

Local Lettings Plan

Between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council for

The Meadows – Phase 2

Maurice Garner Court and Elizabeth Hughes Court

Introduction

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

Letting of the properties is expected to commence in late October 2024 *This is subject to change.

Purpose of the Local Lettings Plan

This Local Lettings plan (LLP) has been prepared to assist in the letting of 56 Council rented homes on the development known as The Meadows. The phases covered in this plan are known as 'Maurice Garner Court' consisting of 26 rented homes and 'Elizabeth Hughes Court' consisting of 30 rented homes. The Local Lettings Plan will set out how these properties will be let, and which households will be prioritised for certain lettings on the development. The Registered Provider (Owner and Landlord) for this scheme is Cambridge City Council. The development is situated within South Cambridgeshire District Council.

This LLP will apply to all the first-time lettings and subsequent lettings on the development, South Cambridgeshire District Council / Cambridge City Council having 100% allocation rights on first let.

Location of the scheme

Block A – Maurice Garner Court – Daisy Close, Cambridge

Ground Floor

Two x 1-Bedroom Flat

One x 1-Bedroom Flat (Wheelchair Accessible)

Two x 2-Bedroom Flat

One x 2-Bedroom Flat (Wheelchair Accessible)

First Floor

Four x 1-Bedroom Flats

Four x 2-Bedroom Flats

Second Floor

Four x 1-Bedroom Flats

Four x 2-Bedroom Flats

Third Floor

Two x 1-Bedroom Flats

Two x 2-Bedroom Flats

Block B – Elizabeth Hughes Court – St Catherines Road, Cambridge

Ground Floor

Two x 1-Bedroom Flat

One x 1-Bedroom Flat (Wheelchair Accessible)

Two x 2-Bedroom Flat

One x 2-Bedroom Flat (Wheelchair Accessible)

First Floor

Four x 1-Bedroom Flats

Four x 2-Bedroom Flats

Second Floor

Four x 1-Bedroom Flats

Four x 2-Bedroom Flats

Third Floor

Four x 1-Bedroom Flats

Four x 2-Bedroom Flats

All 56 homes will be let at Affordable Rents (up to 60% of market rents)

Objectives

- To help create a mixed, balanced, and diverse community.
- To help create a community that is sustainable and well-integrated with existing homes and communities.
- To help create a high-quality place where people choose to live and stay, feel safe and content in their homes and are protected from nuisance and anti-social behaviour.

- To ensure that, in implementing the plan, applicants are treated fairly and equitably, and not unreasonably excluded from being awarded a tenancy.

Building a mixed community

Meadows Phase 2 is a new housing development located in South Cambridgeshire, on the northern edge of Cambridge. An LLP is being introduced to create a balanced, sustainable community that can help complement the wider community.

The LLP should also help support local businesses and services and minimise need for private vehicle journeys to work by allocating some of the homes to people working locally. It also aims to free up council homes for others on the two councils' housing registers by giving some priority to existing Council tenants. It will also support the needs of people needing wheelchair accessible housing by giving priority to those who need it. The LLP will help tackle homelessness by allocating homes to homeless applicants who are owed a main duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and aims to ensure that successful applicants can afford the rents being charged.

South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council understand the need to provide housing for those who are otherwise unable to buy or rent homes due to expensive owner-occupying and private renting in the area.

Letting Plan Criteria

Allocation of Homes

The Lettings Policy applies to all lettings at Meadows Phase 2.

Subject to demand:

- Approximately 20 homes will be allocated at first let to local workers in full time employment or employment of more than 16+ hours per week that has lasted at least 12 months. A local worker is defined as working within three miles of the boundary of Cambridge City. First lets will be offered to applicants on both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council's housing registers.
- All subsequent lettings will be offered to applicants with a dual connection to both councils.
- Approximately 18 homes will be allocated at first let to current tenants of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, who have a dual connection to both Councils. on a 50 / 50 percentage split, whose homes are no longer suitable for them. This could be because their family have moved out and they wish to move to a smaller home or to another area; they are fleeing domestic abuse; or their current home is no longer suitable for other reasons.

- Approximately 18 properties will be allocated at first let to other applicants on Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council's housing registers on a 50 / 50 percentage split with a dual connection to both Councils. This will be a mixture of applicants who are already a tenant of either council or of a Private Registered Social Landlord (housing association), whilst for others it may be their first home. This includes homeless households who are owed a main duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

Each size of home will be allocated at first let to a mix of household types and sizes. Example, 1-bedroom homes will be allocated to a mix of single people and couples, whilst 2-bedroom homes will be allocated to applicants both with school aged children and adult children.

This will help provide a mixture of different types of households across the new community. Cambridge City Council will ensure priority is given to those requiring a ground floor or first floor property as determined by an occupational therapy assessment.

Applicants will be asked to complete an affordability assessment prior to any offer to try and prevent financial hardship. Cambridge City Council reserves the right not to make an offer of accommodation if the applicant does not meet affordability requirements (rent should be no more than 40% of total household income).

The Cambridge City 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, as well as those given an emergency status for rehousing as a result of re-generation projects.

Please note there may be overlaps between the above groups. For example, someone allocated a home could be both working locally and be a transfer applicant.

Wheelchair accessible homes

Four of the properties are wheelchair accessible: two x 1-bedroom and two x 2-bedroom. Priority will be given to applicants on the relevant Council's housing register requiring this type of housing. This may involve assessment from an occupational therapist to ensure people's needs are met.

All other flats on the development are adaptable to become wheelchair accessible. Therefore, applicants with a wheelchair need may still be considered if the two wheelchair units have already been let.

Unacceptable behaviour and Background checks

When shortlisting applicants, the Councils will consider whether an applicant or a member of their household has a history of behaviour, particularly within the last three years, which in the opinion of the nominating council is unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviour can include (but is not limited to) domestic or other abuse, harassment, anti-social behaviour, drug dealing or other criminal activity, failing to maintain or repair their home or associated garden or garage, noise nuisance or tenancy related debt.

When considering whether to exclude an applicant from the shortlist Cambridge City Council will also consider whether an applicant is effectively engaging with a recognised programme of support and rehabilitation.

The Council will disclose any information they hold from the Multi-Agency Protection Agency (MAPPA) in relation to violent and / or sexual offenders to the provider.

The housing provider retains the right to carry out checks on all nominations to check for evidence of any support needs / support plans in place or history of unacceptable behaviour.

Additional information

Cambridge City Council tenants are allowed pets under their tenancy agreement; however, tenants in flats are asked to consider space constraints which may not be suitable for owning more than one domestic animal such as a house cat or one dog.

Given the type of properties tenants who wish to have cats in the flats would be advised to have house cats. Because of fire safety concerns no permission will be granted to tenants to install cat flaps either on their front doors in the flats or any communal entrance door.

It is important to ensure that the development and its residents are protected from potentially negative impacts, such as noise, and the possible impact of animal fouling in open spaces.

Parking:

Please note that there is minimal car parking available. Given the limited parking availability, we strongly encourage applicants to consider their parking needs before applying. Alternative arrangements or the use of public transportation may be necessary if a parking space is unavailable. A total of 28 parking spaces will be provided at the Meadows site, allocated as follows:

Allocation Breakdown:

- **Elizabeth Hughes Court** – 15 parking spaces
- **Maurice Garner Court** – 13 parking spaces

- **Wheelchair-Accessible Spaces** – four spaces are designated specifically for the four wheelchair-accessible apartments.

Priority Considerations:

- Wheelchair-accessible spaces are reserved exclusively for residents of wheelchair-accessible accommodation.
- Allocation of remaining spaces will be managed on a first-come, first-served basis, with no more than one space per accommodation.

Additional Guidelines:

- Parking spaces are for resident use only and may not be sublet or transferred to others.
- Unauthorized use of designated spaces may result in fines or penalties.

Parking at The Meadows development will be managed by Cambridge City Council, and residents will require parking permits for which there will be an additional charge. This will not be covered by Housing Benefit / Universal Credit.

Relationship with Home-Link Lettings Policy

Homes on this development will be allocated in accordance with this Local Lettings Plan in the context of the Councils' choice-based lettings portal, Home-Link and Lettings Policy.

Future reletting of these properties will also be undertaken in full accordance with the Council's Lettings Policy.

Tenancy Agreement

All new tenants will be given an Introductory Tenancy. If the tenant is transferring from an existing Council property or Registered Social Landlord (RSL), they will be given a Secure Tenancy; this will be determined by the tenancy they currently hold.

Nomination Rights

100% of the first and subsequent nominations on this scheme will be made available to both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council on an equitable split of 50% each. Successful applicants will need a dual connection to both Councils.

Urgent housing need

The councils will continue to give appropriate priority to those who are homeless and those who need to move on medical or welfare grounds and who have an urgent need for housing.

How rent levels will be set

Affordable Rents are expected to be set in line with the councils' [Affordable Rents Policy](#) at Annex 4 to the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029. (See *the policy for more detail*)

Financial hardship

Applicants will be asked to complete an affordability assessment before being made an offer. An applicant may be excluded from being made an offer if it is clear from the assessment that they are unlikely to be able to afford the rent and any service charges.

Equalities

The 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 and maternity
- Marriage and civil partnership

Applicants with any of these protected characteristics will not be disadvantaged in respect of decisions made about the allocation of available homes. Cambridge City Council carries out Equalities Impact Assessments on all LLPs before they are finalised.

Decisions to refuse an applicant

Any decision to refuse an applicant for a home must be fair and reasonable, and applicants will be informed of any such decisions and the reasons for them on their HomeLink accounts.

The housing provider (Cambridge City Council) will be expected to have arrangements in place to deal with applicants who challenge a decision made by the provider.

Monitoring and Review

The Council will monitor allocations periodically whilst the Plan is in place, to ensure the homes are being let in line with the criteria in the Plan and that the objectives and outcomes from the Plan are being achieved.

To enable this to happen the housing provider will be required to provide information to South Cambridgeshire District on a regular basis, with format and timescales to be agreed by the Council.

If problems are identified whilst the Plan is being implemented the Council will support the provider in resolving these. If issues are ongoing the Plan may be amended with the agreement of both the Council and the housing provider.

Once all the homes on this development have been let for the first time, the Council will complete an 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 other schemes.