

# **Stourhead Western Estate**

## **Allocation Policy for new cottages at Brook, Gasper**

Updated May 2017

### **Purpose:**

This policy ensures that the 4 new houses in Gasper Street built by Stourhead Western Estate (“SWE”), the Landlord, are 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.

### **2 Other criteria to be met**

(a) Applicants must have a local connection, as defined in section 3 below

(b) Occupation suitable to size of household

Houses will be allocated in accordance with the policy set out in Appendix 1.

(c) Financial criteria

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 from current earnings (checks will be carried out at the Landlord’s expense).

Applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their income, debts, savings and capital assets.

### **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:

- At least one year’s substantial and continuing employment in the village of Stourton; or
- At least one year of self employment or running a business operating to a substantial degree in the village of Stourton

(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 the village of Stourton, who has lived in the village full time for the preceding 10 years .

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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 Stourton and contiguous parishes (currently Zeals, Kilmington, 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, as defined in Appendix 2.

### **5 Nominations**

Homes will be advertised through appropriate local channels at the Landlord's expense.

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

The Landlord may seek references at its own expense to confirm applicants meet the criteria in sections 1 2 and 3. Applicants meeting the conditions in sections 1 2 and 3 may nevertheless be vetoed according to the criteria set out in Appendix 3.

Any applicant will have the right to appeal to the Stourton Parish Council if they feel the policy or a veto has been wrongly applied as set out in Appendix 4.

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### Appendix 1: Occupation criteria

#### Bedroom eligibility

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

<b>Household make-up</b>
<b>Eligible for two bedroom home:</b>
Single person
Couple
Single or Couple with 1 Child
Single or Couple with 2 Children (both under 10yrs)
<b>Eligible for three bedroom home</b>
Single or Couple with 1 Child
Single or Couple with 2 Children (both under 10yrs)
Single or Couple with 2 Children (one of which over 10yrs)
Single or Couple with 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>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><b>Adequately Housed</b></i>	Applicants who are currently housed in a property that is appropriate for their needs in terms of size and facilities.
<i><b>Deliberately worsening circumstances</b></i>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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### **Appendix 3: Grounds for veto of an application**

#### **Landlord reasons for rejecting an applicant**

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. The applicant may appeal to the Stourton Parish Council if it feels the rejection is unfair and not in accordance with this policy.

#### ***Area unsuitable/Anti-social behaviour***

Where there is evidence that an applicant might endanger the health and safety or well being of neighbouring residents the Landlord may refuse the right to offer them accommodation in that particular area.

#### ***Property unsuitable – Health and Safety***

Where there is reasonable evidence to suggest a property is unsuitable for the applicant due to health and safety concerns (for example, where the applicant has mobility needs that cannot be met without making considerable adaptations to the property.)

#### ***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.

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### **Appendix 4**

#### **Parish Council Appeal Procedure**

All applicants are entitled to appeal to the Stourton with Gasper Parish Council, if they feel the Allocations Policy had not been adhered to.

An applicant who is refused a tenancy will be notified of the decision by recorded delivery and is permitted to appeal to the Stourton with Gasper Parish Council within 14 days of the date of receipt of the letter if he feels the Allocations Policy has not been adhered to.

Stourton with Gasper Parish Council has 14 days in which to consider the Appeal, set a hearing date, liaise with PC members, organise a venue and date at which at least 3 members can be present, distribute material to members, and members to study material before hearing date.

Only material in the possession of the Landlord at the date of the rejection of the application will allowed at appeal, and neither the appellant nor landlord will be present at the PC appeal hearing.