

Emma

During the Regulation 16 consultation period, the Parish council submitted a letter requesting the inclusion of a local lettings policy in the Plan. The wording of the suggested policy has been compiled in conjunction with the Housing Development Manager at Sedgemoor District Council.

Justification for the policy is local concern that affordable housing is needed in the Parish and that this should be available in the first instance to residents and workers in the Parish.

The wording of the proposed local lettings policy is as follows:

*For any new affordable housing unit in the Neighbourhood Plan area, initial priority (and subsequent future allocation of the affordable home) will be given to eligible households who are in housing need (as defined in xxx of the Wedmore Neighbourhood Plan) and who have the following local connection with the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area:*

- *Currently live in (and have done so for 5 years or more) the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area.*
- *Previously lived for 5 years or more (within the previous 10 years) in the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area.*
- *Work 16 hours or more a week in the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area.*
- *Have immediate family (who currently live in, and have done so for 5 years or more) the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area - means grandparent(s), parent(s), child(ren) or sibling(s)*
- *Provides or received care for immediate family in the parish (immediate family as defined above)*

*Should any affordable homes be left unallocated after exhausting the above list, the unallocated affordable homes will be allocated in accordance with the Homefindersomerset housing policy and rules (or any subsequent replacement).*

In addition, it is suggested that local housing need for the purposes of this new policy is defined in the Plan as:

*For the purposes of the Wedmore neighbourhood plan area, a household is considered to be in housing need if they are assessed as being an emergency, gold or silver band household in accordance with Homefindersomerset housing policy and rules (or any subsequent replacement), plus applicants with no dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or living in accommodation with shared living facilities. <https://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk/content/Information/Prioritisingapplications>.*

The proposed local lettings policy is supported by Sedgemoor District Council and would support the provision of affordable housing. This policy meets the Basic Conditions. It has regard to national policy for affordable housing provision, contributes towards sustainable development and is in general conformity with strategic policy. However, my remit is only to determine whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. As such, I am unable to recommend the inclusion of this policy, as this policy is not required for the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. Therefore, as I have been requested to include this policy at this late stage, I suggest that it is publicised as a late addition to the Plan and made available for public consultation. As this is only one policy, I consider a public consultation period until 15 February would give ample opportunity for public comment.

Regards

Janet Cheesley