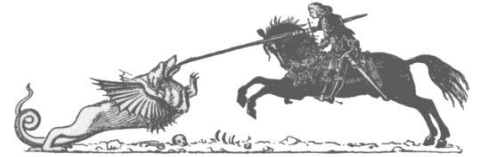


GUILD of St GEORGE



Property Lettings Policy

1. Background

One of the original aims of the Guild of St George was to acquire land and to bring it into useful production. Companions supported Ruskin's utopian aims with gifts of real estate and money. A cooperative farm was established near Sheffield; woodland was given in Bewdley, Worcestershire and a number of houses in Wales. After Ruskin's death, several properties in Hertfordshire were donated to the Guild. This policy considers the properties which are currently available to let, but may also apply to any new properties coming into the Guild's possession.

The Guild of St George is a registered charity which works to put Ruskin's ideas and values into practice but to pursue those values in contemporary ways. The Guild funds a significant proportion of its charitable activities and support for local community groups using income generated from its residential and commercial properties. These properties were donated to the Guild on the understanding that it would use the rental income to support its charitable objectives. In accordance with Charity Commission guidance these assets should yield a good and sustainable financial return for the charity.

Where the Guild engages the services of a professional agent to manage its properties (e.g. in Westmill) the agent will be made fully aware of the Guild's charitable objectives and the importance it places on the ethical and environmentally responsible standards it requires regarding its property and tenancies.

2. Guild Properties Available to Let

Bewdley - Worcestershire

- Uncllys Farm
- St George's Farm
- St George's Farmhouse
- St George's Bungalow

Westmill – Hertfordshire

- 1 & 2 Hope Cottages
- 1 & 2 School Cottages
- 1, 2 & 3 Lane End Cottages
- Vine House

3. Selection of Tenants and Rent

Ruskin believed in the principle of fair rent. The Guild, while seeking to maximise the value of its assets, will not select tenants for its properties solely on the basis of their ability to pay the maximum rent. A fair rent will be decided upon using the market rate as a benchmark, and the Guild might, in certain circumstances, grant a personal concession to a tenant. Whether using a professional letting agent or acting independently, the Guild will look favourably on applicants for tenancies who:

- Demonstrate the capacity to contribute to the local community and further the charitable objectives of the Guild;
- Demonstrate a professional or personal interest or skill in arts, crafts, environmental issues or sustainable rural management;
- Have strong local connections.

The Guild also places a high value on promoting diversity and will therefore, in terms of selecting tenants and applying rents, look favourably on applicants with protected characteristics as defined by the 2010 Equality Act (e.g. race, colour, creed, age, gender etc.).

4. Type of Tenancy and Rent Review

New tenants in domestic properties will be offered an Assured Shorthold Tenancies for an agreed term. Farm Business Tenancies will be available to properties where the prime purpose is agricultural/rural (e.g. Uncllys Farm).

Vine House in Westmill has a commercial lease with a business tenant. The Guild recognises the importance of ensuring there is an ongoing business in the heart of the village.

Rents will be reviewed according to the terms of the lease to ensure they are delivering the requisite return for the Guild. Increases will be negotiated with tenants (and with the appropriate agency in respect of regulated tenancies).

FEBRARY 2023