

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 7 December 2022	Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness
Report title:		Sedgmoor Place – Local Lettings scheme	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		St Giles Ward	
From:		Karen Shaw, Head of Housing Solutions	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Lead Member for Council Homes and Homelessness is asked to approve the local lettings scheme for 13 new homes at Sedgmoor Place where 50% of the properties (7) will be allocated to existing tenants within the local area.
2. Approve the criteria that will be applied when allocating properties to prospective tenants of the local lettings scheme:
 - i. The local area is defined as the estate where the development is located and the nearby estate namely Southampton Way Estate, and includes nearby blocks and street properties in the immediate vicinity of the development.
 - ii. Tenants will be required to have less than four weeks rent arrears 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 there is are medical grounds confirmed through a Housing Solutions medical assessment. In order to avoid overcrowding, households will not be permitted to move into the new homes if the property is below their assessed bed need.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. 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 Sedgmoor Place.
4. The development at Sedgmoor Place includes 13 new homes that are scheduled for completion in winter 2022.
5. This development has 13 homes of different sizes and has been developed in consultation with the local residents that live on the Estate.
6. All 13 properties will be let on social housing tenancies.
7. Southwark's Housing Allocations Scheme sets out how council homes are allocated. The scheme also provides for the use of local lettings schemes in order to meet the housing needs of residents within a local area.
8. Demand for social housing within the borough continues to outstrip supply. There are over 17,500 households on the housing register. Recent figures for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 show that the council received and processed over 6,000 applications for assistance but was only able to allocate 810 social tenancies.
9. One of the aims of the housing allocations scheme is to enable local tenants in housing need to remain within their communities and not have to re-locate outside of the area in order to find suitable accommodation.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

10. All lettings for the new build schemes located at Sedgmoor Place will comply fully with Southwark Council's Housing Allocations scheme.
11. It is proposed that 50% of the initial lettings of the new homes will be allocated to Southwark Council tenants currently living on Southampton Way Estate, Havil Street and Sedgmoor Place.
12. These lettings aim to enhance the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promise of homes for all.
13. The Communities service team, local housing office, 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 Sedgmoor Estate.

14. These meetings have taken place over a number of months with the residents, tenants, and local elected members of the council to identify the geographical area that will be covered by the Local Lettings scheme. The local lettings area covers Southampton Way Estate and includes the following properties/buildings:

- Southampton Way Estate:
 - Dibden
 - Marchwood Close
 - Netley
 - Redbridge Gardens
 - Stanswood Gardens
- Havil Street
- Sedgmoor Place

15. The new homes are situated nearby the Southampton Way Estate and will consist of the following social rented properties:

Property size	Number of homes
1 bed	4
2 bed	5
3 bed	4
Total	13

16. Therefore, it is anticipated 7 properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 14 of this report.

17. As at 26 October 2022, 59 households located within the local lettings area are registered on our Homesearch Bidding Scheme. 46 of these households have been assessed as having a housing need and are listed within a priority bands 1, 2 or 3. The priority housing need is detailed below:

Priority category	1 bed need	2 bed need	3 bed need	4+ bed need	Total count
Under occupiers	2	5	0	0	7

Management transfers	0	0	1	1	2
Overcrowded households	1	3	15	10	29
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	0	1	1
Medical/welfare needs	1	1	2	2	6
Good Tenant	0	0	0	1	1
Accessible housing requirement	0	0	0	0	0
Sheltered housing	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	9	18	15	46

18. The above table shows a mixture of household compositions including 1,2, 3 and 4 bedroom households. Therefore it is anticipated these households will benefit from the new development within the local area.
19. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified 46 households on the Estates. Therefore, it is expected they will free up properties that will be available to other residents on the housing list.
20. There is sufficient demand to warrant priority being given to tenants within the defined local area. Any increase in the local lettings area for the new homes will generate additional demand and is likely to raise expectations beyond what can be delivered as part of this local lettings scheme.
21. Letters will 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 2 above and dates when the properties will be available on the Homesearch bidding website.
22. The local Resident Services Officer will work with the Housing solutions service to help identify additional households within the local lettings estates that have a need for housing but are not registered on the Homesearch bidding scheme. Such cases given assistance so they can bid for the new homes.

23. The homes will be advertised in advance of the completion of new homes on Haddonfield Estate. The first 50% of homes will be advertised to local tenants, while the remaining 50% will be advertised once we have given local tenants an opportunity to register their interest.
24. 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.

Policy implications

25. There are no policy implications or amendments required.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

26. Awarding priority to existing tenants within the estate recognises the fact that the development of new homes may cause disruption and on some occasions a lack of amenities.
27. 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.
28. The allocation of these homes will be conducted in accordance with the council’s published allocation scheme, which is already subject to its own community impact assessment.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

29. An equalities Impact assessment was carried out on 30 September 2022. No adverse findings were made by the assessment.
30. This scheme follows the successful local lettings schemes at new developments such as Pelier Street, East Dulwich Estate, Nunhead, Clifton estate, Masterman and Willow Walk.

Health impact statement

31. There are no health impact implications as a result of this policy.

Climate change implications

32. There are no climate change implications arising from this local lettings scheme.

Resource implications

33. The operational process will be conducted using staffing resources within Resident Services.

Consultation

34. During the individual consultation events held for the Southampton Way Tenants and the Residents Association, prior to the submission of planning, residents were informed that a local letting policy would be devised to meet the local demand.
35. This local lettings scheme has been developed in consultation with the local ward members.
36. It is noted there are further developments located on Sceaux Gardens which will be available for tenants in the local area through a future local lettings scheme.
37. The defined local lettings area has been decided having been shared with the local TRA and Ward Councillors.
38. Paragraph 7.10.4 of the council's main scheme further provides that 'Local Lettings policies will be reviewed on a regular basis and equality impact assessments undertaken with consultation undertaken with customers and communities before a Local Lettings Plan is agreed'.
39. The law requires that consultation must be undertaken when proposals are at a formative stage and include sufficient reasons for the proposal and time for interested parties to respond. The cabinet member is required take into account the outcome of the consultation when making a decision on the recommendations in the report.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

40. In accordance with the requirement under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 to have a scheme for determining priorities and procedures in the allocation of its housing, the council has in place a main housing allocations scheme. The scheme gives effect to the statutory requirement to give reasonable preference to certain groups of housing applicants.

41. Generally, the council must not allocate council housing (or nominate an applicant to a housing provider with whom it has a nominations agreement) except in accordance with its main allocation scheme.
42. However, under s166A(6) of the 1996 Housing Act, the council may depart from its main allocation scheme where it puts in place a local lettings policy which prioritises particular groups of applicants for particular properties, provided the cumulative effect of such schemes does not displace the system of reasonable preference set out in the main allocation scheme.
43. Paragraph 7.10.2 of the council's current main allocation scheme incorporates a local lettings policy which provides for 50% of all allocations for 'the new London Borough of Southwark 1000 properties initiative (to be) allocated to existing tenants local to the redevelopment/new build scheme'.
44. The local letting scheme proposed in this report is in line with the local lettings policy incorporated in the main allocation scheme.

Public Sector Equality duty (PSED)

45. The Equality Act 2010 requires the council, when taking decisions, to have due regard to the need to:
 - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct;
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it;
 - c) foster good relations between those who share a relevant characteristic and those that do not share it.
46. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in relation to (a) above.

When taking decisions on the exercise of council functions conscious thought must be given to the PSED, including having regard to any equality impact assessment carried out, in particular, where any possible disproportionate effects on groups sharing protected characteristics are identified, the mitigation proposed. The cabinet member is referred to the community impact section of this report.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

47. No comments sought.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
n/a		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
n/a	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Karen Shaw, Head of Housing Solutions	
Report Author	Alex Herd, Housing Choice and Supply Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	7 December 2022	
Key Decision?	No	
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	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	7 December 2022	