

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 1 July 2021	Meeting Name: Cabinet member for Council Housing and Homelessness
Report title:		Cezanne House – Local Lettings scheme	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		St Giles	
From:		Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation	

RECOMMENDATION

1. To approve the local lettings scheme area for the first allocations of the new build development, Cezanne House.
2. To agree 100% of the properties at Cezanne House be allocated to existing tenants within the local area and former local tenants who moved away as part of a regeneration scheme.
3. To agree the pre allocation criteria in the following local lettings priority order:
 - i. Tenants residing on Marie Curie placed in band 1
 - ii. Existing tenants of Racine House placed in band 1.
 - iii. Former tenants of Florian and Racine moved away from the estate as part of the decant program of the two blocks.
 - iv. Existing tenants of the local lettings area
 - v. All other residents on the housing register
4. 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, Sceaux Gardens.
 - ii. Rent arrears of more than four weeks or £50 if claiming housing benefit at the point of a successful bid will mean we are not able to proceed with a offer in accordance with section 5.25 of the councils published allocations scheme. The policy can be found by clicking the [existing full](#)

[allocations scheme](#). Please note this will not apply to tenants on the Marie Curie block who will not be restricted by any level of rent arrears.

- iii. With the exemption of tenants on Marie Curie 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.

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 Cezanne House on the Sceaux Gardens Estate.
- 6. In order to complete the essential communal and individual works identified within the Marie Curie block on the Sceaux Gardens Estate, vacant possession of the block is required. Each tenanted household has been determined to be in a housing need and entitled to band 1 priority in line with the housing allocations scheme. The tenants on the Marie Curie block have been advised they can move permanently or temporarily in order to ensure the essential works can be completed.
- 7. The Sceaux Gardens estate also consists of two blocks (Florian and Racine) which are due be demolished to accommodate a new development. However the completion date of this alternative site is not due to complete until approximately 2023. Residents from the Florian block have already vacated the block and now have tenancies elsewhere within the borough. The residents from Racine are now currently active in band 1 actively bidding for properties on the Homeseach bidding website. Tenants from both blocks have been advised of the ability to return to the local area and the development at

Cezanne will offer such opportunity.

8. The development at Cezanne House includes 28 new council homes scheduled for completion in Summer 2021.
9. This development has a total of 28 homes comprising of different property sizes and has been made in consultation with the local residents within the Estate. The development also includes three wheelchair accessible homes to meet the needs of our residents.
10. 100% of the homes will be listed as social housing tenancies.
11. 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.
12. Demand of social housing within the borough continues to outstrip supply where there are over 15,100 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021 the council received and processed over 6,000 applications while only able to allocate 840 homes through either a nominations to housing associations or Southwark council properties.
13. The design of the housing allocations scheme is to enable local tenants in housing need are able to continue remain within their communities and not have to re locate outside of the area to find suitable accommodation.
14. 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

15. All lettings for the new build schemes located at Cezanne House will comply fully with Southwark Council's Housing Allocations scheme.
16. It is proposed that 100% of the initial lettings of the new homes will be allocated to Southwark Council tenants currently living on the Sceaux

Gardens Estate and the returnees from an active decant program. These lettings will be delivered to maximise the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promises.

17. The Communities service team, Residential Services team, Regeneration team and the Housing Solutions service have been working in partnership with the Sceaux Estate tenants to design a Local Lettings scheme for the initial allocation of the new build schemes located on Cezanne House.
18. 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 Sceaux Gardens, including the following properties:

Sceaux Gardens Estate

- Colbert
- Fontenelle
- Havil Street
- Lakanal
- Marie Curie
- Mistral
- Racine
- Rill House
- Southampton Way
- Voltaire

19. The new homes will be part of the Sceaux Gardens Estate and will consist of the following social rented properties:

Property size	Number of units
1 bed property	8
2 bed property	11 (including 2 wheelchair accessible homes)
3 bed property	9 (including 2 wheelchair accessible homes)

Total	28
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20. Therefore, it is anticipated all 28 properties will be allocated to existing tenants of Southwark Council living within the area identified within section 18 of this report.
21. As at the 1 June 2021, 51 households located within the Sceaux Gardens are registered on our Homesearch Bidding Scheme with an identified housing need. This is a mixture of households compositions including 1,2, and 3 bedroom households. There are a further 72 households who are due to be registered on the Homesearch bidding scheme from Marie Curie which will increase the number of residents in a housing need. Therefore it is anticipated these households will benefit from the new development within the local area.
22. 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.
23. Each local letting priority category listed in section 3 will allocated separately.
24. In line with the priority order under point 3, the residents of Marie Curie will be advised of the availability of the new build properties a minimum of 3 weeks before the properties are advertised. This will be through direct contact with each household in order to maximise the ability to achieve local lettings.
25. Should there still be available properties available after the first priority, contact will be made with tenants of Racine and Florian block, allowing them to register their interest in the properties located at Cezanne House. The Housing Solutions Service will work with the local resident officer of the new and previous tenancy to ensure we receive a response from all the tenants of the two blocks.
26. 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 and 4

above and dates the properties will be available on the Homesearch bidding website.

27. The homes will be advertised over a four week period, working through the priority order listed under section 3. Should the priority local lettings categories be exhausted, any remaining homes at Cezanne will be allocated to the remaining households on the housing register outside of the local lettings area.
28. 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.
29. 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.

Resource implications

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

Policy implications

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

Community impact statement

32. 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.
33. The contents of this report will help to provide suitable housing solutions to tenants whom require a move from Marie Curie in order to facilitate the essential works within the block.
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 Meeting House Lane 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 who have confirmed they are in support of the local lettings scheme and the

defined area.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
There are no background papers		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
n/a	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Cheryl Russell, Director of Resident Services		
Report Author	Ricky Bellot – Interim Head of Housing Supply		
Version	Final		
Dated	29 June 2021		
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	Yes	Yes	
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes	
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		29 June 2021	