

Stourhead (Western) Estate

Allocation Policy for proposed new cottages at Bonham Farm, Stourton

Description of Development

Stourhead (Western) Estate (“the Landlord”) intends to build a terrace of 4 cottages in a barn style, for affordable rent to local people in the same way as the Brook Cottages development completed in 2016. The terrace will consist of:

- 2 single storey two bedroom houses, built to level 2 accessibility standards.
- 2 two storey houses, with a bedroom on the ground floor also meeting level 2 accessibility, with a further two bedrooms and shower on the first floor

The intention is to give priority to local people currently in need of ground floor accommodation, and older people who may need such accommodation to enable them to stay in the village as long as possible.

This policy ensures that the 4 new houses will be let to tenants with local connection (as defined below), taking into account their housing need.

1 Eligibility to apply

All members of the public may apply. There is no requirement to be on the Housing Register or in need of accessible or ground floor accommodation

2 Other criteria to be met

- (a) Applicants must have a local connection, as defined in section 3 below
- (b) Occupation must be suitable to size of household. Houses will be allocated in accordance with the policy set out in Appendix 1.
- (c) Financial criteria will be applied so that tenancies will only be granted to applicants who
 - (i) Are unable to afford to buy a home in the village of Stourton; and
 - (ii) Do not own any residential property; and
 - (iii) Are able to pay rent and outgoings at time of letting (checks will be carried out at the Landlord’s expense). Guarantors will neither be sought nor accepted.

3 Definition of Local Connection

To demonstrate a local connection, applicants must meet one or more of the three following requirements at the time of application:

- (a) Local work
Either:

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- At least one years' substantial and continuing employment in the Parish of Stourton with Gasper ("Stourton"); or
- At least one year of self employment or running a business operating to a substantial degree in Stourton; or
- Have retired from such employment or self employment in the last 5 years

(b) Local residency

Full time residence in Stourton for at least 5 of the preceding 10 years

(c) Family connection

At least one parent resident in Stourton, who has lived in the village full time for the preceding 10 years .

If there are more applicants meeting the Stourton local connection than vacancies, preference will be applied to those meeting the Local Work condition

If there are fewer applicants than vacancies meeting the Stourton local connection conditions, the tenancies will be readvertised and Local Area extended to include the Parish of Kilmington.

If further applicants are needed the local area will extended to include the other contiguous parishes of Stourton (currently Zeals, Mere, Bourton, Charlton Musgrove, Brewham and Penselwood).

4 Housing need

If there is more than one applicant for a tenancy, meeting all other criteria and with equal degrees of local connection, the tenancy will be allocated to the applicant with the highest degree of housing need with the following order of priority:

- (i) A current need for accessible or ground floor accommodation
- (ii) Applicants over the age of 60
- (iii) Thereafter applying the housing list based criteria in Appendix 2

5 Nominations

Homes will be advertised through appropriate local channels.

Houses will be allocated strictly in accordance with this agreement. The applications will be made to the Landlord, who will make the final decision.

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The Landlord may apply standard tenant referencing. Applicants meeting the conditions in sections 1 2 and 3 may nevertheless be vetoed according to the criteria set out in Appendix 3.

Appendix 1: Occupation criteria

Bedroom eligibility

Any expected child will be included as part of the household when calculating minimum bedroom requirements

Household make-up
Eligible for two bedroom home: (1 to 3 residents)
Single person
Couple
Single or Couple with 1 Child
Eligible for three bedroom home (3 to 5 residents)
Couple with 1 Child
Single or Couple with 2 or 3 children

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Appendix 2: Housing Need

The bands of housing need are listed from highest to lowest:

Gold

<i>Seriously Overcrowded</i>	Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of at least two additional bedrooms)
<i>Hazards</i>	Applicants living in a property assessed by the Private Sector Housing Team in accordance with the HHSRS as having 3 or more category 1 hazards that cannot be remedied.
<i>Insecurity of tenure</i>	Where an applicant is under written notice to leave their accommodation. Applicants assessed as being insecure in their accommodation will generally be under a 2 month or 93 day notice to vacate their accommodation.
<i>High welfare or support needs</i>	Where an applicant has an identified support or welfare need which cannot be alleviated in the current accommodation. Applicants may need to live closer to family or support networks to give or receive support. Consideration will be given to the obstacles relating to the applicants need, such as the distance and transport links between the two areas.
<i>Harassment</i>	Applicants who are suffering from serious harassment, violence, or threat of violence at their current property, providing evidence exists to substantiate their claim.
<i>Multiple needs</i>	Applicants meeting more than two needs criteria within silver band.
<i>Split households</i>	Applicants whose family have formerly lived together as a household unit, with dependent children or expecting a child, who are unable to live together because of factors beyond their control, and as a result are living in separate households.

Silver

<i>Serious Disrepair</i>	Applicants living in a property assessed by the Private Sector Housing Team in accordance with the HHSRS as having 1 or 2 category 1 hazards that cannot be remedied.
<i>Overcrowded</i>	Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of one additional bedroom).
<i>Sharing Facilities</i>	Applicants sharing facilities - e.g. kitchen, bathroom, and toilet - with people who are not included on the housing register application form. This does not include applicants who choose to share their home with someone who is not included on the housing application.
<i>Tied Accommodation</i>	Applicants living in accommodation tied to their employment.

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Bronze

<i>Adequately Housed</i>	Applicants who are currently housed in a property that is appropriate for their needs in terms of size and facilities.
<i>Deliberately worsening circumstances</i>	Where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances in order to qualify for higher banding the application will be placed in Bronze band. For an applicant to have deliberately worsened their circumstances there must be evidence that it would have been reasonable for the applicant to have remained in their original accommodation.
<i>Financial capability</i>	All applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their income, savings and capital assets

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Appendix 3: Grounds for veto of an application

The Landlord may need to refuse an applicant for one of the following reasons. In that case, it is Landlord's responsibility to inform applicant of the reasons

Anti-social behaviour

Where there is evidence that an applicant might endanger the health and safety or well being of neighbouring residents because they have a history of violent or abusive behaviour, the Landlord may refuse the right to offer them accommodation.

Suspected fraudulent application

Where there is reasonable evidence that an applicant has provided false information in their application for housing, the Landlord reserves the right not to offer accommodation.

Rent arrears

Where the applicant has a history of uncleared rent arrears with any landlord, the Landlord may refuse the applicant.

No vacant possession guarantee

Where the Landlord has advertised a property which has since become unavailable.