

# Local Lettings Plan- Regents Village

## Objectives of the Local Lettings Plan:

1. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) is a partnership between Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC), Gloucester City Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council and sets out how the areas will develop during the period up to 2031.
2. The Local Lettings Plan will operate in line with the overarching principles of the latest [Homeseeker Plus Policy](#) to ensure that we will work together to achieve cohesive, sustainable and balanced communities that contribute to meeting housing need.
3. The information contained in the lettings plan will be used to decide upon appropriate allocations following bids being placed on Homeseeker Plus.
4. In order to achieve cohesive and balanced communities we expect the Housing Providers, working together with appropriate partner agencies, to take a strength-based approach to creating sustainable communities with a particular focus on supporting the following outcomes:
  - Supporting tenants into education, training and employment
  - Promoting financial and digital inclusion, and maximising income through welfare benefit take-up
  - Reducing fuel poverty

- Reducing social isolation
  - Promoting community engagement
  - Tackling anti-social behaviour
  - Increased recycling and appropriate waste management
5. The objectives of the Local Lettings Plan are to help meet housing need whilst helping to ensure we create a safe and sustainable community.

**Lettings Plan:** Regents Village (Swindon Farm, planning reference 20/00759/FUL)

**Area Background/Local Context:**

This site, located in Swindon Village, Cheltenham, being comprised of 266 homes, forms the first phase of the larger Elms Park (North West Cheltenham) Strategic allocation, which, upon detailed planning consent, could deliver over 4,100 homes. This specific site will deliver 93 affordable homes (35% affordable), of which 65 x social rented units will be impacted by the adoption of this Local Lettings Plan. The remaining units are currently allocated as 5 x Shared Ownership and 23 x First Homes.

**6. Proposed Property Types:**

6.1. The proposed scheme at Regents Village, Swindon Farm, is made up of a total 93 affordable homes as follows:

93 x affordable (35%)	Social Rented Housing	First Homes	Shared Ownership
1b2p flat, 49m2	9	0	0
1b2p FF flat, 57m2	6	0	0
1b2p GF Flat M4(2) Cat 2, 48m2	6	0	0
2b3p Bungalow M4(2), Cat 2; 60m2	2	1	0
2b4p House, M4(2) Cat 2, 67m2	0	11	3
2b4p House, M4(2) Cat 2, 73m2	18	0	0
3b5p House, M4(2) Cat 2, 79m2	0	11	2
3b5p House, M4(2) Cat 2, 83m2	18	0	0
4b6p House, M4(2) Cat 2, 100m2	6	0	0
Totals	65	23	5

**7. Criteria**

7.1 To ensure that other than in exceptional circumstances applicants with a substantiated history of serious anti-social behavior, which has impacted on the community and/or an ability to sustain a tenancy, will be excluded in accordance with the criteria as set out below:

- Applicants and members of their household for whom a Possession Order has been obtained relating to anti-social behavior or who have previously been evicted for anti-social behavior or have been the subject of an injunction for anti-social behavior within the last 5 years.

- Applicants with a proven history of anti-social behavior relating to their tenancy, either at a current or previous tenancy within the last 3 years.
- 7.2 However, individual circumstances will be expected to be considered by CBC's Housing Management and Lettings Teams, e.g. an applicant fleeing domestic abuse will not be excluded if the applicant was not responsible for the anti-social behaviour.
- 7.3 To enable CBC's Housing Management and Lettings Teams to exclude applicants who have caused significant damage to their current property due to mistreatment, subject to individual circumstances being considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.4 That the housing shall be affordable in relation to the individual tenant's income and earnings. For the sake of clarity, in the event that an applicant is entitled to benefits, and the rental element of their benefits has been calculated by the benefits agency to fully cover the applicant's proposed rent, then CBC's Housing Options Team would normally expect the property will be deemed affordable — however it is recognised that there could be occasional exceptions. Cases where the applicant does not meet the Housing Provider's affordability criteria will be discussed with CBC's Housing Options Team on an individual basis.
- 7.5 Persons in social housing who have arrears on their rent account of 8 weeks or more, former tenant arrears of 8 weeks or more or rechargeable repairs and/or court costs greater than £500 may be excluded unless they have kept to a repayment plan.

- 7.6 Exclusions would not apply in exceptional circumstances if applicants were not responsible for and/or were unable to control the arrears and/ or damage to their current property. Examples of this would include:
- o If current arrears are due to affordability issues due to welfare reform and in these circumstances each case would be assessed on an individual basis.
  - o If the applicant's arrears or damage to their current property came about as a result of coercive behavior from an ex-partner, and it is intended that this ex-partner will no longer form part of a future household.
- 7.7 Former tenant arrears that have not been pursued in last six years, or previously written off will not be considered as a debt for the purpose of this lettings plan unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- 8. Process:**
- 8.1 All applicants will be eligible and active on Homeseeker Plus.
- 8.2 All initial and subsequent lettings of properties will be advertised through Homeseeker Plus and include details of the Local Lettings plan criteria.
- 8.3 Unless there is priority agreement regarding off plan lets all properties will be advertised no more than 8 weeks before on each phase.

- 8.4 Properties with adapted accessibility features will be advertised as priority given to applicants with a proven medical need, and shortlisting for these properties will be organized accordingly.
- 8.5 The council will consider letting adapted and/or adaptable properties off plan by agreement on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.6 Bungalows, due to the scarcity of this property type in CBC's existing housing stock and significant demand for these housetypes, will be advertised as priority to be given to applicants with a proven medical need for a ground floor property. Shortlisting for these properties will be organized accordingly.
- 8.7 Housing Providers will consider bids with the necessary local connection in priority band order.
- 8.8 When the bidding cycle has ended a list will be produced of all applicants who have bid on the property. These applicants will be ranked by the Homeseeker Plus system according to local connection, housing need and time waiting in that housing need.
- 8.9 The highest placed applicant in housing need who fulfils the local connection criteria for the scheme will be contacted and their application assessed in line with the criteria outlined in the Local Lettings Plan.
- 8.10 If there is evidence that an applicant does not meet the Local Lettings plan criteria then the process will move onto the next ranking applicant.

- 8.11 Housing Providers shall review the shortlisted applicants in line with the Homeseeker Plus policy with the Local Authorities housing options team and final offers shall be jointly agreed.
- 8.12 New tenants will be offered introductory tenancies, except where they already have a current secure/assured tenancy, or as otherwise required by law in the event that a Housing Provider offers fixed term tenancies.

**9. Review:**

- 9.1 This Local Lettings Plan is for both the initial and potentially for future lettings at the development, if required; and will be subject to an annual review to be undertaken 10 months after the initial lettings plan has been agreed (in December 2025) and every 12 months thereafter (if still in operation) to ensure that it continues to fulfil the needs and criteria as initially intended.
- 9.2 In the event that officers believe that the Local Lettings Plan (LLP) is not functioning as originally intended, Officers will review the LLP prior to the annual review date to ensure that the LLP is serving its intended purpose.

**On behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council (Strategic Housing)**

Name: Martin Stacy

Job Title: Housing Strategy & Partnerships Manager

Dated: 24/01/2025

**On behalf of: Cheltenham Borough Council (housing management and lettings)** *Caroline Walker*

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Dated:

*4/2/25.*