band 3.
- Band 3 – 15% -once band 3 is exhausted band 4 will be considered next, then band 1 and then 2.
- Band 4 – 5 % - once band 4 is exhausted band 1 will be considered next, then band 2 and then band 3.

Current applicant bedroom requirements as of 31st January 2025 are as follows:

Applicants Band	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom	Total Applicants
Band 1	114	95	50	12	271
Band 2	147	69	36	16	268
Band 3	76	108	82	45	311
Band 4	701	374	178	25	1278
					Total 2128

This data supports the banding quota.

The following additional priority will also be given to applicants that meet the additional criteria below for each property type as follows:

2-bedroom ground floor flats and apartments

- Main or joint applicant must meet the ground floor medical criteria such as being in receipt of higher rate PIP/DLA or equivalent or age requirement (aged 55+).
- Households that fully meet the bedroom occupancy will have priority over those that do not.

2-bedroom upper floor flats, apartments and 2 and 3-bedroom houses

- Main or joint applicant in employment** (16+ hours per week), **OR**
- Main or joint applicant are full or part time carers, in receipt of Carers Allowance for a member of the household.

- Households that fully meet the bedroom occupancy will have priority over those that do not.

4-bedroom houses

- Main or joint applicant in employment** (16+ hours per week), **OR**
- Main or joint applicant are full or part time carers, in receipt of Carers Allowance for a member of the household.
- Households that fully meet the bedroom occupancy will have priority over those that do not.
- Larger families (3+ children) will have priority over those that do not.

**as defined in Employment Rights Act and government guidance ([Employment status: Employee - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/employment-status-employee))

Offers will not usually be made unless the above criteria can be fully evidenced. However, it is recognised that individual applicants will have differing housing histories and have experienced different circumstances over time. Therefore, all applications will be considered upon their own individual merits, with offers of accommodation only withheld where there is no evidence on the application to show they clearly meet the criteria.

If adaptations are required to the property prior to accepting and moving in, a joint inspection will be required for an Occupational Therapist assessment to determine whether adaptations can be made to meet household current and future needs. If adaptations are not required at the time of offer but circumstances change within the tenancy period, the request would follow our Adaptations process and information on this can be found here: <https://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing/manage-your-home/your-home/aids-and-adaptations-to-your-home/>

All applicants will need to evidence that they are able to fully afford the costs related to renting, managing and maintaining a home as well as ongoing day-to-day living costs.

All offers of accommodation will be subject to passing a thorough home inspection where standard of property, garden and shared spaces will be assessed. If access is refused, or an inspection fails due to damage, cleanliness, un-reported repairs, significant hoarding or unauthorised alterations the offer of accommodation will be retracted immediately.

The local lettings policy will apply to the letting of these properties for the initial 6 years to allow for a consistent approach, efficient management of stock and to assist in building long-term sustainable tenancies. The banding requirements will revert to those in the Housing Services Allocation Policy 2023-2027 (or any subsequent editions) after this period.

10th March 2025

Decision

Decision Regarding	Local Lettings Policy (Neasham Rd) v.3
Officer	Claire Gardner-Queen - Head of Housing
Assistant Director	Anthony Sandys

Portfolio Holder Decision	Agreed
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matthew Roche
Date of Decision	10 th March 2025