

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 10 October 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:		Director of Resident Services	

SUMMARY

This report provides details of initial allocation of 13 new council homes developed within the ST Giles ward, available Winter 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Lead Member for Council Homes and Homelessness is asked to approve the local lettings scheme for the new homes at Sedgmoor Place where 50% of the properties will be allocated to existing council tenants within the local area.
2. To note the further criteria applied to tenants of the local lettings scheme:
 - i. The local area is defined as tenants on the immediate estate where the development is located and the nearby estate:
 - Stanswood Garden Estate
 - Nearby blocks and street properties
 - 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 there is a medical grounds confirmed through the 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, creating a situation of overcrowding.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. In line with the council's target to produce 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 scheduled for completion in Winter 2022.
5. This development has a total of 13 homes comprising of different property sizes and has been made in consultation with the local residents within the Estate.
6. All 13 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 16,900 households registered on the housing register. Recent figures from 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 the council received and processed over 6,000 applications while 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 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 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 Stanswood Garden Estate and surrounding roads.
12. These lettings will be delivered to enhance the housing solutions to the local community and to deliver the Fairer Future promises, 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 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 Sedgmoor Place Estate including the following properties/buildings:

- Southampton Way Estate:
 - Dibden
 - Marchwood Close
 - Netley
 - Redbridge Gardens
 - Stanswood Gardens

15. The new homes sit on Stanswood Gardens 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 10 October 2022, 50 households located within the local lettings area were registered on our Homeseach Bidding Scheme. 37 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	1	3	0	0	4
Management transfers	0	0	1	1	2
Overcrowded households	1	1	12	10	24
Statutory overcrowded households	0	0	0	1	1
Medical/welfare needs	0	1	2	2	5

Good Tenant	0	0	0	1	1
Accessible housing requirement	0	0	0	0	0
Sheltered housing	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	5	15	15	37

18. The above table shows a mixture of households 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. This includes the ability to provide accessible properties for the local residents in a housing need.
19. There are no sub households listed on the housing register within the identified 19 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 2 above and dates the properties will be available on the Homesearch 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 Homesearch 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 Haddonfield Estate. 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 Homesearch bidding scheme.

Policy implications

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

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

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.
29. An equalities Impact assessment was carried out on 30 September 2022. No adverse findings was 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.

Climate change implications

31. There are no climate change implications as a result of this local lettings scheme.

Consultation

32. During the individual consultation events held for the Southampton Way Tenants and the Residents Association, prior to the submission of planning, residents were advised of a local letting policy devised to meet the local demand.
33. This local lettings scheme has been developed in consultation with the local ward members.
34. 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.
35. 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

36. 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.

37. 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.
38. 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.
39. 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'.
40. The report confirms that the proposed scheme is in line with the local lettings policy incorporated in the main allocation scheme.

Consultation

41. 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'.
42. 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.

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.

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.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS.

Background Papers	Held At	Contact

APPENDICES

No.	Title
1	

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Cllr Darren Merrill – Cabinet member for council homes and homelessness		
Lead Officer			
Report Author	Alex Herd		
Version	1 st Draft		
Dated	10 October 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	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
Officer Title		Comments Sought	Comments included