

Approved Preferred Housing Partners Policy – Herefordshire Council

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Aims & Objectives
3. Approval of Preferred Housing Partners
4. S106 (Developer Contributions) for Affordable Housing
5. Applications to Become an Approved Preferred Housing Partner
6. Review and Monitoring

Annexe A

Approved Preferred Partners Application Form

1. Introduction

Herefordshire Council's County plan 2020-2024 shapes the future of Herefordshire and aims to encourage and strengthen our vibrant communities, create a thriving local economy and protect and enhance our environment to ensure Herefordshire remains a great place to live, visit and, work, learn and do business. Herefordshire Council is aspiring for the county to become carbon neutral by 2030. We aim in part to achieve this by working with Registered Providers (RP's) and developers to enable them to build more affordable homes that are energy efficient and that will adapt to meet the needs of our aging population and by encouraging innovative solutions to help reduce homelessness. This policy sets out how Herefordshire Council will approve Registered Providers becoming preferred housing partners for new development opportunities across the county and how we will work together to deliver new affordable homes.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to set out the criteria to approve Registered Providers to become preferred delivery partners of affordable housing in Herefordshire through S106 obligations (developer contributions) and RP lead schemes. The council is committed to working in partnership with approved RP's to achieve consistency in the quality and standard of the provision of affordable housing in the county, through both development and management activity. Preferred partners are expected to demonstrate that they are committed to delivering good quality, well designed, sustainable, adaptable and affordable home in Herefordshire.

3. Approval of Preferred Housing Partners

To be included on the council preferred housing partner list within the Provision of Affordable Housing – Technical data to support the affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document, organisations must demonstrate that they meet all the following criteria:

1. Are registered with Homes England and are judged by them as compliant for governance and viability requirements¹.
2. Manage stock in the local² area and/or have an established local management arrangement.
3. Have a sustainable and long³ track record in the management of affordable homes and have a plan in place to reinvest any recycled capital grant for the benefit of local communities.
4. Have in place or agree to develop a nomination agreement⁴ with the council to allocate homes in accordance with the Councils allocation scheme through, Herefordshire council's choice base lettings system⁵.
5. Commit to the principles within the council's Tenancy Strategy.
6. Agree to develop a complaints protocol by negotiation with the council.

¹ Homes England and the Regulator of Social housing publishes regulatory judgements on RP's for compliance with the governance and viability requirements of the Governance and Financial Standard. G1 and V1 are the preferred ratings.

² Local means to own or manage stock in Herefordshire or a neighbouring authority.

³ Long term is 5 plus years.

⁴ The nomination agreement is for the purpose of allocating housing (nominations, acceptance and refusal of nomination) and successful partnership working between the RP and Herefordshire Council

⁵ Home Point

7. Attend and actively contribute to the Councils Strategic Housing Partnership Forum and other Development related meetings.
8. Consult and liaise with Strategic Housing's Development Officers about potential and new development opportunities.

All preferred housing partners will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they continue to meet the criteria; they will be invited to regular meetings to discuss development opportunities and their performance on managing their homes and enabling supply.

4. S106 (Developer Contributions) for Affordable Housing

In line with our planning policies and Affordable Housing SPD the Council requires that the delivery of new affordable housing will be developed on site, however, in exceptional circumstances where this is unachievable, the Council will accept commuted sums in lieu of delivery to invest in affordable housing projects elsewhere.

RP's that have been approved by the Council maybe approached by the Strategic Housing to deliver projects that meets our strategic fit utilising commuted sum funds.

5. Applications to become a Preferred Housing Partner

To apply to become an approved housing partner an application form (Annexe A) can be obtained by contacting the Strategic Housing Team on 01432 260269, or email Housing Development housingdevelopment@herefordshire.gov.uk

6. Review and Monitoring

This policy and criteria for becoming an approved preferred Housing Partner will be reviewed on a periodic basis. An annual review will take place with each approved RP to ensure their compliance with the policy.

Annex A

Approved Preferred Housing Partners –
Application Form

About this form

1. This form should be completed by Registered Providers (RP's) whom wish to become a Preferred Housing Partner of Herefordshire Council.
2. The form should be completed in conjunction with the 'Approved Preferred Housing Partners Policy'. Before completing the application form, please familiarise yourself with the requirements that will apply once approved. The applicant should not proceed unless they are satisfied that they are able to meet all the requirements of approval.
3. All questions should be answered as accurately and as concisely as possible. Witten statements and supporting information provided as clearly labelled appendices.
4. The council is committed to meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; please note that any applications may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act. Should the applicant consider any information submitted commercially sensitive, they must clearly identify this within their application and explain in broad terms what harm could result from a disclosure and the time period applicable to that sensitivity.
5. The completed application and supporting evidence should be submitted to:

housingdevelopment@herefordshire.gov.uk

Part 1: General Information

Contact Name:	
Position/role:	
Organisation's website address:	
Registered Office address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Correspondence address of above contact (if different to registered office):	

Part 2: Homes England Registration

Is your organisation registered with Homes England Y/N	
--	--

Organisation Name:	
Homes England Registration No:	
Designation: (profit/non-profit/local authority)	
Registered Office address:	
Governance Rating	
Viability Rating:	
Date of last assessment	

Part 3: Stock holder

To become an approved partner you must currently own or manage stock in the local area

	Yes	No
Do you currently own or manage stock within Herefordshire County		
If Yes, please tell us: type/size/location/specialist/rent charged		

If you don't own or manage stock within Herefordshire, please state how you will meet the requirements set out in the policy Section 3

Please include any supporting evidence clearly labelled

Part 4: Sustainability

To become an approved partner you must have a sustainable and long track record in the management of affordable homes and have a plan in place to reinvest any recycled capital grant for the benefit of the local community

<p>Please outline the management arrangements in place. Please include information about repairs and maintenance arrangements, tenancy sustainment and housing management</p>	
<p>Please outline your plans for investment of any recycled capital grant in the local communities</p>	

Please include any supporting evidence clearly labelled

Part 5: Requirements

By signing the declaration below, you are agreeing to the following requirements

- Have in place or agree to develop a nomination agreement with the council and allocate housing in accordance with the council's allocation policy through the council's choice based lettings system.
- Commit to the principals within the council's Tenancy Strategy
- Agree to develop a complaints protocol by negotiation with the Council
- Attend and actively contribute to the Council Strategic Housing Forum and other development related meetings
- Consult and liaise with the Strategic Housing Team's Development Officers about potential new developments.

Approved Preferred Partners will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with all the criteria

Part 6: Declaration and consent

- I/We declare that information contained within this application is correct and accurate
- The organisation accepts the terms and conditions of the policy
- That status will be reviewed annually
- The information may be disclosed as part of a freedom of information request and have identified information deemed as commercially sensitive, the reasons for this and the timescales for this sensitivity.

Signed by:

Date:

Name:

Position: