

LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN

BETWEEN

BCP Councils, Town Hall, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, Poole, BH2 6EB and Sovereign Housing Association, Spectrum House, Grange Road, Christchurch, BH23 4GE.

FOR

POTTERS GROVE, SOPERS LANE, POOLE, BH17

A. Background

Section 167 (2E) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) enables Housing Authorities to adopt Local Lettings Policies and Plans. The Code of Guidance states that these lettings plans could enable a Housing Authority to allocate to specific groups of people, whether they fall into the reasonable preference categories. However, it does also state that reasonable preference categories must be considered overall and that local lettings plans (LLPs) should not discriminate either directly or indirectly on any equality grounds.

Once agreed these schemes will have their own allocations criteria. LLPs may be applied in addition to any local planning restrictions (contained in agreements made under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) which may be in place but will not override them.

LLPs can be put in place for a specific area or estate and will be set up in response to local circumstances. They will include a clear commitment to equality of opportunity, the provision of clear and accurate information to applicants and an appeals mechanism.

LLPs will be used to ensure, where possible, that there is a mixed and balanced community, working towards outcomes that reflect the wider community and address issues such as child density and the proportion of households in employment in any one area or estate. The precise approach to be adopted will reflect the specific problems/issues of an area or estate.

This LLP shall apply to the initial allocations of 70 new social and affordable rented properties at Potters Grove, Poole, the development also includes an additional 57 shared ownership units. The LLP will begin at the point that the first properties are handed over, approximately April 2022 and continue until all 70 properties have been allocated. The LLP can be extended by mutual agreement.

The homes at Potters Grove consists of 48 social rented units, 22 affordable rented units and 57 homes for shared ownership, broken down as follows.

Social rented units

4 x 4 bed, 6 person houses

13 x 3 bed, 5 person houses

20 x 2 bed, 3 person flats

11 x 1 bed, 2 person flats

Affordable rented units

12 x 2 bed, 3 person flats

10 x 1 bed, 2 person flats

Shared ownership units

11 x 3 bed, 5 person houses

4 x 2 bed, 4 person houses

28 x 2 bed, 3 person flats

14 x 2 bed 4 person flats

The flats within this development are made up of two large blocks over 4 floors, both blocks having two lifts. One block is for social rent and consists of 31 flats, 28 x 2 beds and 3 x 1 beds, the other block is for shared ownership and contains 36 x 2 bed flats. In addition, there are two smaller affordable rent blocks, each containing 6 x 2 bed and 5 x 1 bed flats and 2 small, shared ownership blocks of 3 x 2 bed flats.

The layout of the units is shown in appendix 1.

BCP will have 100% nomination rights on the first letting. All tenancies for 1, 2 and 3 bed properties will be offered on an assured basis with a one-year probationary period, although the probation period won't apply to existing residents who currently have an assured or secure tenancy.

The 4 bed properties will be offered on a 5-year fixed term basis with a one-year probation period for anyone who hasn't held a social tenancy prior to being nominated, anyone coming from an existing tenancy with a social landlord will be offered an assured tenancy.

Completion of the first phase of these homes is expected in April 2022 with the completion of all units by the end of 2022.

B Purpose of the Local Lettings Plan

The purpose of this local lettings plan is to provide a stable community within the development.

C Objectives of the Local Lettings Plan

The objectives of this local lettings plan are as follows:

- i) to create a community that is sustainable

- ii) to meet the requirements of BCP's Allocations Policy & Sovereign's Letting Policy to ensure allocations are made to suitable applicants
- iii) to make the best use of the housing stock
- ii) to ensure that current and future residents feel safe and content in their homes and have the same opportunities as any other resident
- iii) to minimise any possible stigmatisation of residents living in these properties
- iv) to protect the public and residents from nuisance/anti-social behaviour (ASB)
- v) to create a sense of community within the blocks
- vi) to promote a sense of pride within the blocks
- vii) to reduce turnover and potential refusals of properties

Residents may be asked to sign up to a Local Neighbourhood Agreement that will set out additional conditions that are specific to the scheme.

The existence of the lettings plan may mean that vacancies will not always be allocated to the applicant who can demonstrate the greatest housing need. Applicants with a lower priority may be considered for an allocation if their housing may help to maintain a stable community.

This LLP does not:

- Provide for subsequent allocations of these properties, which will be let in accordance with BCPs current allocation policy and in line with Sovereign's lettings policy.

D Key Elements

Properties will be allocated in accordance with BCP's and Sovereign's selection and allocation criteria. Applicants will be considered who are eligible for a suitable sized property in accordance with the Council's allocation policy bedroom needs assessment. It is not intended to under occupy these properties.

For the initial vacancies the following will be considered by BCP prior to nominating applicants from the Housing Register:

- i. The 70 rented properties will be occupied by a mix of housing need applicants and therefore from different bands
- ii. To assist residents with downsizing, priority will be given to people under-occupying social homes
- iii. We will aim to allocate a third of the units to residents who are economically active and working either full time or part time and not wholly reliant on benefits. This proposed allocation is not exclusive
- iv. First lets to the 2-bedroom flats will have a maximum of 1 child to minimise the child density at the scheme
- v. Applicants who have support needs should have the relevant support in place at the point of letting, with a commitment from both the applicant and

the support provider to continue the arrangement for as long as appropriate and in any event for a minimum of 3 months

Once the nomination has been received Sovereign will assess whether the applicant/s meet their allocation criteria and will assess whether the accommodation is affordable for the individual households.

E Advertising & Lettings

All properties will be advertised through BCP's Choice based allocations scheme on an agreed phased arrangement to ensure an even spread of adverts.

The adverts will describe the property types and sizes available for letting, together with a summary of the LLP, with the full version of the LLP being available through BCP's website. The standard information about property attributes and rent levels will be included.

The properties will be openly advertised to all bands, ensuring the criteria of this plan is defined, clarifying properties may not always be allocated to those with the highest housing need.

F Exclusions

In line with Sovereign's grounds for refusal, all applicants will be considered for housing based on their personal and housing history. Consideration will be given to creating a balanced community within the scheme.

Bids will not normally be considered from those who have housing related debt or have a history of, or any recent or significant antisocial behaviour or for any other breaches of tenancy with a registered social landlord.

If Sovereign are to refuse a nomination, they will advise BCPs Housing Service and the applicant/s. Sovereign will provide evidence to support their recommendation for refusal to the BCP staff to consider and approve. Where a disagreement remains following initial consultation, the situation will be referred to the designated officer at the BCPs Housing Services Manager and the Operational Head of Lettings at Sovereign.

G Equalities Impact Statement

We believe in treating everyone fairly and it's an essential part of our culture.

We expect all our employees to treat our residents, honestly and with respect, regardless of their age, gender, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity or national origin.

The plan aims to ensure that the schemes are representative of the local community and promote community cohesion.

H Monitoring and Review

BCP and Sovereign will review this LLP. The review will include:

- Assessment against the purposes and objective of the LLP.
- Satisfaction of permanently relocated tenants with their new allocated properties.
- Review any management issues at the scheme

Signed by:Catherine Courtney.....

On behalf of BCP

Dated:02/03/22.....

Signed by:.....

On behalf of Sovereign Housing Association Limited

Dated:23/2/2022.....

Appendix 1

