

Local Lettings Policy Arthington House

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Created by:	Dave Bowen, Area Manager
Approved by:	CSMT
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1 Overall purpose

This policy sets out the principles behind the introduction of a Local Lettings Policy (LLP) for the Arthington House flats, the reasons why it is of benefit, and the guidelines of the Local Lettings Policy.

The Policy supports Leeds Federated's vision of 'Building Futures Together' and is aligned with the following goals of the Association:

Goal 1:	Sustain
Goal 2:	Engage
Goal 3:	Grow

2 Context

For the purposes of this policy, Arthington House Apartments includes all rental properties owned and managed by Leeds Federated at:

30 Westfield Road,
Burley,
Leeds
LS3 1DE

- 16 x 1 Bedroom Apartments (including 12 new builds)
- 22 x 2 Bedroom Apartments (including 10 new builds)

3 Background

Leeds Federated's Lettings Policy states that:

"Leeds Federated is also committed to assisting in the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities. We will:

- *Operate a local lettings policy in selected areas in order to help build or maintain sustainable communities but these will always take into account urgent housing needs and be non-discriminatory".*

"The Association may operate local lettings policies to enhance the sustainability of selected areas. Where a local lettings policy operates, preference for offers of accommodation will be given to

particular customer groups. An equality analysis is undertaken to ensure that local lettings policies will not discriminate unjustifiably, directly or indirectly on racial or other equality grounds.

The relevant local authority will be notified of any local lettings policies introduced which will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant.”

4 Introduction

Burley is an inner-city area of Leeds in close proximity to local amenities such as Leeds City Centre, Kirkstall Road and the Headingley area. It is a high demand, popular area attracting several applicants for empty properties.

With the Arthington House apartments providing a mix of one and two bed properties, it is important to ensure that the needs of all tenants are met in order for tenancies to be sustainable. A Local lettings policy (LLP) gives clear guidance on the expectations of a good tenancy history and the need for engagement in support, where applicable.

Over the past two years, there has been a long-standing case of serious anti-social behaviour at Arthington House. Various factors, including court closures due to COVID19, this matter has taken an unusual length of time to resolve. The resources (both financial and management time) taken to address the serious anti-social behaviour here has been disproportionate. The behaviour has not only impacted upon the daily lives of other residents but has led to the repeated damage of communal areas including the lift, the door entry system and hallways.

Leeds Federated has made a commitment to existing customers living within Arthington House that in order to minimise the chance of any further disruption, and to afford them some well-deserved respite from this activity, we will implement a Local Lettings Policy. This will allow us to ensure that no new residents to the block will have any involvement in the past 2 years of crime or anti-social behaviour. This was deemed necessary with the development of the office space into new flats and the increase in new residents taking occupation early in 2023.

5 Local Lettings Policy

Leeds Federated will operate a Local Lettings Policy for the Arthington House Apartments to ensure sustainable tenancies in this high demand area. It will cover all properties in the area to ensure that new residents are better matched to the properties available and due consideration is given to both their needs and those of existing local residents. The policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier, if necessary, to ensure it is meeting its overall purpose and supporting the goals of the Corporate Plan.

The LLP will therefore stipulate that:

- Excellent references must be received from a minimum of 2 sources, one of which should ideally be from a previous or current landlord.
- Applicants must be able to provide a full 3-year address history for referencing purposes, as is the usual requirement.

- Any applicant who is known to have been the perpetrator of any crime or anti-social behaviour or any other form of nuisance will be refused accommodation. Background checks will be carried out to obtain this information, where required. Any applicant making a false declaration will be subject to tenancy enforcement action on the grounds that the tenancy was obtained under false pretences.
- Preference will be given to households with the ability to work 16 hours or more per week. With the exception of applications for rehousing from people who have a disability or illness which affects their ability to work. In these cases, they will be prioritised according to the prioritisation from Local Authority.
- Mobility disabilities - Where we receive applications from people who are affected by a disability which may impede their ability to vacate a 3-story building in the event of an emergency, LFHA will only consider Ground floor accommodation to be suitable properties. This is to ensure that in the event of evacuation people can leave the building safely.
- Applicants with a history of drug or alcohol abuse will need to prove that they have been engaging with support for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and provide a satisfactory reference from their support service confirming that they have not suffered any relapse within the same period.

6 Communication Plan

It is important that this Local Lettings Policy for Arthington House is communicated to customers and stakeholders.

We will:

- Submit the Local Lettings Policy to Leeds City Council to ensure that they are informed of the stipulations of the policy.
- Include the overarching details of the Local Lettings Policy in any adverts for properties within the geographical area, to ensure that applicants are given the information they need in order to decide whether to place a bid.
- Promote and communicate any changes to our Local Lettings Policy for the Arthington House Apartments and surrounding areas to staff and customers as necessary.
- Undertake a consultation exercise with Leeds Federated tenants within the geographical area designated by the Local Lettings Policy at the time when the policy becomes due for review.

7 Implementation

The Head of Customer Services and Area Manager are responsible for ensuring that this Policy is implemented and reviewed.

It is the responsibility of all Leeds Federated Housing Association staff to ensure that their work is carried out in accordance with this Policy. This will ensure that the Association's Lettings Policy is delivered consistently.

The Local Lettings Policy for Arthington House will be reviewed every two years or earlier if necessary to ensure it is meeting its overall purpose and supporting the goals of the Corporate Plan. At review, a report on the effects of the LLP will be presented to the Leadership Team to ensure that it remains relevant and serves a purpose to increase the sustainability of the area covered by the policy.

8 Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Leeds Federated Housing Association will monitor, evaluate and report on the activities undertaken to deliver this Policy, in particular, through:

- “Reasons for Leaving” as part of the tenancy termination process.
- ASB levels within the geographical area
- Satisfaction levels from various survey results
- Feedback from the customer service visit programme in the area
- Number of tenancy terminations in the area
- Level of demand for properties in the area

9 Equality Analysis

An Equality Analysis for the Local Lettings Policy for Arthington House has been completed and will be reviewed in line with any review of the policy.