

Local Lettings Plan

for Lancaster West Estate
and Bramley House

Frequently Asked Questions

**Housing
Needs**



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

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What does the Local Lettings Plan do?

A

Council properties on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House that are empty and available will be reserved and offered 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.

Q

Why was a Local Lettings Plan introduced?

A

The Council introduced the Wider Grenfell 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. 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 a Local Lettings Plan that we hope will help members of the community.

Q

Which housing blocks are included in the Local Lettings Plan?

A

Barandon Walk, Camborne Mews, Camelford Court, Camelford Walk, Upper Camelford Walk, Clarendon Walk, Hurstway Walk, Lower Clarendon Walk, Upper Clarendon Walk, Morland House, Talbot Grove House, Talbot Walk, Testerton Walk, Treadgold House, Upper Talbot Walk, Verity Close, plus Bramley House.

Q**A**

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 an existing 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 are living in a temporary home on the Estate or in Bramley House provided by the Council (under 1996 Housing Act section 188 or 193), and you wish to move to your own secure Council tenancy
- iv. you are a household member of a Council tenant and:
 - are 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
 - you qualify to be rehoused to your own, separate home under the Local Lettings Plan – this is explained later in this leaflet
- v. you qualify for at least one of the priority categories explained later in this leaflet.

Who does not qualify for the Local Lettings Plan?

The following residents do not qualify for rehousing under the Local Lettings Plan:

- ➔ Leaseholders or resident family members of leaseholder
- ➔ Residents living in private rented accommodation
- ➔ Lodgers
- ➔ Council tenants who do not meet one of the priority categories
- ➔ Council tenants or families living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council who were not living on the Estate or in Bramley House at the time of the Grenfell tragedy
- ➔ Council tenants who are living away from home but still hold a tenancy on the Estate or in Bramley House unless the Council assesses their existing council home to be unsuitable (for example because you really struggle to use the stairs in your home).

Q

A

How might you 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 eight categories (in yellow) currently exist under the Council's main Housing Allocation Scheme. The six further categories (in green) are additional priorities provided within this Local Lettings Scheme.

We are using the additional priorities to help tackle 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 in the following table. More detailed explanations of the highest priorities can be found in the Council's Allocation Scheme, which can be found at www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing.

Points award	Priority category
2000	Very urgent need, being exceptional priority and emergency medical need
1900	Serious risk to welfare
1000 to 1300	Downsizing from an under-occupied home
1000	Freeing up an accessible home
900	High medical need
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
1000	Freeing up a larger home
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 member 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 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 to welfare

These points might be awarded if you are, for example, experiencing domestic abuse 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.

**1000
to
1300
points**

Downsizing from an under-occupied home

If you have spare bedrooms in your home you can apply to move to a smaller home.

This will free up a larger home for a family that needs it.

Tenants with spare bedrooms are sometimes called 'under-occupiers', and moving to a smaller home is called 'downsizing'. Downsizing is voluntary - you cannot be made to move to a home with fewer bedrooms.

If you would like to move to a smaller home and you have family members living with you, we may agree to rehouse one or more family members to their own separate home at the same time. The family members must be 18 or over and living with you as their main home. This is sometimes called a 'split household'. The total number of bedrooms in the new homes occupied by you and your family members must be less than the number of bedrooms in the home you moved out from.

More information about family members moving to their own home will be found later in this leaflet.

In most cases, you will have to move to the smaller home before your family members will be offered their own homes. After you have moved, your family members will not be able to stay in the old home while they wait to be rehoused.

The number of points you can be given depends on the number of bedrooms you are giving back. We work this out by counting the difference between the number of bedrooms in the home you are moving out from, and the total number of bedrooms in the home or homes you and your family members are moving in to.

1000 downsizing points	giving back 1 bedroom
1100 downsizing points	giving back 2 bedrooms
1200 downsizing points	giving back 3 bedrooms
1300 downsizing points	giving back 4 or more bedrooms
1000 downsizing points	family member moving to their own separate home

You may qualify for a financial incentive and other support when you downsize to a smaller home (tenant only).

1000 points **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.

If you move to a home with the fewer or the same number of bedrooms than your current home, you may qualify for a financial incentive and other support.

1000 points **Freeing up a larger home**

If you are living with your family in a home with three or more bedrooms, you can apply to move to a smaller home. Family members, aged 18 or over, who are living with you as their main home will move to their own separate homes. This will free up a larger home for a family that needs it.

You don’t need to have spare bedrooms in your current home to qualify.

The total number of bedrooms in the new homes occupied by you and your family members must not be greater than the number of bedrooms in the home you move out from.

In most cases, you will have to move to the smaller home before your family members will be offered their own homes. After you have moved,

your family members will not be able to stay in the old home while they wait to be rehoused.

You, and each family member moving to their own separate home, will be awarded 1000 points.

More information about family members moving to their own home will be found later in this leaflet.

**900
points**

High medical need

This is sometimes called health and independence priority.

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.

There is a real shortage of homes suitable for residents with disabilities or mobility difficulties, especially on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House. This means that if you need a particular type of home that meets your health needs, you may never be rehoused through the Local Lettings Plan.

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**

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, adopt or become a Special Guardian for one or more children who are, or otherwise could be, 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.

There is a shortage of larger family-sized homes on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House. This means that if you need a larger home, you may never be rehoused through the Local Lettings Plan.

100 points **Moving from a temporary home provided by the Council**

These points will be awarded to you if you are living in a home provided for you by the Council but you do not have a secure tenancy. This means that you are living in temporary accommodation provided by the Council. The Council must have accepted a responsibility to rehouse you (a duty to help you under Section 188 or 193 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 a 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.

There is a real shortage of homes suitable for residents with disabilities or mobility difficulties, especially on the Lancaster West Estate and in Bramley House. This means that if you need a particular type of home that meets your health needs, you may never be rehoused through the Local Lettings Plan.

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

points

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 **Family members of tenants living in a home lacking two bedrooms or more**

points

These points might be awarded to you if:

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

These types of move help to reduce overcrowding.

More information about family members moving to their own home can be found later in this leaflet.

10 **Family members of tenants living in a home lacking one bedroom**

points

These points might be awarded to you if:

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

These types of move help to reduce overcrowding.

More information about family members moving to their own home can be found later in this leaflet.

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 number of points?

Where two or more households with the same rehousing points are interested in the same available home, the home 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 sometimes be awarded points for more than one category. For example, you might have a high medical need and are lacking two or more bedrooms.

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

However, you cannot combine the 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 being overcrowded, downsizing or freeing up an accessible home, and your family members cannot be rehoused separately.

When can a family member move to their own home?

There are three situations when a family member living with you, aged 18 or over, can move out into their own home on the Lancaster West Estate or in Bramley House.

In most cases, if you have moved into to a smaller home, your family members will not be able to stay in your old home while they wait to be rehoused.

1. When you have spare bedrooms and you are happy to downsize to a smaller home. Family members aged 18 or over, who are living with you as their main home, may be able to move to their own separate home.

The total number of bedrooms in the new homes occupied by you and your family members must be less than the number of bedrooms in the home you moved out from.

Examples

You and your husband are living in a four-bed home with your 19 year old daughter. You and your husband can move to a one-bed home, and your daughter can move to a one-bed property.

You are living in a three-bed home with your 24 year old son. You may be able to move to a two-bed home so your grandchild can visit and stay, and your son can move to a studio. Your son cannot move to a one-bed, as the total number of bedrooms you and your son will have will not be less than the home you moved out from.

More information can be found earlier in this leaflet, in the section called 'Downsizing from an under-occupied home'.

2. When you are living in a home with three or more bedrooms (and you don't have spare bedrooms) and you are happy to move to a smaller home. Family members aged 18 or over, who are living with you as their main home, may be able to move to their own separate home.

The total number of bedrooms in the new homes occupied by you and your family members must not be greater than the number of bedrooms in the home you move out from.

Example

You are living in a three-bed with your daughter aged 21 and your son aged 16. You can move to a two-bed with your son, and your daughter can move to a studio or one-bed.

More information can be found earlier in this leaflet, in the section called 'Freeing up a larger home'.

3. When you are living in a home with three or more bedrooms, but you are overcrowded and needed a bigger home. Family members aged 18 or over, who are living with you as their main home, may be able to move to their own separate home.

Members of your family can move to their own studio or one-bed home until you are no longer overcrowded. Family members cannot move out to their own home under the Local Lettings Plan if it results in you having spare bedrooms.

If you are living in a temporary home, your family members cannot be rehoused to their own home in this way.

Example

You are living in a three-bed with your daughters aged 25 and 15, and your son aged 22. Each of you need your own bedroom, so as a family you need a four-bed. Either your eldest daughter or your son can move to their own studio or one-bed, meaning that you and your two remaining children are suitably housed in your three-bed home.

If you are overcrowded and need a home with four or more bedrooms, you must choose whether to apply as a family or apply to have family members move to their own home. You cannot do both.

I am an adult family member. How do I apply to be rehoused to my own home?

Firstly, you need to make sure you can qualify for the Local Lettings Plan. Please read the guidance earlier in this leaflet.

- Step 1** The main tenant(s) completes a Local Lettings Plan application form saying that they would like an adult member of their family to be rehoused to their own home. This ensures that the tenant is aware that a family member may want to move to their own home.
- Step 2** The Council assesses this form to make sure the family member qualifies to be rehoused to their own home.
- Step 3** The Council contacts the family member who is asked to complete a different, 'splitting household member' form so they can join the Local Lettings Plan. The family member cannot apply to the Local Lettings Plan direct – they must be contacted by the Council.

Both the tenant and family member will be asked to provide supporting information. Please see 'What rent will you pay for a home let under the Local Lettings Plan?' later in this leaflet, as you should be sure you can pay the rent for a new home.

How do we assess a need to move on health grounds?

Medical points are not just awarded because a tenant or a member of their family has significant health problems. They can be awarded if it becomes difficult for a tenant or member of their family to live an independent life in their home AND if a move to a more suitable property would increase independence. An example of this might be a resident who has a long-term mobility problem which means their existing property is unsuitable.

We may ask you to complete a separate medical assessment form, so we have more information about the difficulties you face. We may also ask (with your permission) for independent health reports from relevant professionals who provide treatment, such as GPs.

The assessment is carried out by the Council's Medical Team who are very experienced in housing issues. Though the Council may seek and value information from medical professionals, the assessment decision remains with the Council and not your health professional.

How do we work out many bedrooms you 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.

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

This means that:

- Two children of different gender can share a room until the eldest reaches 10.
- Two children of the same gender 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 eight and a boy aged six will need a two bed.
- A mother with a girl aged 10 and boy aged six will need a three bed.
- A mother and father with boys aged 18 and nine will need a two bed.
- A father with girls aged 21 and 15 will need a three bed.
- A mother and father with a girl aged 12, and boys aged 9 and 21 will need a four bed.

How will available homes be advertised?

Homes that are available under the Local Lettings Plan are advertised on a separate area of our Home Connections website. This means that only those residents who qualify for the Local Lettings Plan will be able to see what is available. When you join the Local Lettings Plan, we will tell you how you can log in to the Home Connections website.

Printed copies of advertised homes can 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.

Where possible, we will hold open days for available properties so that you can view them before deciding to express an interest.

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

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

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

You will pay the same rent and 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.

However, 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.

Before moving to a new home under the Local Lettings Plan, think about whether you will be able to afford the rent, especially if you are a family member moving to your own home. For example, most full-time students will not be able to claim housing benefit or Universal Credit to help them pay the rent.

If you are not sure, Housing Advisors in the Housing Department and Neighbourhood Officers in the Lancaster West Neighbourhood Office can talk this through with you. We want to make sure that you will not end up in financial difficulty. If we believe you will not be able to afford the rent, we may not allow you to move to a new home.

If you move, will the right to succeed your 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 you have already inherited the tenancy for the home you are living in (the tenancy 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's policy on discretionary succession (local rules that will allow a family member to take over the tenancy when the tenant dies, even if the law does not give them that right) is that they will be considered on an exceptional, case-by-case basis.

How will accessible properties be allocated?

Some Council homes are suitable for residents with disabilities or mobility difficulties. These types of home are sometimes called 'accessible homes'.

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 needs fully wheelchair accessible accommodation to and throughout the home. • 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 needs a step-free home 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 use an outdoor electric wheelchair/scooter outdoors, 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 able to move around 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 may 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 may consider properties with more than six steps but requires OT assessment/accompanied viewing.
General needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person is able to manage at least one flight of stairs. • If the person can only manage a limited number of flights of stairs, or can only go up to a maximum floor level, we will set this out in our medical assessment.

Will you be guaranteed to move?

No, we cannot guarantee that you will move under the Local Lettings Plan.

Your chances of moving to a more suitable home will depend on the properties that become available, the type and size of home you need, and your priority for rehousing compared to other residents who also need to move. It is possible you will never move under the Local Lettings Plan, especially if you need a larger family home, or an accessible home.

How to apply to the Local Lettings Plan

You will need to complete a simple application form that will tell us about your and your family and explain why you would like to be rehoused.

Once we have received your form, we may ask you to provide supporting information, such as proof of identity for the members of your family and proof of their relationship to you.

If you qualify for the Local Lettings Plan, we will send you a unique 'User ID' number and pin number for the Home Connections website where you will be able to see, and express an interest in, available properties. We will also give you more information about how to use the Home Connections website.

If you are already on the Housing Register you will still need to complete a Local Lettings Plan application form. You will have two separate applications – one for the main Housing Register and another for the Local Lettings Plan. Your User ID number for the Local Lettings Plan will be different to your User ID number for the Housing Register.

Where to find an application form for the Local

Lettings Plan

In person

You can collect an application form from:

Lancaster West Neighbourhood Office
Unit 7, Baseline Studios,
Whitchurch Road W11 1AT

Customer Service Centre

Kensington Town Hall
Hornton Street, W8 7NX

By email

You can ask us to post you an application form by emailing:

 housingsolutions@rbkc.gov.uk

By telephone

You can ask us to post you an application form by calling:

 020 7361 3008 (HousingLine)

Online

You can download and print off an application form from the Council's website scan the QR code or go to



 www.rbkc.gov.uk/housing/housing-consultations-and-policy/policy-and-publications/local-lettings-plan