

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 8 December 2022	<b>Decision maker:</b> Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness
<b>Report title:</b>		345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre – Local Lettings scheme	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		South Bermondsey	
<b>From:</b>		Karen Shaw – Head of Housing Solutions	

## RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness;

1. Approves the local lettings scheme for 22 new homes at 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre where 50% of the properties (11) will be allocated to existing tenants within the local area.
2. Notes the further criteria applied to residents of the local lettings scheme:
  - i. The local area is defined as tenants near the immediate site where the development is located:
    - Southwark Park Estate
    - Four Squares Estate
    - Frankland Close Estate
    - Abbeyfield Estate
  - 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. Equally households will not be permitted to move into the new homes if the property is below their assessed bed need therefore creating a situation of overcrowding.

## **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 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre
4. The development at 345 Southwark Park Rd Day Centre includes 22 new homes scheduled for completion in November 2022.
5. This development has a total of 22 social homes comprising of different property sizes and has been made in consultation with the local residents in the locality of the day centre.
6. All of the 22 social home properties will be listed as social housing tenancies.
7. 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.
8. Demand of social housing within the borough continues to outstrip supply where there are over 17,500 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2021 – 31 Mar 2022 the council received and processed over 6,000 applications while only able to allocate 810 homes through either a nominations to housing associations or Southwark council properties.
9. 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.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

10. All lettings for the new build schemes located at 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre 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 in close proximity to 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre.
12. These lettings will be delivered to maximise the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promises, homes for all.
13. The Communities service team, Residential Services team, Southwark Construction and the Housing Solutions service have engaged with the local

tenants, to advise of the Local Lettings scheme for the new build at 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre.

14. It is proposed that the geographical area for the Local Lettings area that covers 345 Southwark Park RD Day Centre include the following properties/buildings:

Southwark Park Estate  
Four Squares Estate:  
New Place Square  
Lockwood Square  
Marden Square  
Layard Square  
Frankland Close Estate  
Abbeyfield Estate  
Damory House  
Thaxted Court  
Bradley House

15. The new homes site on 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre will consist of the following social rented properties:

<b>Property size</b>	<b>Number of units</b>
1 bed flat	6
2 bed flat	12 (Inc. 5x wheelchair access unit)
3 bed flat	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

16. Therefore, it is anticipated 11 properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 14 of this report.

17. As at the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022, 93 households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homeseach Bidding Scheme. 39 of those households have been assessed as having a housing need and are listed in priority bands 1, 2 or 3. The priority listed households are broken up below:

<b>Priority category</b>	<b>1 bed need</b>	<b>2 bed need</b>	<b>3 bed need</b>	<b>Total count</b>
Under occupiers	4	1	0	<b>5</b>
Management transfers	4	1	2	<b>7</b>
Overcrowded households	0	6	9	<b>15</b>

Statutory overcrowded households	0	1	1	2
Medical needs	3	1	2	6
Accessible housing requirement	1	0	1	2
Sheltered housing	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>39</b>

18. The above table shows a mixture of households compositions including 1, 2, and 3 bedroom households. Therefore it is anticipated these households will benefit from the new development within the local area. This includes the ability to provide sufficient accessible properties for the local residents in a housing need.
19. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified 39 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. 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.
21. 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 Homeseach bidding website.
22. 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 Homeseach bidding scheme. Such cases will be expedited to permit the ability to bid on the new homes.
23. The homes will be advertised in advance of the completion of the homes near 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre. The first 50% of homes will be advertised to the local tenants, while the remaining 50% will be advertised once we have given the full opportunity for the local tenants 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 Homeseach bidding scheme.

## **Policy implications**

25. There are no Key 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 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 councils 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 the 24 October 2022. No adverse findings were found as part of the findings from the assessment.

30. This scheme follows the successful local lettings of 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. 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre was submitted to planning on 17 May 2022 and no Climate change implications statement was produced.

33. The scheme has PV panels installed on the roofs and air source heating as part of the energy strategy.

## **Consultation**

34. During the individual consultation events held for the 345 Southwark Park Road Day Centre Development, prior to the submission of planning, residents were advised of a local letting policy devised to meet the local demand.

35. In the course of the development including pre-construction consultation and all through the construction, residents have received hand delivered newsletters and have been kept abreast of the local lettings policy opportunity.
36. The defined local lettings area has been decided having been shared with the local Ward Councillors.
37. 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'.
38. 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 and is referred to the consultation section of this report.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Director of Law and Governance**

39. 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.
40. 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.
41. 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.
42. 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'.
43. The report confirms that the proposed scheme is in line with the local lettings policy incorporated in the main allocation scheme.

## **Public Sector Equality duty (PSED)**

55. 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.

56. 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.

57. 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 Corporate Services**

58. No comments sought.

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
n/a		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
n/a	

## AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Cabinet member for council homes and homelessness		
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?	Non Key		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included	
Director of Legal Services	yes	yes	
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	no	No	
Cabinet Member	Yes	No	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		7 December 2022	