

Local Lettings Plan

Between Cambridge City Council and London & Quadrant Housing Trust

for

Darwin Green One – Local Centre & BDW 1

Introduction

Local lettings plans are an important tool that can be used to respond to specific local circumstances and are one of the main vehicles for Cambridge City Council and their housing provider partners to allow flexibilities within the allocations on a new build scheme for social and affordable rented housing.

Purpose of the Local Lettings Plan

This Local Lettings plan has been prepared to assist in the letting of 90 Social Rented homes on the development known as **Darwin Green One**. The phases covered in this plan are known as the '**Local Centre**' consisting of 34 rented homes and **BDW 1** consisting of 56 rented homes. The Local Lettings Plan will set out how these homes will be let, and which households will be prioritised for certain lettings on the development. The Registered Provider (Owner & Landlord) for this scheme is **London and Quadrant North East Neighbourhood Team**.

This Local Lettings Plan will apply to all the first-time lettings on the development, **Cambridge City Council** having 100% allocation rights on first let.

Rented Housing Mix

Local Centre	BDW 1
12 x 1-bedroom flats	11 x 1-bedroom flats
22 x 2-bedroom flats	35 x 2-bedroom flats
	5 x 2-bedroom houses
	5 x 3-bedroom houses

Location of the scheme

The two sites form part of the wider Darwin Green One development. Overall, the scheme will provide 1,593 homes of mixed tenures. The site is well connected with Cambridge City centre and easily accessible as Huntingdon Road is a major arterial road linking central Cambridge, with Junction 14 of the M11 motorway and the A14 northwest from the City. The immediate surroundings are a newly built residential development and the remaining surroundings are primarily suburban family homes.

Objectives of the Local Lettings Plan

- Aim to create a community that is sustainable. That ensures that the housing needs of the local and wider community are reflected within the new development and the homes blend smoothly with the existing housing around.
- To establish a balanced, mixed & diverse community. Helping support the integration of tenants into a new neighbourhood. Ensure that those groups protected by an equality characteristic are not disadvantaged by this plan. The Council will also continue to give appropriate priority to those who are homeless and those who need to move on medical or welfare grounds and may have an urgent need for housing.'
- Agree targets for the number of economically active households to prevent a concentration of residents wholly dependent on welfare benefits.
- Prioritise a number of homes for applicants who work locally. This will contribute to the councils' Zero Carbon objectives by minimising travel to work places and encouraging walking and cycling.
- To make the best use of the current Cambridge City Housing stock by offering a transfer to a percentage of tenants who are currently under occupying larger properties.
- Allow under occupation on a percentage of two bedroom properties to control child density in concentrated areas and minimise turnover and potential refusal of properties.
- Ensure a balance of couples and single people are allocated one bedroom properties to avoid over concentration of one particular group
- Create a quality place to live in. A place where people choose to live and stay. Where they feel safe and content in their homes, and they are protected from nuisance/anti-social behaviour.
- To continue to meet the requirements of Cambridge City's choice-based allocation system, Home-link.

Letting Plan Criteria

Each size of home will be allocated to a mix of household types – For example, 1 bed homes to a mix of singles and couples and a mix of ages (including older people); larger properties to those with school aged and adult children. This will help to achieve a balanced and sustainable community.

- At least 50% of one bed properties will be let to those in full time employment or employment of more than 16+ hours per week that has lasted at least 6 months.
- At least 35% of one bed properties to be let to applicants over the age of 55 years.
- At least 25% of one bed properties to be let to couples.
- At least 50% of two, three & four bed properties will be let to those where at least one member of the household is in full time employment or employment more than 16+ hours per week that has lasted at least 6 months.
- At least 10% of the lets for working applicants, will be working locally within a 3km radius to encourage walking/cycling to work.
- At least 10% of properties will be let to transfer applicants
- Up to 25% of two bed properties may be under occupied by a couple with no children.
- If there are insufficient applicants to fulfil the above criteria, then the properties will be let as the standard allocation policy allows.
- When shortlisting applicants, the provider will consider any recent history of unacceptable behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to; domestic abuse, harassment, hate crime, anti-social behaviour, drug dealing or other criminal activity, failing to maintain or repair their home or associated garden/communal area, noise nuisance, and/or housing related debt.
- The Home-link team will ensure any information they hold from the Multi Agency Public Protection Agency (MAPPA) will be disclosed to L&Q to aid successful lettings of the properties. The multi- agency protection arrangements are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Professional services can include police, probation, mental health support, and adult safeguarding/social services.
- The landlord, London & Quadrant (L&Q) retain the right to carry out extensive checks on all nominations, this can include affordability, previous landlords, previous anti-social behaviour, current & previous rent arrears, and/or requirement of support needs.

Tenancy Agreement

All new tenants will be given a Starter Tenancy. If the tenant is transferring from an existing council property or Housing Association, they will be given an alternative appropriate tenancy. This will be determined by the tenancy they currently hold.

Other Important Information

Cambridge City Council will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or victimisation and will strive to promote equality of opportunity and understanding within our organisation and our communities. The Equality Act 2010 identifies a number of 'protected characteristics',

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy & maternity
- Marriage & civil partnership

Applicants with any of these protected characteristics will not be disadvantaged in respect of decisions made about the allocation of available homes. Homes on this development will be allocated strictly in accordance with this Local Lettings Plan and Cambridge City Councils choice-based lettings portal, **Home-Link** & Housing Allocation scheme.

Future Lettings

100% of the first nominations on this scheme will be made available to the council.

Subsequent lettings will be available to the Council in line with our nomination agreement with L&Q which states that 75% of lettings will go to the Council and 25% may be allocated by L&Q.

The lettings plan will only be in force for the first lettings of the properties in the new development and homes which become empty on the estate during the development period.

Review Process

This lettings plan has been drawn up by Cambridge City Council in agreement with London & Quadrant Housing Trust.

L&Q to provide information to the council regarding any reasons for refusing applications.

This lettings plan will be reviewed periodically, while active. The review will consider the following.

- Monitoring of allocations to ensure that the Local Lettings Plan has been complied with in terms of percentage of allocations
- Turnover of vacancies
- Failed tenancies and reasons for these
- Numbers of households accessing/needing support services
- Anti-social behaviour and any impact on the development
- General tenant satisfaction

L&Q to provide information on the above selection of outcomes, in a format to be agreed with the council. We will monitor the outcomes of this Lettings Plan and the impact it may have on any particular groups of people or characteristics of the scheme. We will also consider if the original objectives of the Local Lettings Plan are being achieved. If there are ongoing issues that need resolving while the development is still live, this Local Lettings Plan may be amended but only on the agreement of both parties, Cambridge City Council & London & Quadrant Housing Trust.

Once all the homes on this development have been let the Council will complete a final evaluation exercise to review how all properties were let, assessing factors of housing need, household composition, equalities and if all the original objectives of the Lettings Plan have been achieved. This will inform guidance for future Local Lettings Plans on future parcels on this development and on others in the Greater Cambridgeshire area.