

Local Lettings Plan (LLP) agreement between Swindon Borough Council and Sovereign Housing Association for the development at:

Commonhead , Swindon

1. INTRODUCTION

Commonhead Phases R1 and P1

This is a joint development between Persimmon Homes (P1) and Redrow Homes (R1), the development when complete will include 890 homes, a village centre and a primary school.

On new developments it is really important to get them off to a good start. Issues can be magnified in a community with little community resilience which is common in a newly forming neighbourhood,

There are plans for a community centre to be built within this development to include a school and small shops. However it should be noted that until the development is much further advanced and the infrastructure of this development is in place the facilities on site will be very limited as will public transport .

Due to limited facilities and services we want to make sure residents will be able to live and succeed with their tenancies and not suffer due to living on an ongoing building site, social isolation, finance and mobility issues. This particularly relates to the "first settlers" moving into Bradbury Park.

The Scheme

The Scheme comprises of 32 properties which are Affordable Rents, these are due to be handed over in 3 tranches in June and December 2015 and March 2016. These are approximate handover dates and as with all new build developments handovers can be delayed. Within these two first phase schemes there are a total of 32 units, they will comprise of;

- 18 x 1 bedroom flats
- 1 x 2 bedroom flat
- 8 x 2 bedroom house
- 4 x 3 bedroom house
- 1 x 4 bedroom house

2. PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT

To work with Swindon Borough Council to achieve a sustainable and balanced community which can contribute to meeting the varying housing needs of applicants who are included on the Swindon Homebid common housing register.

To create a safe and secure environment in which tenants can live peacefully and harmoniously and with a commitment in helping to create and maintain a vibrant community .

Whilst the lettings plan is designed to afford the best possible chance of creating and maintaining a stable and safe community, Sovereign Housing is committed to assisting Swindon Borough Council to meet housing need in this area. However, the existence of the lettings plan may mean that vacancies will not always be allocated to applicant who can demonstrate the greatest housing need. Applicants with a lower priority may be considered for any allocation if their housing may help to maintain a stable community.

The short term impact of *not* having a Local Lettings Plan in place

- We create a community with life style clashes
- We will not be using the properties to their full potential
- Residents will be dissatisfied with their homes and community affecting health and wellbeing
- Community cohesion issues between owner occupiers and affordable residents

The long term impact of not having a Local Lettings Plan in place

- The reputation of the scheme will diminish – it becomes seen as a 'difficult to let' scheme

3. Who can apply for housing

To be considered for one of these properties, applicants need to be registered for housing with Swindon Borough Council. For the initial vacancies on these schemes Swindon Borough Council has 100% nomination rights.

In relation to the properties suitable for wheelchair users, Swindon Borough Council will direct match applicants to these

In an effort to achieve and maintain community stability, nominations will be sought to try and maintain a good mix for community taking into account

economic status, scheme layout and household size, age and household make-up. Therefore consideration will be given to applicants who are employed, retired, registered disabled, or of working age and currently or willing to engage in back to work activities or prepared to engage with Sovereigns Employment and Training Co-ordinators.

Applicants who are not in employment, must be either engaged in back to work employment training or prepared to engage with Sovereigns Employment and Training co-ordinators with a view to returning to work.

4. Agreement between Sovereign and Swindon Borough Council

Sovereign will complete a comprehensive pre-tenancy assessment with all applicants to ensure that they are housed appropriately in a home they can afford and that meets their housing need, in line with Sovereigns Lettings policy.

Sovereign will provide support for applicants where identified in relation to Employment and Training and tenancy support.

Swindon Borough Council will provide specific nominations for the wheel chair adapted properties.

5. Exclusions

Any refusals will be made in accordance with Sovereign Housing refusals policy.

For existing RP or Council tenants, their present accommodation must be in good decorative order and they must be maintaining a clear rent account.

Sovereign Housing reserves the right to withdraw any offer made, where applicants fail to attend Sovereigns new tenants workshop as detailed in section 6.

6. Building a sustainable community

As part of the allocations process all residents being allocated a home will have to attend a workshop where they will find out what it is like living on a new development and how they can sustain their tenancy as a Sovereign resident. Full information will be provided to applicants during the assessment process.

Sovereign's new neighbourhood 's service will work on this development creating partnerships with key local organisations and residents to provide the first services and events on the development.

Monitoring the Local Lettings Plan

The Local Lettings plan will operate for a period of 2 years after this period of time a review will be carried out.

However, it is important we monitor the effectiveness of the plan and record the results of our findings. If any of our reviews demonstrate the plan is not working or issues arise that mean we need to consider alternative measures, we will contact Swindon Borough Council and request an early review.

Formal agreement of the Local Lettings Plan

Sovereign Housing

Regional Housing Manager

12/03/2015

Swindon Borough Council

Allocations & Advice Manager

