

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 30 January 2023	Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness
Report title:		Rathbone Court (Tenda Road) – Local Lettings	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		South Bermondsey	
From:		Karen Shaw - Head of Housing Solutions	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet Member for Council Homes and Homelessness approves the local lettings scheme for 12 new homes at Rathbone Court, Tenda Road, SE16 3FR where 50% of the properties 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 on the immediate estate where the development is located:
 - Manor 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
 - vi. Households within the defined local lettings area will be permitted to move into new homes which are one room less than their assessed bed need for three or more bedroomed homes.

- vii. Households within the defined local lettings area will not be permitted to move into new one or two bedroomed homes if the property is below their assessed bed need.
- viii. Households on the general register not in the defined local lettings area will not be permitted to move into any of 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 Rathbone Court.
- 4. The development at Rathbone Court includes 12 new homes scheduled for completion in March 2023.
- 5. This development has a total of 12 homes comprising of different property sizes and has been made in consultation with the local residents within the Estate.
- 6. All 12 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 the 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 17,400 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2021 – 31 Mar 2022 show the council received and processed over 6,000 applications while only able to allocate 839 homes through either 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 to 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 Rathbone Court 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 Manor Estate.

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, 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 Rathbone Court.
14. 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 Rathbone Court including the following properties/buildings:

Manor Estate:

Ambrose Street
 Camilla Road
 Hambley House
 Holford House
 Mortain House
 Pope House, Anchor Street
 Radcliffe House
 Ramsfort House
 Roseberry Street
 Southwell House
 Thurland House
 Trappes House

15. The new homes sit on Manor Estate and will consist of the following social rented properties:

Property size	Number of units
1 bed flat	4
2 bed flat	6
3 bed flat	1 wheelchair access unit
4 bed flat	1
Total	12

16. Therefore, it is anticipated that 6 properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 14 of this report.
17. As of the 28th November 2022, 27 households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homeseach Bidding Scheme. Of those, 17 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	1 bed need	2 bed need	3+ bed need	Total count
Under occupiers	1	1	0	2
Management transfers	0	0	2	2
Overcrowded households	0	1	7	8
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	1	1
Medical needs	0	1	1	2
Accessible housing requirement	0	1	1	2
Sheltered housing	0	0	0	0
Total	1	4	12	17

18. The above table shows a mixture of household 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 17 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 that there is sufficient demand to warrant priority being 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 4 above and dates the properties will be available on the Homeseach 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 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 on Rathbone Place. 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 28th November 2022. No adverse findings were found as part of 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. Rathbone Court was submitted to planning on 20 October 2016 and no Climate change implications statement was produced.
33. The scheme has PV panels installed on the roofs as part of the energy strategy.

Resource Implications

34. There are no Resource Implications.

Financial Implications

35. There are no Financial Implications.

Legal Implications

36. See below comments from the Director of Law and Governance.

Consultation

37. During the individual consultation events held for the Rathbone Court Development, prior to the submission of planning, residents were advised of a Local Letting policy devised to meet the local demand.
38. The contents of this report has been shared with the TRA and Ward Councillors whom confirmed they are in support of the defined Local Lettings area.
39. 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'.
40. 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 to 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.

Public Sector Equality duty (PSED)

37. 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.

38. 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.

39. 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.

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 report confirms that the proposed scheme is in line with the local lettings policy incorporated in the main allocation scheme.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

45. No comments sought.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
n/a		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
n/a	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Cllr Darren Merrill – 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	23 rd January 2023	
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	No	No
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		30 January 2023