

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 15 October 2021	Meeting Name: Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness
Report title:		Welsford Street – Local Lettings scheme	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		South Bermondsey	
From:		Director of Resident Services	

RECOMMENDATION

1. To approve the local lettings scheme area for the first allocations of the new build development on Welsford Street.
2. To agree 100% of the new homes at Welsford Street be allocated to existing tenants within the local area.
3. To note the further criteria applied to residents of the local lettings scheme:
 - i. The local area is defined as tenants on the immediate estate where the development is located:
 - Thornburn Square
 - Lynton Estate
 - Longfield Estate
 - Lynton Road
 - Welsford Street
 - Reverdy Road
 - Alma Grove
 - Manor Estate
 - Surrounding roads
 - ii. Rent arrears of less than four weeks or £50 if claiming housing benefit at point of application and point of offer.
 - iii. Households can only move upon successful completion of pre-tenancy inspection and interview as per section 5.26 of the councils published allocation scheme.

- iv. Only households assessed in a housing need (bands 1-3) will be allocated a property through the local lettings scheme. Households will be prioritised in existing priority bands and priority stars in accordance with our published allocations scheme.
 - v. Requests for additional bedrooms above the assessed need will not be considered unless on medical grounds confirmed by Housing Solutions medical assessment.
4. To note the Housing Allocations team will monitor and report on the number of chain lettings that has resulted from the 100% local lettings to existing council tenants.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5. In line with the council's target to produced 11,000 new homes by 2043, planning permission was granted to proceed with the development of new council homes located at Welsford Street.
- 6. The development at Welsford Street includes 10 new homes scheduled for completion in late summer 2021.
- 7. This development has a total of 10 homes comprising of different property sizes and has been made in consultation with the local residents within the Estate.
- 8. All 10 properties will be listed as social housing tenancies.
- 9. Southwark's Housing Allocations Scheme sets out the criteria in which properties will be allocated. The scheme also permits Southwark the ability to implement local lettings scheme in order to meet the housing needs of tenants within the area.
- 10. Demand of social housing within the borough continues to outstrip supply where there are over 16,000 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 the council received and processed 6,757 applications while only able to allocate 849 homes through either a nominations to housing associations or Southwark council properties.

11. One of the aims of the housing allocations scheme is to enable local tenants in housing need the ability to continue remain within their communities and not have to re locate outside of the area to find suitable accommodation.
12. As part of the Welsford Street community engagement, monthly newsletters have been sent to residents in the local area to provide an update on the upcoming development and the progress of completion.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

13. All lettings for the new build schemes located at Welsford Street will comply fully with Southwark Council's Housing Allocations scheme.
14. It is proposed that 100% of the initial lettings of the new homes will be allocated to Southwark Council tenants currently living on the Thornburn Square, Lynton Estate, Longfield Estate, Lynton Road, Welsford Street, Reverdy Road, Alma Grove and surrounding roads in the local area.
15. These lettings will be delivered to maximise the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promises, homes for all.
16. The Communities service team, Residential Services team, New Homes Delivery team and the Housing Solutions service have been working in partnership with the local tenants, to design a Local Lettings scheme for the initial allocation of the new build schemes located on Welsford Street.
17. These meetings have been conducted over a number of months and an agreement has been reached with the residents, tenants, and local elected members of the council for the geographical area for the Local Lettings area. The local lettings area covers Thornburn Square, Lynton Estate, Longfield Estate, Lynton Road, Welsford Street, Reverdy Road, Alma Grove, and surround roads including the following properties:
 - Longfield Estate
 - Alfred Salter House
 - Cragie House
 - Dartford House
 - Dhonau House
 - Fairby House
 - Fawkham House
 - Hartley House

- Stansfeld House
- Lynton Estate
- Lynton Road
- Reverdy Road
- Thornburn Square
- Welsford Street
- Chaucer Drive
- Longfellow Way
- Burnham Close
- Bushwood Drive
- Cadet Drive
- Oxley Close
- Abercorn Way
- Trappes House
- Pope House
- Ramsfort House
- Southwell House
- Mortain House
- Radcliffe House
- Hambley House
- Thurland House
- Holford House
- Mason House
- Townsend House.

18. The new homes sit on the edge of Thornburn Square Estate and will consist of the following social rented properties:

Property size	Number of units
2 bed houses	4 (including 1 accessible home)
4 bed houses	6
Total	10

19. Therefore, it is anticipated all properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 17 of this report.

20. As at the 1 April 2021, 67 households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homesearch Bidding Scheme. 15 of those households have been assessed as having a housing need and are listed in a priority band. The priority listed households are broken up below:

Priority category	2 bed need	4 bed need	Total count
Under occupiers	1	0	1
Management transfers	0	0	
Overcrowded households	5	6	11
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	0
Medical needs	2	1	3
Accessible housing requirement	0	0	0
Sheltered housing	0	0	0
Total	8	7	15

21. The above table shows a mixture of households compositions including 2 and 4 bedroom households who would qualify for the new homes. Therefore it is anticipated these households will benefit from the new development within the local area.
22. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified 15 households on the Estates. Therefore it is expected they will free up properties that will be available to other residents on the housing list.
23. It is therefore envisaged there is sufficient demand to warrant priority given to tenants within the defined local area. An increase in the local lettings area for the new homes will generate unnecessary demand and likely to raise expectations above what can be delivered as part of this local lettings scheme.
24. Letters will also be sent to qualifying tenants on the register in advance to inform them of the upcoming development. This will include details of the available homes, qualification criteria listed under section 3 above and dates the properties will be available on the Homesearch bidding website.
25. The local Resident Officer will work with the Housing solutions service to help identify additional households within the local lettings estates whom are in a

housing need but not registered on the Homesearch bidding scheme. Such cases will be expedited to permit the ability to bid on the new homes.

26. The homes will be advertised in advance of the completion of the homes on Welsford Street. 100% of homes will be advertised to the local tenants, should there not be interest in all the homes from local tenants, the remaining homes will be advertised once we have given the full opportunity for the local tenants to register their interest via the bidding process.
27. The information listed on the website will promote the features of the new build homes and ensure the full listing of the local lettings scheme is available for the households listed on the Homesearch bidding scheme.
28. The local community fully supports the contents of this report and look forward to the completion of the new build schemes, and for the local community to benefit from this development.

Policy implications

29. There are no Key policy implications or amendments required.

Resource implications

30. There are no additional budgetary or staffing implications to implement the local lettings scheme.

Legal Implications

31. There are no legal implications in the implementation of the Local lettings scheme.

Finance Implications

32. There are no financial implications in the implementation of this Meeting House Lane local lettings scheme.

Community impact statement

33. Awarding priority to existing tenants within the estate recognises the fact that the development of new homes may cause disruption and on some occasions lack of amenities.
34. The groups that are affected, and deemed able to apply for the homes as “local” tenants are the tenants within the immediate estate where the property has been developed.
35. The allocation of these homes will be conducted in accordance with the councils published allocation scheme, which is already subject to its own community impact assessment.
36. This scheme follows the successful local lettings of new developments such as Pelier Street, East Dulwich Estate, Nunhead, Clifton estate, Masterman and Willow Walk.

Consultation

37. In 2014 the council embarked on a borough-wide consultation with residents regarding the delivery of new council homes and the creation of the Charter of Principles
38. 2,002 residents responded to this consultation and that the vast majority of these were council tenants and leaseholders/homeowners. The size and representativeness of the sample gives a high level of confidence that the findings of the engagement exercise reflect the views held by the majority of our residents.
39. Consultation took place with both the formal consultation structures of Tenant and Homeowners Council, Area Housing Forums and more broadly with those not engaged in these formal structures. A 2014 Cabinet report on the consultation process agreed to reaffirm its commitment to engaging as widely as possible with residents as the 11,000 new homes programme progresses. Officers are to continue to consult through both the formal tenant and homeowner structures and in other ways to ensure that those who are not engaged in the formal structures are able and encouraged to get involved.
40. Around 90% of respondents agreed to the 6 pledges cabinet has agreed to the adoption of the Charter of Principles that has formed the basis of this local

letting scheme.

41. During the individual consultation events held for the Copeland Road Development, prior to the submission of planning, residents were advised of a local letting policy devised to meet the local demand.
42. The contents of this report has been shared with the TRA whom confirmed they are in support of the local lettings scheme and the defined area.

Climate change implications

43. The impact on climate change was been considered in the development of the Homes on Welsford Street.
44. An energy statement setting out the measures to ensure the development is as efficient was submitted as part of the proposals.
45. There are no direct climate change implications to implement a local letting scheme at Welsford Street.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

46. No comments required.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

47. No Comments required.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Not applicable		

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Cheryl Russell, Director of New Homes	
Report Author	Alex Herd	
Version	Final	
Dated	13 October 2021	
Key Decision?	Non Key	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Law and Governance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	14 October 2021	