



Cambridge City Council Local Lettings Plan

Location covered by plan: Five Trees Court, Fen Road, Cambridge, CB4 1UT

Landlord

The landlord of the properties covered by this plan is: Cambridge City Council

Total number of properties covered by this plan

12 homes (expected to be ready for letting starting from March 2024)

Affected property types and sizes

8 x 2-bedroom houses

3 x 3-bedroom houses, including 1 wheelchair accessible

1 x 4 bedroom house which is wheelchair accessible

Reasons for introducing the Local Lettings Plan (LLP)

1. Background

This Local Lettings Plan (LLP) applies to all first time lets of Cambridge City Council lettings on Fen Road development also known as Five Trees Court.

The Council has worked in partnership with housing developer, Hill, through the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) to build a new housing development in Cambridge, perfectly situated for access to the city centre.

The development is ideally located in Chesterton with regards to local schools and colleges and provides easy access to Central Cambridge, the nearby A14 and Cambridge North Station. The location of the development allows travel by foot, public transport, and through cycling - including the new Histon Road Cycle trail.

2. Building a mixed community

The reason for this LLP is to support a mixed and balanced community, to support the local economy, and to give some priority to people who work locally, potentially minimising the impact on the environment by limiting the need for people to travel long distances. It is

hoped this will build and strengthen the diverse community that exists in North Cambridge area.

It also aims to:

- Help minimise need for private vehicle journeys to work by giving some priority to people working locally
- Free up existing council homes for others on the register through priority given to existing Cambridge City Council tenants.
- Support the needs of people needing wheelchair accessible housing by giving priority to those who need them
- Ensure successful applicants can afford the rents being charged

The Council recognises that Cambridge has a thriving economy and a growing population that needs housing, and some of whom may be unable to buy or rent homes due to expensive owner-occupying and Private Rented Sector (PRS) in the City.

3. Additional information

Council tenants are allowed pets under their tenancy agreement.

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

To protect the development and its residents from potentially negative impacts, please take into consideration advice from Environmental Health and the Dog Warden in relation to noise, the Public Space Protection Order (PSPOs) already in force across the City, and the possible impact of dog fouling in open spaces. For more information about PSPOs and exclusion areas visit <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/dog-control>

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been completed?

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on 12th January 2024.

How we propose to let the properties covered by the plan

1. Completion dates

The letting of the 12 affordable homes will be staggered from late February 2024 as homes are constructed*

**all dates subject to change.*

2. Affordability and rent levels

Rent levels for homes, including most service charges, will be set in line with our [Affordable Rents Policy](#) as an Annex to our Housing Strategy. (Up to 60% of gross median market rent for that size of property, location and service provision, or the current Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, whichever is lower). For more information on LHA levels in Cambridge City, please visit <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-housingallowance>

In line with Cambridge City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy, applicants will be asked to complete an affordability assessment before any offers are finalised to try and prevent financial hardship. The council reserves the right not to make an offer where there is a risk that an applicant may not be able to afford the level of rent and any service charges being charged.

3. Allocating homes

The Council's Lettings Policy applies to all lettings of affordable homes at Five Trees Court, Fen Road.

The Lettings Policy document is available via <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/8662/lettings-policy.pdf>

In addition to this, subject to demand:

a) Approximately a third of homes (4 homes) to be allocated to households with at least one member working either full time or part time within Cambridge City, some of whom may be in lower 'bands' under the Council's Letting Policy but struggle to access housing that is affordable.

b) Approximately a third of 2-bedroom properties (2 to 3 homes) will be allocated to current tenants of Cambridge City Council 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.

One-third of the two-bed homes, (1 home) priority will be given to those downsizing from three or four bedroom council homes. As well as helping to support a mixed community, this will help to free up existing homes for applicants on the Council's housing register.

c) The remaining homes will be allocated to others on the Council's housing register. This will be a mixture of applicants who are already a tenant of a Registered Social Landlord (such as housing associations), whilst for others it may be their first home.

(Please note: There may be overlaps between the above groups. For example, someone allocated a home could be both working locally and be a current Council tenant).

The Council will 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 following other regeneration and decanting projects.

Although this is small development, we will ensure that each size of home will be allocated to a mix of household types and sizes. This will help provide a mixture of different types of households across the new community.

Where short-listed applicants have similar priority banding and dates, the council may use its discretion in deciding who to make an offer to; for example, to support those with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 or to help create a balanced community.

Wheelchair accessible homes

2 homes (one 3-bedroom house and the 4 bedroom house) are wheelchair accessible and priority will be given to applicants on the 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 the houses on the development are built to a standard that makes them easier to access or adapt for people with mobility issues.

Unacceptable behaviour

This Local Letting Plan aims to support the objectives of the Lettings Policy.

City Homes will reserve the right to carry out background checks for applicants nominated to these properties.

When shortlisting applicants, the Council will consider whether an applicant or a member of their household has a history of behaviour which, in the opinion of Cambridge City Council, is unacceptable. Unacceptable behaviour may include (but is not limited to): being a perpetrator of domestic or other abuse, harassment or anti-social behaviour; drug dealing or other criminal activity; failing to maintain or repair their home or associated garden or garage; noise nuisance; tenancy related debt; or drug and/or alcohol abuse or any other vulnerability which may have an adverse impact on the community or on the applicant themselves.

City Homes reserves the right to refuse any applicant with an evidence history of unacceptable behaviour within the past 3 years, or with a relevant unspent criminal history.

When considering whether or not to exclude an applicant from the shortlist the Council will take into account whether they are effectively engaging with a recognised programme of support and rehabilitation.

Details regarding the Housing Related debt policy can be found on <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/5404/housing-related-debt-policy.pdf>

The period that the plan covers

Until first Lettings are completed.

This plan is approved by:

Role

Housing Services Manager, City Homes (on behalf of landlord)

Housing Services Manager, Housing Advice (on behalf of Housing Advice Service)

Housing Strategy Manager

If there are any enquiries about the criteria contained within this document please email HousingOfficer@cambridge.gov.uk

Date of plan

12/01/2024

Staff Guidance – Examples of reasons for introducing the LLP

Please note the examples below are to be used by staff as a guide to identifying LLP objectives. It should not be considered a definitive list.

For re-lets in a specific area using current social housing stock

- Help meet particular unmet needs within an area
- Help regenerate areas
- Help to ensure that affordability of homes is taken into account when they are let
- Help promote homes in areas which tend to attract fewer bids through Home-link
- Encourage greater community cohesion and sustainability
- Respond to particular housing management issues where problems of anti-social behaviour, nuisance or crime occur (including environmental crime such as fly tipping and dog fouling)
- Address an imbalance of residents from different age groups or family type within existing developments
- Giving those in acute need the opportunity to bid for homes in the context of the Council's Housing First programme
- Take into account any restrictive covenants associated with the land

For first-time housing lets on a new development

- Create a balance between those in and out of work to support the local economy
- Give priority to people working within an agreed geographical radius of the development; although ensuring that priority is available to employees of a range of employers and employment types
- Create a mix of household types and children's ages
- Give priority to households whose children currently attend schools in the catchment area
- Ensure specialist housing, for example disability adapted homes may be reserved for households who require them
- Provide a balance between households that will need additional support and those that will not
- Allow for under-occupation of some homes
- Identify the balance to be struck between existing social tenants and home-seekers
- Ensure some homes are available for let nearer to completion, where homes have been advertised through Home-Link well in advance of them being available to let
- Enable households whose needs have more recently been assessed to bid
- Give those in acute need the opportunity to bid for homes in accordance with the Council's Housing First programme