

East Devon District Council

18a and 18b St Andrews Road Flats – Allocations and Management

Issue details	
Title:	18a and 18b St Andrews Road Flats – Allocations and Management
Version number	Version 1.0
Officer responsible:	Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager
Authorisation by:	tbc
Authorisation date:	tbc

1 Previous Policies/Strategies

None

2 Why has the council introduced this policy?

To record decisions and approaches in allocating and managing the twelve flats at 18a and 18b St Andrews Road, also known as the 'Sailors Rest' flats whilst they are being used as move on accommodation.

3 What is the council's policy?

3.1 Background

3.1.1 A report dated 20th May 2020 proposing that the flats could be used as temporary accommodation or move on accommodation for homeless applicants who had been placed in temporary accommodation was composed by the Housing Service Lead and agreed by Cabinet. This decision was made in response to the homeless crisis and huge increase in the need to accommodate people as a temporary measure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.1.2 The report gives the Housing Solutions Manager the authority to designate (where required) the use of the twelve flats for the purpose of temporary or move on accommodation as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The decision has been subsequently made that move on accommodation is the preferred option, providing a stable accommodation arrangement for homeless applicants and also freeing up the existing temporary accommodation resources for new homeless approaches

3.1.3 This measure has been brought in for an undetermined temporary period of time and will go some way to alleviate the pressure on the Council's Homelessness budget in the general fund as well as providing income for the Housing Revenue Account, with the aspiration to significantly reduce the use of emergency accommodation including bed and breakfast.

3.2 Allocations

3.2.1 Allocations into the flats will be made through an Allocations Panel made up of members of staff from the Allocations, Options, Rentals and Estate Management teams within the Housing Service.

3.2.2 Nominations will be made by members of the Options team, and sourced from existing temporary accommodation units including:

- Accommodation in our own housing stock including the 8 bedroom HMO property specifically used as temporary accommodation.
- Gissage House, Honiton, a project providing low level support and run by Independent Futures (part of DCH). There are 6 rooms for single people and 2 small flats for families.
- Bed and breakfast accommodation and holiday let accommodation within the district that is being used as emergency accommodation when nothing else is available.

3.2.3 Applicants nominated will need to be registered on Devon Home Choice and banded accordingly.

3.2.4 The panel will make a decision based on the suitability of the nomination and the supporting information provided at the Panel meetings.

3.3 Furniture and Fittings

3.3.1 A one-off grant was received via a bid for funding dated 11th June 2020 to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). A request was made for the repurposing of a proportion of the funding received through the Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) for 2020-21 that could not be used for its original purpose due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.3.2 This bid was made in acknowledgment of the likelihood that all tenants nominated into the flats would be sourced from homeless situations, and would not have access to furniture and fittings or finances to furnish the flats. The intention matches the aspirations within the Homelessness Strategy that aim to set tenants up to succeed. It is acknowledged that the tenants would have a better chance of sustaining the tenancy and achieving higher levels of affordability and health and wellbeing should the flats be readily furnished.

3.3.3 This funding has been used to ensure each flat is furnished and fitted to the levels listed in the inventory (appendix 1)

3.3.4 The furniture and fittings will be tied to the flats and will not become the property of the tenants. When the tenancy ends it is expected that the furniture and fittings remain in the flat (references to damage and wear and tear, and recharges made under 3.5)

3.4 Sign ups

3.4.1 At the sign-up a member of staff from the Housing service will take photos of the furniture and fittings so that a record is kept of the state of the property and the items provided at the start of the tenancy

3.4.2 An inventory will be provided and signed for each new tenant, recording the furniture and fittings provided with each flat.

3.5 Management

3.5.1 The flats will be managed by the Estate Management team using the standard EDDC introductory to flexible tenancy agreement.

3.5.2 Key fobs will be used for access to each flat with the management of the key fobs being overseen by the Estate Management team. The cost of replacing damaged key fobs or key fobs lost by the tenant will be recharged to the tenant.

3.5.3 Solar panel readings will be taken and recorded by the Estate Management team

3.5.4 At the end of each tenancy checks will be made by the Estate Management team in each flat in order to assess the state of the flat and the furniture and fittings. A check will be made against the inventory completed and signed at the sign up, taking into account factors such as wear and tear. The expense of replacing any damaged or missing items will be recharged to the tenant.

3.6 Appeals and complaints

3.6.1 The Housing Solutions Manager has overall responsibility for ensuring that the right people are placed in the right property on the right type of tenancy.

3.6.2 In making an offer of accommodation we will have taken full consideration for the requirements of the applicant. We will therefore have met our duty under homelessness legislation to the applicant and if our offer is refused we are not required to make a further offer.

3.6.3 The Housing Service will deal with any complaints in accordance with the East Devon District Council corporate complaints policy. For full details please contact the Complaints Officer, East Devon District Council, Blackdown House, Border Road, Heathpark Ind Estate, Honiton, EX14 1EJ, email complaints@eastdevon.gov.uk or phone 01395 517528.

4 Equality impact considerations – the policy is high relevance to equality if it has a big impact on residents and users of the service

Low

We will fully assess the needs of the applicant and additional support will be available through the Housing Options team if required.

5 Appendices and other relevant information

Appendix 1:

Inventory for 18a and 18b St Andrews Road, Exmouth

EDDC have provided the following in a room by room basis that would not be part of the usual fixtures and fittings:

- Bedframe and mattress
- Curtains and Blinds
- Wardrobe
- Chest of drawers
- Table and two chairs
- Sofa
- Lampshades
- Fitted appliances – oven and fridge
- Microwave
- Kettle
- Toaster
- Kitchen utensil pack (full details in the inventory)

6 Who authorised the policy/strategy and date of authorisation.

To be authorised by the Housing Review Board

7 Related Policies/Strategies, Procedures and Legislation

Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002)

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities (Department for Communities and Local

Government)

Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023

8 Policy date for review and responsible officer

01.04.2021 Housing Solutions Manager