

## Cambridge Southern Fringe

### Building a Sustainable Community at Southern Fringe

Inter-agency agreement on letting arrangements between:

Cambridge City Council – CCC

South Cambridgeshire District Council – SCDC Cambridgeshire Partnerships Ltd

#### 1. Background

Cambridgeshire Partnerships Ltd, comprising 5 RSLs led by **bpha**, has been appointed to provide the development of the first 3,300 affordable homes on three strategic sites within Cambridgeshire. These sites are Southern Fringe, NIAB and Northstowe. The responsibilities of Cambridgeshire Partnerships in terms of achieving good quality homes and contributing to a sustainable living environment on each site are set out in the terms of its appointment by the Homes and Communities Agency as the strategic partner.

A total of 4064 new homes will be provided at Southern Fringe sites of Clay & Glebe Farm, Trumpington Meadows & Bell School, of which 667 will be affordable rent and 360 social rent properties with initial lettings in accordance with Home-Link, the Choice Based Lettings service approved by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and Cambridge City Council (CCC). This will include 2% fully wheelchair accessible properties and 8% supported housing properties where the needs are identified. These percentages will be reviewed as the evidence base improves. 25% of the rented homes will be advertised on an on-going basis as available to households within the sub- region. The remainder of the affordable homes required by the Area Development Framework will be forms of low cost home ownership such as shared ownership, which will be let or sold in in line with Capital Funding Guidelines and liaise with the appointed Home buy agent as required by such conditions. Cambridgeshire Partnerships has been tasked with drawing up proposals for the letting arrangements, having regard to those already established by CCC and SCDC in other growth localities, and to confirm its co-ordinated approach to housing management on behalf of its member RSLs who will own homes on the site.

## 2. Objectives of the development

1. The vision for Southern Fringe is for a modern high quality, vibrant and distinctive urban extension of Trumpington, which will complement and enhance the character of the City. One of the objectives of the development is to create a balanced and sustainable community – a place where people want to live, not just now, but in the future.
2. Another objective of the signatories to this agreement is to build high levels of social capital on the development. Social capital can be enhanced when residents see their neighbourhood as a destination – a place where they are prepared to invest time and effort in developing neighbourly relations. One way of achieving this is by putting in place a flexible and sensitive lettings policy for the social rented and affordable rent units on the site ensuring that prospective residents have *chosen* to move to Southern Fringe is fundamental to this process. Housing need will be a major factor governing the selection of nominees, but other factors will also be taken into account. It is the aim of the parties to this agreement that these will include the criteria below. Where targets are given these will act as a guide and will be subject to ongoing monitoring and discussion between the signatories to this agreement.

### **Social / Affordable housing dwellings**

Cambridgeshire Partnerships, through their managing agent, have or will subscribe to the Home-Link Choice Based Lettings Scheme and enter into a Service Level Agreement setting out the parties' mutual obligations. All social / affordable housing lettings will be advertised through Home Link and will be allocated in compliance with the legal and regulatory requirements for social / affordable housing, where applicable the Allocation Policy of Cambridgeshire Partnerships and the agreed Local Lettings Plan described below.

The parties agree that in order to enable Tenants Choice 80% of homes will be advertised in Home-Link 6 months in advance of the anticipated letting date. The balance will be advertised one month prior to letting in order that those in acute need have an opportunity to express their interest.

- Underletting – 70% of the homes will be let to households who will under-occupy the dwelling by at least one person. For example 2 children in a 3-bed, 5-person house and 1 child in a 2-bed, 4-person house. This is in order to enable households to remain and grow within the community, to meet an acceptable child density target across the development, and to support the creation of a balanced community.

Children’s ages – for households containing children, the short-listing process will aim to select households with a range of child ages, from 0 to 18. Households for the general needs social / affordable rented units will be selected with a range of child ages as follows:

<b>Preschool Age 0 – 5</b>	<b>Primary School Ages 5 – 11</b>	<b>Secondary School Ages 12 – 16</b>	<b>Further Education Age 17+</b>	<b>Total</b>
30%	30%	30%	10%	100%

- Households including children as permanent residents (that is, not staying contact) will not be offered accommodation in apartments above the second floor.
- Diversity – the new community should broadly reflect the diverse population of Cambridge and the parishes in South Cambridgeshire adjoining the A14.
- Economic activity – a target applies of at least 30% of households short-listed from within the reasonable preference categories to include a member who is economically active.
- Transfers – transfer bid opportunities for those holding existing successful social housing tenancies will comprise no more than 50% of lettings
- Specialist Housing – fully wheelchair accessible properties will be available to households who have a member who will benefit from the accommodation.

The targets set out above will be monitored quarterly once lettings are underway and Cambridgeshire Partnerships will meet with the local authorities in the event that the actual lettings figures vary significantly from these targets. An annual review will take place to agree on going strategy to ensure targets around sustainability are maintained.

### 3. Intermediate Housing

As well as social / affordable rented housing, the Southern Fringe scheme includes up to 605 units of shared ownership. All of these new homes are being funded through social housing grant from the Homes and Communities Agency and will therefore be subject to the nomination process set out in the Capital Funding Guidance, issued by the Homes and Communities Agency. In marketing, letting and selling these properties Cambridgeshire Partnerships will liaise with the appointed home buy agent, key worker employers and local authorities in accordance with the procedures set out in the Capital Funding Guidance.

#### 4. Management arrangements

For the new homes on these sites, rent levels should be consistent across each phase of development, regardless of where each home is located in relation to the district boundary. Arrangements around the use of fixed term tenancies, length of tenancy and tenancy renewal on sites where nomination rights are shared between the two Councils will be agreed in the Local Letting Plan developed for each area, which may differ in some respects to the Councils Tenancy Strategies. Where differences arise, the Local Letting Plan will take precedence in relation to those differences

Cambridgeshire Partnerships will offer a single point of contact, integrated management service for all of the affordable homes owned by its members. The Partnership will have consistent policies, and locally influenced, published service standards. As a minimum the following areas will be covered by policies:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Housing management Policy
- Rent Arrears Policy
- Rent setting and Service Charges Policy
- Complaints & Compliments Policy
- Equalities and Diversity Policy
- Repairs and voids policies
- Resident Involvement Policy
- Tenant Transfer and Allocations policy – LA's to provide
- Aids and Adaptation Policy

There will be a common community development Action Plan in place to welcome and support the new residents, and to build capacity.

#### Signatories to the agreement:

Cambridge City Council – CCC: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

South Cambridgeshire District Council – SCDC: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cambridgeshire Partnerships Ltd: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_