

# **LOCAL LETTINGS PLAN FOR CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES & COTTSWAY**

## **Shurdington Road (Greenway Chase, Leckhampton, Cheltenham, GL53 0JH) (Effective from September 2025)**

### **Local Lettings Plan Summary:**

#### **Purpose of this Local Lettings Plan:**

The purpose of this Local Lettings Plan is to support Cottsway's investment into one hundred and forty (140) new-build affordable homes at Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0JH, by setting out the appropriate measures required to strike a reasonable balance between meeting the local authority's housing needs and supporting the establishment of a new, sustainable and cohesive community in this location through sensitive lettings arrangements.

For context, this area has a comparatively low level of existing affordable housing stock, and thus the introduction of a significant volume of affordable homes (including 98 ninety eight (98) rented homes) must be carefully managed to ensure that the existing and new community in this area continues to thrive.

#### **Properties impacted by this Local Lettings Plan:**

There are a total of one hundred and forty affordable homes at Shurdington Road, of which ninety-eight (98) are available for rent- as covered by this Local Lettings Plan. Of these 98 properties, forty one (41) will be made available for social rent, with an additional fifty seven (57) properties being made available for affordable rent levels.

The remaining forty two (42) affordable homes will be delivered through the Shared Ownership tenure. To be clear, these 42 Shared Ownership homes will fall outside the scope of this Local Lettings Plan.

## The Local Lettings Plan:

Cottsway will use this Local Letting Plan to cover the first lets of all 98 rented properties on the development at Shurdington Road, Cheltenham, GL53 0JH in order to maintain as balanced and sustainable a community as possible, where each resident has the maximum opportunity to thrive.

This Local Lettings Plan will provide Cottsway with greater control over first lets to minimise the risk of persons with significant vulnerabilities being housed on this development covering the initial period of first lets.

Cottsway will let the 98 no. rented affordable properties to households in housing need (applicants in Emergency, Gold or Silver banding) as identified on the Council's housing register.

There is an aim to have a minimum of **40%** of allocated homes with at least one household member in employment or economically active. The definition of employment includes those participating in dedicated training schemes, internships, managed volunteer work, back to work programmes or further and higher education courses. State Pension age applicants are treated as economically active. Applicants with protected characteristics who are unable to work or volunteer, or who do not otherwise meet this criteria will be considered on a case by case basis.

We require this mix of income and ages of children to offer sustainability. This is identifying some families with children over 16 years old and others who are not benefit dependant. This will be key to the local lettings plan and means the development will have a mix of ages and incomes.

Where applicable priority for ground floor units in the scheme will be given to those whose housing need means they need ground floor accommodation, including people with mild to moderate mobility issues or visual impairments. Any wheelchair adapted properties should only be allocated to those applicants who require this adaptation.

## Exclusion Criteria:

Cottsway reserves the right not to offer a tenancy at properties at Shurdington Road (Greenway Chase) to a person where the applicant(s) and/or any other person attached to the application are:

- Persons for whom a Possession Order has been obtained relating to Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) or who has previously been evicted for ASB or who has been the subject of an Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction (ASBI) within the last 3 years.

- Persons with a history of ASB at a current or previous tenancy within the last 3 years. Each applicant will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will include the applicant(s) response or engagement with any informal ASB actions, such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC's).
- Persons who have caused a deterioration of the condition of their current property, its garden or its fixtures and fittings due to hoarding, ill-treatment, waste, neglect or default. This will include any unauthorised alterations.
- Persons who have a high support need that may be vulnerable to being targeted or have a history of being manipulated by and having their properties 'cuckooed', by criminally linked groups or persons, particularly those with a history of non-engagement with support agencies.

*\*When applying the above exclusion criteria, Cottsway will consider the individual circumstances of each applicant on a case-by-case basis, for example where domestic abuse may have contributed to reports of anti-social behaviour or a deterioration of the condition of their current property, this would not disadvantage an applicant seeking to secure a home\*.*

Nominations will not normally be considered from those who have a debt outstanding to this association or another landlord. This includes present rent arrears, former rent arrears or any sundry debt such as recharges within six years.

However, consideration will be given to those who have former tenancy debt and adhered to a repayment plan.

Cottsway will require applicants to demonstrate an income that will cover rent and service charge for the homes it covers. All applicants must meet the relevant criteria under Cottsway current lettings policy. One month's rent in advance is required in most cases but flexibility will be shown to those in financial hardship.

## Process:

- The properties will be advertised using Homeseeker Plus, and the advert will include details of the local lettings criteria.
- When the bidding cycle has ended a list will be produced of all applicants who have bid on the properties. These applicants will be ranked by the Homeseeker Plus system according to housing need.
- The highest placed applicant in housing need will be contacted and their application assessed in line with the criteria outlined in this Local Lettings Plan.
- If there is evidence that an applicant does not meet the Local Lettings Plan criteria the process will then move to the next ranking applicant. At the same time Cottsway will inform the applicant of the reason they have not been

successful and of any steps that they need to take to prevent further bypasses for the same reason, as well as how they can improve their chances of securing a property in the future.

- If the applicant meets the Lettings Plan criteria a housing needs and affordability assessment will be carried out by Cottsway

Providing all is acceptable then a viewing of the property will be arranged if required with a Neighbourhood Housing Officer from Cottsway, otherwise sign up is arranged to take place at the property.

### Local Lettings Plan Meeting:

On an annual basis, and following the completion of the final first let, representatives from Cheltenham Borough Council and Cottsway will hold a joint meeting to discuss the following points, with a view to embed learning into future Local Lettings Plans.

These meetings will consider:

- Lettings data
- Bypassing decisions and the broad rationale supporting these decisions in line with this LLP
- Evidence of any anti-social behavior (ASB) of all forms.
- General community cohesion
- Lets undertaken outside of the Homeseeker Policy in line with the signed Section 106 agreement for this development.

The Local Lettings Plan will automatically expire once all first lets of the 98 no. affected social rented and affordable rented homes have been completed, with Cottsway agreeing to write to the Council to confirm the final lettings completion date within 2 weeks of the final first let being completed.

Authorisation:



Signed:

Position: Claire Hughes, Director of Governance, Housing & Communities

Date: 18/09/2025

**Cheltenham Borough Council Representative:**

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_Sue Lakin, Deputy CEO\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_01/10/2025\_\_\_\_\_

**Cottsway Representative:**