



### **Who will the homes be allocated to?**

A local connection criteria is applied for all sites which are developed as a Rural Exception Site (RES) to ensure that priority for the homes is given to those with a strong connection to the parish where the homes would be built in order to address local need.

Each Rural Exception Site scheme can have slightly different local connection criteria, but they follow the general principles shown below.

- Applicant lives in the parish and has done so for xx years.
- Applicant works in the parish and has done so for xx years.
- Applicant has previously lived in the parish, and has close family members (e.g. mother/father/sibling/grown up child) who currently live in the parish and has done so for xx years.
- Applicant has a need to reside in the parish to provide/receive essential care or support to/from a family member who lives in the parish and has done so for xx years.

(The required time that an applicant and/or family member has to have lived within the parish as well as the list of accepted 'family members' will vary between each RES local connection criteria).

Occasionally there may be no applicants with a strong connection to the parish at the time of a property being advertised for let, and so the local connection criteria for Rural Exception Site schemes include a cascade process which allows homes to be allocated to applicants with a strong connection to named neighbouring parishes, and then to those with a connection to Hart if required.

In the majority of cases, homes on a Rural Exception Site scheme are allocated to applicants with a strong connection to the main parish, but the cascade process is there if required so that the home can be used to help someone in need of affordable housing rather than being left empty.

If a Rural Exception Site is progressed within Eversley, the local connection criteria that is applied for the homes, including which neighbouring parishes are included within the cascade process will be agreed by Eversley Parish Council, Hart District Council and English Rural (the housing association who will be delivering the homes).

## **How will the homes be allocated?**

The homes which will be for rent will be advertised through Hart District Council's housing register. Anyone who would like to be considered for the homes will need to complete a housing register application online by searching 'join housing register' on the Hart District Council website and then selecting 'Social housing in Hart' to find the form to complete. Details regarding any connection to Eversley can then be added to the appropriate section of the form.

If assistance is required to join the Hart Housing Register, Hart's Housing team can be contacted by calling 01252 774420 or emailing [housing@hart.gov.uk](mailto:housing@hart.gov.uk).

Applicants are awarded a housing priority band (Band A - Band D) based on their assessed housing need. Band A applicants receive the highest priority, and Band D applicants the lowest. Most applicants are registered within Band C which reflects that the household has a need for re-housing, but their need has not been assessed as being urgent.

Applicants are also given an Effective Date (the date that they were placed within their band).

When the homes are ready for let (either when they are first let, or when they come up for re-let) they are advertised online for housing register applicants to apply ('bid') for. Applicants are able to bid for an appropriately sized home to meet their household's assessed need (in line with the Hart Bedroom Standard).

Property adverts will give details including the property size, rent level, any relevant facilities and features and will clearly advise that the home will be allocated in line with the local connection criteria.

Once a home has been advertised, a shortlist of applicants who have applied for the property is drawn up. For homes that have been delivered as a Rural Exception Site, all applicants who appear to meet the local connection criteria are identified. Applications are then checked, and documentation requested to confirm who meets the local connection criteria to determine who should be nominated for the vacancy.

Applicants will be prioritised in line with the local connection cascade process and where there is more than one applicant who meets the same level of local connection (i.e. connection to the Parish, or connection to neighbouring parishes etc), the applicant with the highest band award and then the earliest Effective Date will be nominated for the property.

## **How will the homes be protected as affordable homes for local people?**

A legal agreement called a S106 is used to ensure that any homes which are delivered on a Rural Exception Site are protected to be let as affordable homes in perpetuity.

The agreed local connection criteria, including the cascade process is also written into the S106. It is legally binding and must be followed when the homes are allocated on first and all subsequent re-lets.