



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Frequently Asked Questions

Local Lettings Plan for Lancaster West Estate and Bramley House

Public Consultation Draft October 2018

What does the Local Lettings Plan do?

Council properties on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House that are empty and available will be offered first to existing residents of the Estate and Bramley House, who

- need and want to move to a more suitable home, and
- wish to remain in the area and part of the community.

Why is a Local Lettings Plan being recommended?

The Council introduced a rehousing policy to help tenants of the Walkways, Treadgold House and Bramley House to move to another social housing tenancy if they did not feel able to continue living close to Grenfell Tower (the Wider Grenfell Rehousing Policy). This policy does not help residents who wish to remain within the community, but need a better home.

We believe that a Local Lettings Plan may help you if, for example, you are overcrowded and need a larger property, you need a more accessible home, or you are currently living in a temporary home provided by the Council and you would like to move to a more suitable home within the area.

We have worked closely with residents of the Estate and Bramley House whose views have been extremely helpful in shaping proposals that we hope will help members of the community.

Who qualifies for the Local Lettings Plan?

You may qualify for the Local Lettings Plan if you live on the Lancaster West Estate or in Bramley House, **and were doing so at the time of the Grenfell Tower tragedy** and you are:

- i. a Council tenant with a secure tenancy, living at home on the Lancaster West Estate or in Bramley House

or

- ii. a Council tenant with a secure tenancy on the Lancaster West Estate or in Bramley House who is living away from home, would like to return home, but you are unable to do so because your home is very unsuitable.

For example, your home might be unsuitable because you, or a member of your family, cannot use stairs but your home has many internal or external steps.

or

- iii. you have been given a home to rent on the Estate or in Bramley House by the Council (under 1996 Housing Act section 188 or 193), but you do not hold a secure tenancy and you wish to move to a more settled home

or

- iv. you are a household member of a Council tenant who:
- is aged 18 or over, and
 - you are a son, daughter, parent, grandparent, or grandchild of the tenant, or otherwise need to live as part of the household - for example, because you provide necessary care to, or receive care from, another member of the household, and
 - you live with the tenant as your main home

and where:

- the home you live in is overcrowded and as a family you need a four-bedroom property or larger, or
- you live in a home with three or more bedrooms, and the tenant is willing to move to a smaller home if you are rehoused to a studio or one-bedroom property through the Local Lettings Plan.

You will also need to qualify for at least one of the priority categories explained below in order to qualify for the Local Lettings Plan.

How will qualifying residents be prioritised under the Local Lettings Plan?

If you qualify to be rehoused through the Local Lettings Plan you will be prioritised, and awarded points, according to your circumstances. Residents with a greater need to move will be given more points.

The priority categories and points levels are listed below. The first six categories (in yellow) currently exist under the Council's main Housing Allocation Scheme. The five further categories (in green) are additional priorities provided within this Local Lettings Scheme.

We are using the additional priorities to help resolve housing need on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House, and to help residents who might not normally qualify for the main Housing Register.

The points categories are explained below the table. More detailed explanations of the highest priorities can be found in the Council's Allocation Scheme – www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing.

Points award	Priority category
2000	Very urgent need, being exceptional priority and emergency medical need.
1900	Serious risk of harm
900	High medical need
700	Downsizing from an under-occupied home, or freeing up an accessible home
700	Adopting or fostering a child
200	Lacking two or more bedrooms in the current home
100	Moving from a temporary home provided by the Council
80	Medical need
50	Lacking one bedroom in the current home
20	Household members of Council tenants living in a home lacking two bedrooms or more
10	Household members of Council tenants living in a home lacking one bedroom
5	Moving closer to family

2000 points Very urgent need: exceptional priority and emergency medical need

Exceptional priority might be used if you are facing an extremely difficult housing situation and there are no other suitable housing options available - for example, being awarded one of the other points categories. Exceptional priority must be agreed by the Director of Housing Needs and Supply or a delegated officer.

Emergency medical points will only be awarded if you (or a family member) has a medical problem or disability which affects your health very severely, where your home is totally unsuitable for your needs, and no other suitable housing options are available.

1900 points Serious risk of harm

These points might be awarded if you are, for example, experiencing domestic violence or harassment at your home. Points may also be awarded where a child in your family will be taken into care unless you are rehoused to a more suitable home.

We would need to make sure that there is no immediate risk to you and that you can remain in your current home until you are rehoused.

You cannot apply for these points directly - our Children's Services, our Adult Services, the police or Housing Management have to apply on your behalf.

A panel will consider the application and points will only be awarded where there is a serious and immediate risk of harm to a child or adult in your family, unless an urgent move can be obtained.

900 points High medical need

These points might be awarded to you or a family member when, in your current home, a disability or long-term health condition has a substantial impact on your independence, or the independence of the member of your family.

You will only qualify for these points where it can be shown that a move to a more suitable home will have a substantial positive impact upon your ability to enter and leave your home, and / or to access essential facilities within your home. If your health is in long term decline, we will also consider the type of property you will need in the future.

These points aren't awarded simply because you or a family member has health problems. Many residents have serious medical conditions, but they may be living in a suitable home already, or their independence will not be substantially improved by moving to another home.

Medical points are assessed by the Council's Housing Health and Disability Assessment Team (Medical Team). This team is made up of healthcare professionals who are very experienced in housing issues. They are committed to the very highest standards, set by professional medical and healthcare bodies.

700 points Downsizing from an under-occupied home, or freeing up an accessible home

Under-occupation – You might be awarded these points if you have spare bedrooms in your current home and you are looking to move from a property with two or more bedrooms to a smaller property. This can include a move from one property to two or more smaller properties, where another family member wishes to live separately, but

only if the total number of bedrooms for the new homes are less than the original home.

Freeing up an accessible home – You might be awarded these points if you live in a home that is suitable for a person with a disability or mobility problems, but you and members of your family do not have such needs and you are happy to move to another suitable home. Usually, homes with steps will not qualify – however, the Council’s Housing Occupational Therapists will decide whether a property will qualify for these points.

700 points Adopting or fostering a child

You might be awarded these points if the Council’s Children’s Services confirm that you have been assessed as suitable to foster or adopt one or more children who are in the Council’s care, but you need a more appropriate home in order to do so.

200 points Lacking two or more bedrooms in the current home

You might be awarded these points if you and your family lack two or more bedrooms in your current home.

The table found later in this leaflet explains the number of bedrooms your family will need. Please note that only genuine members of your family, who live with you as their main home, will be considered.

100 points Moving from a temporary home provided by the Council

These points will be awarded to you are living in a home provided for you by the Council but you do not have a secure tenancy. The Council must have accepted a duty to help you under Section 193(2) of the Housing Act 1996.

80 points Medical need

These points might be awarded to you or a family member when, in your current home, a disability or long-term health condition clearly affects your independence or the independence of the member of your family.

You will only qualify for these points where it can be shown that a move to a more suitable home will clearly have a positive impact upon your ability to enter and leave your home, and/or to access essential facilities within your home. If your health is in long term decline, we will also consider the type of property you will need in the future.

These points aren’t awarded simply because you or a family member has health problems. Many residents have serious medical conditions, but they may be living in a suitable home already, or their independence will not be improved by moving to another home.

50 points**Lacking one bedroom in the current home**

You might be awarded these points if you and your family lack one bedroom in your current home.

The table found later in this leaflet explains the number of bedrooms your family will need. Please note that only genuine members of your family, who live with you as their main home, will be considered.

20 points**Household members of Council tenants living in a home lacking two bedrooms or more**

These points might be awarded to you if:

- you are aged 18 or over
- are a family member of a tenant
- the home you live in lacks two or more bedrooms
- if you remained together, you would need a home with four or more bedrooms
- you are willing to move to a studio or one-bedroom home to ease the overcrowding

10 points**Household members of Council tenants living in a home lacking one bedroom**

These points might be awarded to you if:

- you are aged 18 or over
- are a family member of a tenant
- the home you live in lacks one bedroom
- if you remained together, you would need a home with four or more bedrooms
- you are willing to move to a studio or one-bedroom home to ease the overcrowding

5 points**Moving closer to family**

These points might be awarded to you if you provide care for a member of your family who lives elsewhere, and moving to a home closer to them will help you to provide that care.

What happens if two or more households have the same priority?

Where two or more households with the same rehousing points are interested in the same property, the property will be offered first to the household who has lived the longest on the Lancaster West Estate or in Bramley House.

The start date for this length of residency is known as the 'priority date'.

Combining priorities for rehousing

You can be awarded points for more than one category. For example, you might have a high medical need and lacking two or more bedrooms.

However, you cannot combine following categories.

- If you are awarded points for a very urgent need (exceptional priority, emergency medical) or because you face a serious risk of harm, you cannot be awarded points for another category.
- You cannot be awarded points for lacking two or more bedrooms and points for lacking one bedroom.
- If you are moving from a temporary home you cannot be given points for downsizing or freeing up an accessible home.

Combining medical points

You can be awarded medical points for each member of your household that needs to move on health grounds. For example, you might qualify for 900 high medical points, and a member of your family might qualify for 80 low medical points, bringing your total points to 980.

How many bedrooms do I need?

The table below sets out the number of bedrooms your family will be assessed as needing. Please note that only genuine members of your family, who live with you as their main home, will be considered.

	One person	Couple	Two adults not living as a couple	One adult or a couple plus					
				One child or other adult	Two children of the same sex aged 20 or under	Two children of opposite sexes aged 9 or under	Two children of opposite sexes, one or both aged 10 or over	Three children	Four or more children
Studio	x	x							
One bed	x	x							
Two bed			x	x	x	x			
Three bed							x	x	x
Four or more bedrooms									x

This means that:

- Two children of different sexes can share a room until the eldest reaches 10.
- Two children of the same sex can share a room until the eldest reaches 21.
- Only up to two children can share a room (three or more children are not expected to share a room).

Examples:

- A mother and father with a girl aged 8 and a boy aged 6 will need a two bed.
- A mother with a girl aged 10 and boy aged 6 will need a three bed.
- A mother and father with a boys aged 18 and 9 will need a two bed.
- A father with girls aged 21 and 15 will need a three bed.

- A mother and father a girl aged 12, and boys aged 18 and 21 will need a four bed.

How will available homes be advertised?

The Council plans to create a separate, private, area on its Home Connections website to advertise homes that are available under the Local Lettings Plan. This means that only those residents who qualify for the Local Lettings Plan will be able to see what is available.

Printed copies of advertised homes will also be made available for you. If you do not have access to the internet, or do not feel comfortable using the internet, we will make sure you will still be able to express an interest in advertised homes.

Will the homes let under the Local Lettings Plan be on a lifetime tenancy?

Properties allocated through the Local Lettings Plan will be let on lifetimes tenancies, even if you did not previously hold a lifetime tenancy.

What rent will I pay for a home let under the Local Lettings Plan?

You will pay the same rent and the service charges that would be paid if the home was let to a resident on the Housing Register. This means that the rent and service charges will not be capped to the amount you paid for your previous home.

If you have spare bedrooms in your current home and you move to a smaller home, you will not pay more rent for your new home. When you move you will pay the lower of:

- the proper rent for your new home
- the same level of rent you paid for your previous home

If I move, will the right to succeed my tenancy be affected?

No, the rights to succeed your tenancy will not be affected.

If you move to a new home under the Local Lettings Plan, your new tenancy will have at least the same succession rights as your current tenancy. Therefore, if there has been no succession to your current tenancy, your new tenancy will have exactly the same rights to succession as you have at the moment.

If the tenancy for the home you live in has already been succeeded to, you will be given new succession rights when you move to a new home under the Local Lettings Plan. However, only a husband, wife, or civil partner will be able to succeed to the tenancy.

This is because the succession rules changed when the Government introduced the Localism Act in 2011, affecting tenancies that started after April 2012. The Council does not have a separate policy on succession.

How will accessible properties be allocated?

Properties that are suitable for residents with mobility problems will be prioritised to residents who need them. This means that a home that is suitable for a wheelchair user or for someone who struggles with steps will be offered to a resident who needs that kind of home before it is offered to someone with no mobility needs - even if resident with mobility problems has less points.

We match accessible properties to residents who need them in the following way.

Describing accessible properties	
Wheelchair accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person requires fully wheelchair accessible accommodation to and throughout the property. • Person may use a large wheelchair and requires more generous space standards for wheelchair circulation or specialist equipment.
Step-free with wider doorways and corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person requires step-free accommodation with generous corridor widths as may use a standard size or attendant propelled wheelchair, a mobility aid (walking frame) indoors and/or a wheelchair outdoors. • May be able to access another level of the property with a stair-lift. • May be outdoor electric wheelchair/scooter user, but able to walk indoors. • May have progressive neurological condition and have a degree of mobility impairment, which is likely to deteriorate in near future. • May be ambulant and obese and need wider doorways and corridors.
Step-free	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is able to mobilise but requires step-free accommodation, may use a walking stick indoors and a frame occasionally. • Person <i>may</i> be able to manage one to two steps but requires an OT assessment/ accompanied viewing to assess.
Minimal steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is able to manage a limited number of steps (up to six). • Person <i>may</i> consider properties with more than six steps but requires OT assessment/accompanied viewing.
General needs	<p>Person is able to manage at least one flight of stairs. If there are evidenced limitations on ability to manage several flights of stairs or other evidenced reasons to specify maximum floor level, this recommendation will be specified on the medical assessment/application.</p>

How long will the Local Lettings Plan last?

The Local Lettings Plan will run for two years before it is reviewed.

We will engage fully with the residents of the Lancaster West Estate and Bramley House when conducting this review to see if the Local Lettings Plan should be renewed, amended, or brought to an end (having achieved what it was meant to achieve). For the Local Lettings Plan to continue after two years it will have to be shown that the original reasons for the Plan still exist.

How many properties might become available?

This will depend upon two things - how many tenants from the Walkways, Treadgold House and Bramley House wish to move to a social housing tenancy elsewhere under the Wider Grenfell Rehousing Policy (and therefore give up their current tenancy in the Walkways, Treadgold House or Bramley House) and how many properties become available due to normal turnover across the estate and Bramley House.

The table below shows how many properties became available across the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House between April 2013 and March 2017.

Year	Lettings on Lancaster West / Bramley House	Lettings to LWE / BH as % of all lettings	Lettings to LWE / BH as % of all Council only lettings
2013/14	19	4.3%	10.8%
2014/15	27	5.3%	14.7%
2015/16	23	5%	11.9%
2016/17	33	7.6%	17.6%
2013/17	102	5.5%	13.8%

Mutual Exchange

The Council intends to launch a local mutual exchange scheme which will help Council tenants to exchange homes if they wish to do so. You do not need to be in housing need to swap your home with another council tenant – you may live in a suitable property but simply wish to live in a different location.

We will give you more information about the Council's mutual exchange scheme in the near future.