**38 Hendy, Tal Y Bont – scheme outline and grant conditions**

The property is a 3 bedroomed house which Grwp Cynefin has identified as suitable for sale on the open market. There is a significant amount of work required to bring it up to the standard which social housing has to meet, and little demand on the housing register for properties in the area. Using funding identified by Conwy County Borough Council, it is proposed to offer a first time buyer grant to support the costs (or, as applicable, some of the costs) of bringing the property up to an agreed standard.

In order to be considered, any potential purchaser must apply to Tai Teg and meet the eligibility criteria for inclusion on the affordable housing register. The potential purchaser must be able to obtain a mortgage to cover the agreed sale price, following which a grant not exceeding £25,000 will be considered based on the cost of the work.

The grant will be subject to a 5 year condition period, and would become repayable in full if the purchaser were to cease to occupy the property, sell or otherwise dispose of it during the grant condition period. The grant would be secured against the property with HM Land Registry.

In order to ensure consistency with other forms of financial assistance offered by the Authority, some circumstances in which the property is disposed of may be treated as exempt from the requirement for the grant to be repaid. Although these are less likely to occur in the case of first time buyers than for other grant applicants, examples include the death of the property owner, or where the property owner goes into permanent care. All exempt disposals are as set out in appendix 1 to this document.

The potential purchaser will be required to provide two contractor estimates (or sets of contractor estimates where different tradesmen are to be used) for the cost of the work. Only works which are agreed by Conwy CBC as ‘eligible’ will be considered for grant.

The eligible works will be based on the standard applicable to the Houses Into Homes loan scheme. The standard is lower than the Welsh Housing Quality Standard which applies to social housing, but higher than the requirements of the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (Part IV of the Housing Act 2004). See appendix 1 below.

It is proposed that the grant will be paid direct to contractors on completion (to the satisfaction of the purchaser) of the works. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for a part-payment to be made before completion of works. This will be done at the discretion of the Council (for example, where a deposit has to be paid for items being made to order).

The 5 year grant condition period will commence on the date that the works are certified as complete to the satisfaction of the purchaser.

**Appendix 1**

**Property Standards and Eligible Works**

**Criterion A: It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing**

To be fit, a dwelling should be free of category 1 hazards as assessed through the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

**Criterion B: It is in a reasonable state of repair**

A dwelling satisfies this criterion unless:

* one or more key building components are old and, because of their condition need replacing or major repair; or
* two or more other building components are old and, because of their condition need replacing or major repair.

A building component can only fail to satisfy this criterion by being old and requiring replacing or repair. A component cannot fail this criterion based on age alone.

Building components

Building components are the structural parts of a dwelling (e.g. wall structure, roof structure), other external elements (e.g. roof covering, chimneys) and internal services and amenities (e.g. kitchens, heating systems).

Key building components are those which, if in poor condition, could have an immediate impact on the integrity of the building and cause further deterioration in other components.

They are the external components plus internal components that have potential safety implications and include:

* external walls;
* roof structure and covering;
* windows/doors;
* chimneys;
* central heating boilers;
* gas fires;
* storage heaters;
* plumbing; and
* electrics.

Lifts are not considered to be a key component unless the lift or the lift shafts have a direct effect upon the integrity of the building.

If any of these components are old and need replacing, or require immediate major repair, then the dwelling is not in a reasonable state of repair.

Other building components are those that have a less immediate impact on the integrity of the dwelling. Their combined effect must therefore be considered, with a dwelling not being in a reasonable state of repair if two or more are old and need replacing or require immediate major repair.

Old and in poor condition

A component is defined as ‘old’ if it is older than its standard lifetime. Components are in poor condition if they need major work, either full replacement or major repair.

One or more key components, or two or more other components, must be both old and in poor condition to render the dwelling non-decent on grounds of disrepair. Components that are old but in good condition or in poor condition but not old would not, in themselves, cause the dwelling to fail the standard.

A building component, which requires replacing before it reaches its expected lifetime has failed early. Under the terms of the definition, this early failure does not render the dwelling non-decent.

**Criterion C: It has reasonably modern facilities and services**

A dwelling is considered not to meet this criterion if it lacks three or more of the

following facilities:

* a kitchen which is 20 years old or less;
* a kitchen with adequate space and layout;
* a bathroom which is 30 years old or less;
* an appropriately located bathroom and WC;
* adequate external noise insulation; and
* adequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats.

A kitchen failing on adequate space and layout would be one that was too small to contain all the required items (sink, cupboards cooker space, worktops etc) appropriate to the size of the dwelling;

An inappropriately located bathroom and WC is one where the main bathroom or WC is located in a bedroom or accessed through a bedroom (unless the bedroom is not used or the dwelling is for a single person). A dwelling would also fail if the main WC is external or located on a different floor to the nearest wash hand basin, or if a WC without a wash hand basin opens on to a kitchen in an inappropriate area, for example next to the food preparation area;

Inadequate insulation from external airborne noise would be where there are problems with, for example, traffic (rail, road and aeroplanes) or factory noise.

Inadequate size and layout of common entrance areas for blocks of flats would be one with insufficient room to manoeuvre easily for example where there are narrow access ways with awkward corners and turnings, steep staircases, inadequate landings, absence of handrails, low headroom etc.

In some instances there may be factors which may make the improvements required to meet the Houses into Homes standards’ challenging, or impossible, factors such as physical or planning restrictions. Where such limiting factors occur the property should be assessed to determine the most satisfactory course of action in consultation with the relevant body or agency so as to determine the best solution. The outcome may determine that some improvements may be possible even if all are not.

A dwelling would not fail this criterion, where it is impossible to make the required improvements to components for physical or planning reasons.

**Criterion D: It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort**

The definition requires a dwelling to have both efficient heating; and effective insulation.

Efficient heating is defined as any gas or oil programmable central heating; or electric storage heaters; or warm air systems; or under floor systems; or programmable LPG/solid fuel central heating; or similarly efficient heating systems which are developed in the future.

The primary heating system must have a distribution system sufficient to provide heat to two or more rooms of the home. There may be storage heaters in two or more rooms, or other heaters that use the same fuel in two or more rooms. Even if the central heating system covers most of the house making a dwelling decent, under the HHSRS the home should be warm enough for the occupant.

Heating sources, which provide less energy efficient options fail the Houses into Homes standard.

Programmable heating is where the timing and the temperature of the heating can be controlled by the occupants.

Because of the differences in efficiency between gas/oil heating systems and the other heating systems listed, the level of insulation that is appropriate also differs:

For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively) and at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is loft space) is an effective package of insulation.

For dwellings heated by electric storage heaters/LPG/programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively).

A SAP rating of less than 35 (using the 2001 SAP methodology) has been established as a proxy for the likely presence of a Category 1 hazard from excess cold.