



Choice Based Lettings Scheme and Lettings Policy
Final Report on Response to Consultation Period
February to April 2007

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Introduction

This report outlines the consultation process the Council undertook in relation to the Cambridge Sub-regional Choice Based Lettings (CBL) scheme and the Councils draft lettings policy relating to that scheme.

This is the final report based on all the responses to the consultation. The report is also limited to the consultation planned and organised by South Cambridgeshire District Council. A number of appendices are included and referred to within the report and these will offer additional and supporting information about the consultation.

The results of consultation, which took place over the wider sub-region, will be reported on and published elsewhere.

What we did

Consultation on the South Cambridgeshire District Councils draft lettings policy and the proposed CBL scheme took place between 26th January and 27th April 2007. However, consultative type work was already being undertaken prior to this time and this will be outlined separately in this report. The consultation was undertaken alongside a planned review of the Housing Register. It was felt this would keep overall postage costs to a minimum and at the same time produce a high quality and positive outcome for both the register review and consultation. Throughout the consultation period all documents were available in different formats on request. The draft lettings policy and CBL scheme guide had also been produced in an audio format on CD

The consultation period began with:

- Consultation documents being placed on the Councils internet site along with other supporting information about CBL.
- Letters and/or emails were sent out to:
 - Members
 - Parish Councils
 - RSLs
 - Stakeholders
 - Relevant staff within the Council including the contact centre staff
 - Voluntary Groups and organisations
 - Social Services, Probation Service and other professional bodies.

Letters included all relevant information and consultation documents. Emails included direct links to our web pages where the information and documents were available to be downloaded and where there was also a facility to complete an online consultation questionnaire. **Please see Appendix 9 (p.34) for a full listing of contacts used.**

- Letters sent to applicants on the Housing Register as part of the review process. The letter contained all documentation and information including a questionnaire.
- Focus Groups were held with a number of groups including:
 - Tenants (including sheltered schemes)
 - Homeless applicants
 - Young people
 - General applicants

- Disability groups (in conjunction with Huntingdonshire DC and Cambridge CC)
- Floating Support and Hostel staff

Further details of events held can be found in Appendix 10 (p.37).

- Information was published in:
 - South Cambs Magazine – District wide publication
 - Housing Services Newsletter – (Internal staff publication)
 - Intranet (with links to all information and documents)
- To forums held and continuing
 - RSL's (sub-regionally) **(See Appendix 12 p.41)**
 - Support Groups and organisations (sub-regionally) **(See Appendix 13 p.43)**

For a full outline of the consultation plan please see **Appendix 8 (p.32)**

Andy Glaves

Choice Based Lettings Project Officer
South Cambridgeshire Council

Final Responses of the Questionnaire

Overall	Approx number of questionnaires sent out	6350
	Number of forms sent out that we could have had a response from	2543
	Forms not returned, OR forms returned but require no action	3807
	Total number of returned questionnaires	1363
	Response Rate	53.60%
	Questionnaires returned via website	8
	Website response rate as a % of total responses	0.58%
	Total responses (all types)	1371

response figures

In total, approximately 6350 questionnaires were sent out covering all groups of customers. The total number of responses to the questionnaire was 1363. A large number of housing register review and consultation forms were returned by the Post Office as 'Gone away' etc. Other customers no longer wished to be considered for housing in the future or simply did not return their form. Taking this into account, the number of forms we could expect a response from was 2543 and this has given an extremely high response rate of 53.60%. The questionnaire could also be completed on-line through the corporate web site but this has produced a disappointingly poor result. Strangely, there were a large number of customers who visited the website to download the consultation form for completion and then to be returned by post. The large and very positive response to the questionnaire was largely due to the fact that we sent out the consultation documents as part of the housing register review. Overall, the response has been extremely positive.

The first part of the questionnaire asked about the proposed CBL scheme itself and then moved on to seek views on our draft lettings policy. Finally, we asked for information about customers completing the form to identify aspects about who we reached as part of the consultation.

Q1a) Where would you like to be able to find out about our available homes?

Out of the total questionnaires returned there was a very high response to this question. Customers are clearly indicating how they would like to find out about available homes.

(Multiple Answers) Number of responses to this question	1364	99.49% As a % of total responses
Total options chosen by those responding to question.	2918	
On the internet	815	27.93% As a % of total options chosen.
In a property flyer	847	29.03% " " "

By visiting a council office	389	13.33%	"	"	"
At a library or other access point	241	8.26%	"	"	"
By text message	418	14.32%	"	"	"
Other (please state)	208	7.13%	"	"	"
By Post	122	58.65%	As a % of those who stated 'Other'		
Press	37	17.79%	"	"	"
Telephone	54	25.96%	"	"	"
In Post Office	2	0.96%	"	"	"
Medical Centre	1	0.48%	"	"	"
Via E-Mail	16	7.69%	"	"	"
Trusted 3 rd Party	1	0.48%	"	"	"

Q1b) How often would you like to see homes advertised?

There was a positive response to this question. Although customers are clearly indicating they would like to see homes advertised on a weekly basis there would be an exceptionally high cost involved for this option. Secondly, it would be impossible to ensure sufficient homes would be available to fill a weekly based advertising cycle. This would be an inconsistent approach to an advertising cycle which could ultimately lead to customer dissatisfaction.

(Multiple Answers) Number of responses to this question	1339	97.67%	As a % of total responses		
Total options chosen by those responding to question.	1353				
Every week	689	50.92%	As a % of total options chosen.		
Every two weeks	414	30.60%	"	"	"
More than every two weeks	74	5.47%	"	"	"
I don't have a view	176	13.14%	"	"	"

1c) How would you like to be able to tell us you are interested in a home?

An excellent response and as may be expected, internet, telephone, coupon and personal visit to the office were all indicated as ways in which customers would want to tell us they were interested in a home.

(Multiple Answers) Number of responses to this question	1345	98.10%	As a % of total responses		
Total options chosen by those responding to question.	3391				
On the internet	728	21.47%	As a % of total options chosen.		
By telephone	911	26.87%	"	"	"
By visiting a council office	745	21.97%	"	"	"
By returning a postal coupon	667	19.67%	"	"	"
By text message	301	8.88%	"	"	"
Other (please state)	39	1.15%	"	"	"
Post	29	74.36%	As a % of those who stated 'Other'		
Local Contact Office	1	2.56%	"	"	"
Via Email	10	25.64%	"	"	"
Fax	1	2.56%	"	"	"
Visit from a Housing Officer	1	2.56%	"	"	"
Trusted 3 rd Party	1	2.56%	"	"	"

Q1d) Do you think you will need help to...

In this question we wanted to identify areas of the scheme where customers felt they may require help to participate. Where customers indicated 'Yes', we then went on to ask them what type of help they may need.

A number of people did answer 'Yes' to the first part of the question but then failed to answer the second part of the question. It is also important to remember that the total 'Yes' responses in the second half of the question can be expected to be greater than the options offered anyway. This is due to the fact that many customers would have indicated 'Yes' to all parts of the main question but may have only made one response in the second part. However, a large number of customers have clearly indicated they would receive help from family or friends and this is encouraging. For those who would need help from somewhere else we shall continue to address this in the coming weeks.

Apply for housing			
Number of responses to this question	1220	88.99%	As a % of total responses
Yes	346	28.36%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	690	56.56%	" " " "
Don't know	184	15.08%	" " " "
Look for available homes			
Number of responses to this question	1281	93.44%	As a % of total responses
Yes	463	36.14%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	638	49.80%	" " " "
Don't know	180	14.05%	" " " "
Express interest in homes			
Number of responses to this question	1009	73.60%	As a % of total responses
Yes	408	40.44%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	424	42.02%	" " " "
Don't know	177	17.54%	" " " "

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above, will your family or your friends be able to help you or, would you need help from another source?

Total number of 'Yes' responses	1217		
Family/Friends	331	27.20%	As a % of those indicating 'Yes' to Q1d.
I would need help from somewhere else	217	17.83%	As a % of those indicating 'Yes' to Q1d.

Q1e) Please tell us your views about the following statements:

Here we asked more general questions about the overall scheme and again, there was an excellent response. I would ask you to note particularly the positive response in terms of ease of use and understanding of the scheme as well as customers 'expectations' of the scheme. Customers were also positive about how feedback on lettings would help them make choices in the future.

The new CBL scheme seems easy to understand			
Number of responses to this question	1278	93.22%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	108	8.45%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	793	62.05%	"

No View	273	21.36%	"
Disagree	75	5.87%	"
Strongly Disagree	29	2.27%	"
The new scheme will keep me more informed about my housing situation			
Number of responses to this question	1302	94.97%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	146	11.21%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	804	61.75%	"
No View	267	20.51%	"
Disagree	71	5.45%	"
Strongly Disagree	14	1.08%	"
Receiving feedback will help me make more choices about my housing			
Number of responses to this question	1241	90.52%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	199	16.04%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	831	66.96%	"
No View	173	13.94%	"
Disagree	31	2.50%	"
Strongly Disagree	7	0.56%	"
The new system will be simpler and easier to understand than the existing system			
Number of responses to this question	1333	97.23%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	119	8.93%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	694	52.06%	"
No View	409	30.68%	"
Disagree	93	6.98%	"
Strongly Disagree	18	1.35%	"
The new system will give priority to people who are most in need of housing.			
Number of responses to this question	1035	75.49%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	141	13.62%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	680	65.70%	"
No View	94	9.08%	"
Disagree	91	8.79%	"
Strongly Disagree	29	2.80%	"

Q2) Property labelling.

Is there anything else you would like us to include in the property description? Please refer to Appendix 1 (p.13).

Q3) Assessment of Needs

I think the individual housing needs have been placed into the correct bands.

Another high response rate with more than half of those responding agreeing with the housing needs/bands. A third of people were unsure and may be reserving judgement. However, the number of

customers who did disagree was very low. Over 10% stated that the criteria within each of the bands was appropriate. A small number made other constructive comments, please see **Appendix 2 (p.15)**.

Number of responses to this question	1264	92.20%	As a % of total responses
Agree	728	57.59%	As a % of those answering the question.
Disagree	109	8.62%	" " " "
Don't Know	427	33.78%	" " " "
Comments	81	6.41%	" " " "

Do you think the names of the bands are appropriate or do you have any other suggestions?

Number of responders who agree appropriate	151	11.01%	As a % of total responses
Number of responders making other comments	25	1.82%	As a % of total responses

Q4. Assessment of Overcrowding

Do you agree with the proposals for assessing overcrowding?

Number of responses to this question	1247	90.96%	As a % of total responses
Yes	770	61.75%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	96	7.70%	" " " "
No View	381	30.55%	" " " "

Q5) Making Offers of a Home

Do you think this is a fair way to decide who to offer the home to?

Although some responders did not agree with other aspects of the scheme and policy, when it came to this question they clearly agreed that this was a fair way to offer homes. For the reasons people did not think it fair please see **Appendix 3 (p.18)**.

Number of responses to this question	1295	94.46%	As a % of total responses
Yes	1197	92.43%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	98	7.57%	" " " "
If you do not think this is fair, please tell us why:	36	36.73%	As a % of those who stated 'No'

6 Local Connection

Q6a) Do you agree with each CBL partner letting 10% of homes to customers anywhere in the sub-region?

A large proportion of people agreed and nearly half of those responding did not have a view. Only a small number of people disagreed.

Number of responses to this question	1099	80.16%	As a % of total responses
Strongly Agree	98	8.92%	As a % of those answering the question.
Agree	389	35.40%	" " " "
No View	486	44.22%	" " " "
Disagree	126	11.46%	" " " "

Q6b) Do you think the remaining 90% of homes should be labelled so that applicants must have a local connection to the district (except where there is a legal agreement asking for a more specific connection, for example to a particular village)?

Number of responses to this question	1321	96.35%	As a % of total responses			
Strongly Agree	339	25.66%	As a % of those answering the question.			
Agree	567	42.92%	"	"	"	"
No View	306	23.16%	"	"	"	"
Disagree	109	8.25%	"	"	"	"
If you disagree, please tell us why	38	34.86%	As a % of those who disagree.			

For the comments made by people who disagreed with the second question, please refer to **Appendix 4 (p.19)**.

7. Direct Lets

Q7a). Do you agree that in certain circumstances, direct lets may be necessary?

Number of responses to this question	1290	94.09%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	735	56.98%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	48	3.72%	"	"	"	"
Don't know	378	29.30%	"	"	"	"
No opinion	129	10.00%	"	"	"	"

Q7b). Are there any particular circumstances where you feel we should make a home available through a direct let?

Please refer to **Appendix 5 (p.21)** for details of comments made.

Number of responders making a comment	62	4.52%	As a % of total responses			
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8. Suspension and reduced preference.

Q8) Do you agree with the proposals to suspend and/or give reduced preference to applicants because of anti-social behaviour or being in debt with any of the following organisations?

A good majority of people are in agreement of our proposals to use 'reduced preference' in the lettings policy by way of dealing with arrears, anti-social behaviour etc.

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE D C						
Number of responses to this question	1198	87.38%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	875	73.04%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	101	8.43%	"	"	"	"
Don't Know	222	18.53%	"	"	"	"
OTHER LOCAL COUNCILS						
Number of responses to this question	1219	88.91%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	902	74.00%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	100	8.20%	"	"	"	"
Don't Know	217	17.80%	"	"	"	"
HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS						
Number of responses to this question	1223	89.20%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	907	74.16%	As a % of those answering the question.			

No	99	8.09%	"	"	"	"
Don't Know	217	17.74%	"	"	"	"
PRIVATE LANDLORDS						
Number of responses to this question	1291	94.16%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	902	69.87%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	139	10.77%	"	"	"	"
Don't Know	250	19.36%	"	"	"	"
OWNER OCCUPIERS						
Number of responses to this question	1292	94.24%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	907	70.20%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	133	10.29%	"	"	"	"
Don't Know	252	19.50%	"	"	"	"

Q9). Should we house customers who have enough income or savings to be able to afford alternative housing?

The majority agreed we should NOT house people who have sufficient income to resolve their own housing needs. However, a number of people thought we should. The impression gained from the responses suggested it was older age groups that thought we should.

Number of responses to this question	1256	91.91%	As a % of total responses			
Yes	353	28.11%	As a % of those answering the question.			
No	616	49.04%	"	"	"	"
No View	287	22.85%	"	"	"	"

Q10) Do you have any other comments on our proposals, our current lettings policy or any other aspect of the CBL scheme?

Please refer to **Appendix 6 (p.23)** for full details of comments.

Number of responses to this question	90	6.56%	As a % of total responses			
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Q11) Suggest a scheme name.

Please refer to **Appendix 7 (p.27)** for suggested names.

Number of responses to this question	380	27.72%	As a % of total responses			
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Q12). More about you...

Are you:

Number of responses to this question	1216	88.69%	As a % of total responses			
An SCDC tenant	165	13.57%	As a % of those answering the question.			
An applicant on SCDC's waiting list	1014	83.39%	"	"	"	"
Both of Above	28	2.30%	"	"	"	"
An elected member	3	0.25%	"	"	"	"
A housing provider	4	0.33%	"	"	"	"
A stakeholder (please state)	2	0.16%	"	"	"	"

Which of the following age groups do you fall into?

Number of responses to this question		1316	95.99%	As a % of total responses
16-20	54		4.10%	As a % of those answering the question.
21-30	351		26.67%	" " " "
31-40	324		24.62%	" " " "
41-50	186		14.13%	" " " "
51-60	156		11.85%	" " " "
61-70	116		8.81%	" " " "
71 or over	129		9.80%	" " " "

How would you describe your ethnicity?

White				
Number of responses to this question		1184	86.36%	As a % of total responses
British	1137		96.03%	As a % of those answering the question.
Irish	15		1.27%	"
Gypsy/Roma	6		0.51%	"
Traveller of Irish heritage	1		0.08%	"
White Other	25		2.11%	"
Mixed				
Number of responses to this question		15	1.09%	As a % of total responses
White and Black Caribbean	0		0.00%	As a % of those answering the question.
White and Black African	2		13.33%	"
White and Asian	5		33.33%	"
Mixed Other	8		53.33%	"
Asian or Asian British				
Number of responses to this question		6	1.54%	As a % of total responses
Indian	0		0.00%	As a % of those answering the question.
Pakistani	0		0.00%	"
Bangladeshi	1		16.67%	"
Asian Other	5		83.33%	"
Black or Black British				
Number of responses to this question		15	1.09%	As a % of total responses
Caribbean	5		33.33%	As a % of those answering the question.
African	10		66.67%	"
Black Other	0		0.00%	"
Chinese or other ethnic group				
Number of responses to this question		5	0.59%	As a % of total responses
Chinese	2		40.00%	As a % of those answering the question.
Other (Please Specify)	3		60.00%	"
Phillipino	3		100.00%	As a % of those stating 'Other'.

Would like to be part of a focus group?

Number of responses to this question		1133	82.64%	As a % of total responses
Yes	198		17.48%	As a % of those answering the question.
No	935		82.52%	" " " "

Number of responder's providing contact details	286	20.86% As a % of total responses
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APPENDIX 1

Response to Question 2 (Labelling)

Total Number of Respondents	214	
Total options chosen by those responding to question.	476	
Type of Labelling Information Required	Number of Requests	As a % of total options chosen.
Location	8	1.68%
Photograph	6	1.26%
Council Tax Band	32	6.72%
Rent	1	0.21%
Type of Heating	26	5.46%
Double Glazing	4	0.84%
Good decorative order	3	0.63%
Shops/P.O.'s	35	7.35%
Park	7	1.47%
Playgroups/Schools/Nursery	33	6.93%
Garden Y or N	40	8.40%
If Garden - Enclosed?	7	1.47%
Size of Garden	31	6.51%
Communal or Private garden	3	0.63%
Garage	14	2.94%
Parking or Driveway	52	10.92%
Transport	28	5.88%
Disabled Adaptations	2	0.42%
Disabled Access	5	1.05%
Sheltered Housing Charges	1	0.21%
Warden Controlled	1	0.21%
24 Hour Alarm System	1	0.21%
Disabled Accessibility of neighbourhood	2	0.42%
Pets Allowed	27	5.67%
GP's/Dentists	21	4.41%
Type of property	3	0.63%
Age of property	2	0.42%
Position of property - End/Middle Terrace	3	0.63%
Room Size	8	1.68%
Room Size by type eg Single, Double etc.	1	0.21%

Floor Plan	3	0.63%
Shower/wet room facilities fitted	4	0.84%
Incidents of ASB	4	0.84%
Area subject to Flooding	1	0.21%
Gas/Electricity installed	7	1.47%
Water meter	4	0.84%
Waiting Time On list for	1	0.21%
Date when ready to move in	3	0.63%
Other local/public facilities	12	2.52%
Nearby employment opportunities	1	0.21%
Type of tenancy	2	0.42%
Length of tenancy	2	0.42%
Smoking	2	0.42%
Bidding Period	1	0.21%
Availability To Buy	2	0.42%
Any restrictions relating to decorating house or work on gardens	2	0.42%
Crime rate	2	0.42%
Garden shed	1	0.21%
Catchment area for schools.	2	0.42%
State of repair to property	1	0.21%
Access front & rear to property	1	0.21%
Is property insulated.	2	0.42%
Responsibility for repairs and upkeep	1	0.21%
Size of the estate	1	0.21%
More information about the area and street.	2	0.42%
Equity Share Scheme	1	0.21%
Neighbourhood watch scheme	1	0.21%
Housing benefit eligibility& housing deposit scheme.	1	0.21%
Map link to display situation of property	1	0.21%
Use of Symbols	1	0.21%

APPENDIX 2

Response to Question 3a

I think the individual housing needs have been placed into the correct bands.

<u>Comment</u>
May help me with my medical condition.
Sleeping Rough - Medium Need!!!
A person could be adequately housed...roof over head etc but it could be an inappropriate roof.
The band 'adequate indicates no immediate need but these applicants should be considered if a property stands empty for any considerable time.
I can only see myself slipping down the list
No
How many years people have been waiting on the housing list
Living in the area for any length of time deserves more credit than currently given. At the end of the day any house I get will be looked after as I love this area.
Social needs in Band C should include education.
High medical need should be Band A, Medium medical need should be Band B, Low medical need should be Band C, No medical need Band D,
Length of time on current list should be taken into account.
I think younger people should be considered more.
As my brother is dyslexic he doesn't understand this.
Length of time on current list should be taken into account.
I think the old system was fine
Unless you are homeless with a need to be placed in band A the chances of being housed are virtually nil.
That there are exceptions to every rule and that individuality is sdo important for the minority.
I would have a band for first time couples who require housing
If someone is already house but would like to live in the village in which they were born and have a family and work...they should have the same chance of a house.
Couple with step children should be taken into consideration
Need to look at the whole property and not just the number of bedrooms.
No band for someone providing support. I look after a close friend in Cambridge for the past 6 years and he is now bedridden. It takes me 2.5 hours to get to him using public transport...what band would that put me in.
The amount of rent paid out and household income coming in should be taken into account.
What happens to the points already accrued...Do I have to start from scratch?
A family in a smaller house needing further 1 or 2 bedrooms should be given a higher priority especially if they are severely over-crowded.
People who have children should get a higher priority.
The banding system seems very fair to me.

Children staying with a separated parent so many nights per week.
The term 'adequately housed' is misleading. Those who are forced to private rent are not adequately housed.
Lacking 2 beds in current accommodation in Band B, should be in Band A with stat. o/crowding.
I think this is a more accurate system of distinguishing between those with a higher need.
The bands do seem fair
Should be done by circumstances not bands.
I cannot see how people other than Band A are going to have a chance.
I'm concerned that people in Assured S/hold properties may never get the opportunity to find permanent accomm. If they are placed in Band D.
Have not taken into account an extra bedroom that may be required for a carer to stay.
A strong structure put in place to update banding information when circumstances change, Doctors, Social Services, O.T.s and other information to be recorded and banding changed accordingly.
People in private rented accommodation who can't afford the rent will be in Band D, even though they have been on the list for years. It's a load of crap. I have been on the points system for 5 years and still haven't got anywhere.
I am adequately housed but I am on my own surrounded by all young families with children and it doesn't work.
Would it still be a good idea to include local connections as well?
I think that individuals earnings as low income should be ranked in a higher band.
More properties should be available for low income earners
is there a system whereby applicants move up a band over time otherwise higher priority tenants will always pip them at the post.
you must take all circumstances into consideration.
different criteria in different bands seems confusing to us...the points system seemed more flexible.
In Band C you have secure accommodation...sleeping rough etc. I feel this should be given a higher priority above harassment, medical need and threatened homelessness.
Employment/Closer to friends or family/mental/Social well being should be added to Band D
Why is sleeping rough only in Band C?
I rent privately and will be classed as adequately housed but am currently living with no heating and cannot afford electricity
More priority should be given to older people who wish to move closer to relatives, especially if health is failing.
Band B should include people who are in temporary accommodation.
Bands are too broad.
Sleeping Rough should be given a higher priority.
Insecure or sleeping rough should surely be a priority.
I think the housing needs bands are too broadly based.
I don't think any child of 11 and above should have to share with a child of 9 years even if they are of the same sex.
This system discriminates against single people.
I think a band system should also include number of points allocated.
I think overcrowding needs to be assessed as a higher priority.
Need flexibility for individual needs
I believe people in need of affordable housing will be categorized in band D, and will never be offered decent accommodation, Needs to be a fairer method of assessment of needs than just ticks in boxes on a form!
I think the waiting list should be taken into consideration.
People who have been on the list a long time may be kept putting back due to other people coming on earlier.
There should be more input for needs in band D
All depends on circumstances of individuals ie going through separation, divorce etc.
Band C-Medium need to include need for family support for those over 65.

People may become homeless just to get housed, just the same as people become pregnant to get housed.
What about transfers?
Single parents have a greater need for stability; private lets do not provide adequate stability.
How do you determine who is in desperate need and who isn't??
Just because someone is adequately housed, does not mean that they can afford it.
See attached letter
The needs of families on low incomes should be considered.
There is no group to cover owner-occupiers over 60's, which have a need to downsize & readjust their living income. That is discrimination. (Equal opportunities pg 1 Letting policy)
If people are homeless not due to their fault why do they have to put down 25 different areas?
Point system seemed clearer and easier to understand...more logical too.
Band C-Sleeping rough could be a result of high medical need (Band B) or urgent health and safety risk, mentally challenged (Band A)
4 bands are too general and wide
I think there should be a band for time spent on waiting list.
A better description of requirements for bands
May be difficult for travellers to show local connection if they have been continually moved around.

APPENDIX 2

Response to Question 3b

Comment

Not enough bands - too many people will be in the top band
Not sure band names identify those with special needs well enough.
Band D could be titled "Adequately Housed/Future Need"
If you have a child who goes to school or college in Cambridge the 'Yes' but not if you don't have employment.
No
I think you have put a lot of thought into this scheme and I think it's a really good idea.
Would like to have seen a couple of more bands
They seem alright.
A strong structure put in place to update banding information when circumstances change, Doctors, Social Services, O.T.s and other information to be recorded and banding changed accordingly.
The names don't matter as long as the vulnerable and those with medical needs receive them.
Seems to make sense
Band C - medium need changed to average need.
Appropriate...nice and simple!
Band D - 'Low Prospect'
Band D. is almost saying " we don't think you need our help "
Bands should have written examples of how they are justified ie) Band A, homeless with family. Band B, Living in cramped house with friends etc.
Because unlike moving up a ladder and eventually getting housed you will stay in the same band & therefore if on a low band it will ALWAYS be impossible to get housed!
See attached letter.
Band E for equity shared ownership schemes for those on low income but with capital tied up in their sole dwelling 60+(Financial resources page 4 Letting policy)
We only have temp acc for 3 years then we will be made homeless.
Band D could be changed to low need.

Treat each family individually
Bands appear rigid, a homeless person may have severe health problems
Previously another housing agency in West Midlands used Bronze Silver & Gold instead of bands
No they are confusing. Each band should list the exact needs required to be placed in that band!

APPENDIX 3

Do you think this is a fair way to decide who to offer the home to?

If you do not think this is fair, please tell us why:

I don't think 2 people can have identical needs so it should be possible to choose the person with the most need.
You could be wasting time and money applying again and again for properties you never get. The frustration and disappointment at being turned down would be awful.
No account taken of extenuating circumstances. I am a 'reclusive' and avoid social contact and use only my cycle or walk. Thus my 'choices' are restricted and have been ever since my present home was allocated.
That there are exceptions to every rule and that individuality is so important for the minority.
Should be based on customer's needs and not how long they have waited - that should be irrelevant.
Because people like us will be in Band D and never get a chance.
Properties will always go to those people in Band A or B. What about those people in Band C or D?
Family's that have a child AND a baby should be allowed separate rooms so that the child can sleep without disturbance.
The points system offers a more precise way of identifying the differing levels of housing need. Under the broad banding structure this is not possible.
Both situations need to be assessed to see whose need is greater.
I am expecting twins and would hope I would be considered over a woman expecting a single child.
Children of different sex need separate bedrooms from a lower age than 6.
also consideration must be given to the urgency of a property requirement and changes in an individuals circumstances.
if you live outside the area how will you know what is available if not contacted.
Should go to the person who needs it the most.
I think each person's individual personal circumstances should be looked at and that it should not automatically go on who has been on the list the longest.
Circumstances change all the time.
Does this mean I have to start again on the waiting list?
I think local connection should remain important in that it keeps families together.
Medical care should be taken into account.
This is too much responsibility on people to look or bid for properties themselves.
I still think it needs a further interview to assess needs.
It should be given to the person with the greater need.
Should be how long you were waiting on list or if harassed so that your health becomes an issue.
The person who is in more urgent need of the house at the time should get it, ie) pregnancy, disability etc.
I think you should view the customer's current property before an offer is made.

Individual situations should be taken into account.
People who have lived in the village all their lives should take priority.
See attached letter.
Prioritise risk
A home visit should be made before a decision can be made.
Other facts may be more relevant such as type of accommodation, location etc,
Should be on individual circumstance, one band covers a lot of possibilities.
If you are in the bottom band you are never going to get an offer, as people will always be joining the list and probably go in above you.
The urgent and high need will always come first
Longest needn't be most urgent

APPENDIX 4

Q6b) Do you think the remaining 90% of homes should be labelled so that applicants must have a local connection to the district (except where there is a legal agreement asking for a more specific connection, for example to a particular village)?

Comment
People needing to move areas will again be applying in vain for properties which will be given to those living in the area, who may have been on the list for half the time...not fair at all.
For people living in small villages or places where there are few houses it would mean little chance of getting a home.
Gives people less say in where they are housed. A person may want to move to an area in order to be able to obtain work but do not have a local connection to that area. Also, a person may wish to move to be a part of their ethnic community.
Provision must be made for elderly applicants who live outside the region and need to be housed near to their children (who do live in the area) for support.
Some people who wish to move to a particular area may not always have a local connection!
Local connection should be a choice not a requirement.
People might live within a 5 or 10-mile radius but have no local connection. I do not think that this is a fair judgement.
I think people should be able to decide if they would like to move to a village with no connections.
I think this is a very high %, I think it should be 50/50
A lower % would surely free up home availability to people in urgent need of housing
90% is too high, 65% is fairer giving people an opportunity to start again in a new environment.
Homes should be available to those in greatest need and not just based on a local connection.
Not everyone has a connection, yet a high need to be housed.
it should be 50% as 90% is too high
Too restrictive.
Not everyone housed has a local connection.
I believe that this should be considered when offering but NOT essential.
It shouldn't matter if you have local connections, if you were buying it wouldn't matter
Because one needs to be housed first then get a job. Also it is a nice mix of people.
Just because people don't have a local connection have a right just as much as anyone else to be considered for housing especially if they qualify.
People need to live where potential jobs are, we are a mobile society, It makes NO sense for someone to have a greater chance of being housed in an area with a local connection taking preferences over other areas.
It may be preferable to split up family members who "gang up " on others. Or who are different in looks/ways!
People should be free to make a choice of where they want to live.
The % should be 60-40.I am concerned that if no local ties exist, that more properties would remain empty.

I think that not having a local connection should hinder your chances of getting a home in an area of your choice.
You should be able to live anywhere
People should have the freedom to move to any area they choose.
See attached letter.
Might have moved or a need to move due to work commitments (or similar) but do not have any other connection
Why should I not be able to live where we would like
It should go on 100% local connection & who has been waiting the longest
I think people should be able to live where they want to live.
Stops people moving to different areas & reduces the chance of being housed.
Why should it be just for local people
I don't think the local connection specifications are fair.
Too few properties in each village/project to limit people
Some people have no family links with a village but their children go to school there, parents work locally but it doesn't count!
Every applicant should be given a fair choice regardless of local connection.

APPENDIX 5

Q7b) Are there any particular circumstance where you feel we should make a home available through a direct let?

Comments
For vulnerable people unable to make real housing choice and where additional services are provided e.g. housing support, care
Medical reasons
For applicants not living in an existing bricks & mortar property and suffering from bad health.
Parent with child(ren) homeless due to domestic violence or abandonment
The present garden is much to big for me to control
To enable children to be close to an extended family member if their parents split.
Near Place Of Work
If applicant has special needs.
H & S issues eg damage to a person's property.
Medical Reasons/Family Connections
Housing Needs in an Emergency
If a customer needs an immediate property.
Abuse in the Home
Where a tenant is under occupying a home and where an applicant needs to move closer to a place of work to make travel easier.
For someone providing support that needs to be nearer.
To Key workers only
When children are homeless
Urgent/Emergency situations
Yes if home has been condemned
When there is a dire need but no other available means of housing.
For the Elderly
Urgent health reasons
Health circumstances
Health circumstances
Should not be used for under occupation...only for urgent and protection purposes.
Adapted/sheltered properties only
If an existing tenant is living in a non-standard council dwelling that is seen as non-viable to repair/upgrade.
If someone known to have a secure tenancy becomes homeless.
Overcrowding
Under medical grounds
When circumstances dictate urgent need
Overcrowding and health and safety

When children are living in poor cramped conditions.
I would hope that people suffering from extreme levels of domestic violence might be considered for a Direct Let.
Disabled adapted properties and high medical needs.
Disability & overcrowding
Domestic violence & unplanned pregnancy
Homelessness, overcrowding-extreme, safety-extreme
Medical / Disability
Where children are involved.
If applicants have a good income
Where someone has to travel great distances to work, it would be better for them to live closer to where they work, or if they are disabled.
When the system fails/too long waiting times, If for historical reasons it is perceived that a new tenant & wife may not fit into any other available district to which they have been connected.
If someone's safety is at risk
When people have been in supported housing for longer than they need to be. Also see attached letter.
Parents living apart, no provision for this.
Homelessness and threat of violence
Disability
Family and Work
Disability or illness
Housing as a person with disabilities or special needs.
Under use of property, move to area having accepted offer of employment.
Witness protection and under occupancy. Also if you move people because of drug dealing etc. potentially the problem will follow them
If a family is in danger or under threat.
If someone is in danger
If there is a risk to someone's safety.
If a persons safety is at risk
Abused women looking to escape violent partners.
Homeless families
Due to severe disability
Domestic violence.
Where people will find it hard to access the CBL system due to disadvantage - making them less likely to succeed in getting a property

APPENDIX 6

Q10) Do you have any other comments on our proposals, our current lettings policy or any other aspect of the CBL scheme?

Comments

Re Q9: Would depend on your view of able to afford eg £140k wouldn't get a 2 bed property in S. Cambs. If I had a £100k and could get a £40k mortgage maybe following divorce, I wouldn't want to waste that equity if I had spent years saving and had no pension. Part buy schemes wouldn't help either.

Question 6b is a leading question - as I disagree with the 10%, I can hardly comment on the "other 90%". I believe that if CBL goes ahead sub-regionally, all general needs properties should be accessible to all residents within the sub-region, except where there is a parish-based local connection attached. Equally, Q8 is ambiguous - it does not offer the option of agreeing with suspension/reduced preference because of anti-social behaviour (which should apply to all) and debt (which should not)

Keen to know where CBL will advertise the properties...website would be ideal. Email alerts to suitable people for certain properties?

Not enough bands - too many people will be in the top band

Preference should be given to people who have paid rent on time.

I just need to get housed!!! my ex-husband will get somewhere before us - I've got the kids!

Will you take account of time waiting on current system? People wishing to relocate for special reasons eg fresh start, social problems should not be disadvantaged. Flexible approach reqd in special circumstances. Clarifying real need for housing is excellent.

Is this in reference to self-employment and temporary positions such as work in government where alternative accommodation is limited?

Thought I was getting near the top of the list after such a long time and now you are changing the system.

With the present system things like length of application, more than one connection to a certain village and the ages of different sex children or children sharing a bedroom, get overlooked.

The scheme seems good. To balance it out in South Cambs is difficult because property and rent levels are so high. If this scheme can produce an opportunity to find a home for us and others like us then I think it will be worthwhile.

Re Q9: I do not think people who own a property should be offered housing.

It needs to be made clear if your date of waiting is from the start of the new scheme or from your initial application.

More choice and availability of affordable homes to local people and first time buyers as I always see plenty of retirement properties advertised.

Will time in waiting be taken into account when I am moved across to the new scheme?

Re Q9 where I answered 'Yes', Particularly with a need for sheltered housing. I think Equity Share is the right thing.

Will time in waiting be taken into account when I am moved across to the new scheme?

Would like to see an increase in housing surgeries to make the scheme more easily accessible.

I do not visit council offices or read the local press. How do I get to know of vacancies?

Sounds like a good idea if it gets people housed more quickly

Have you taken tied accommodation into account within the banding?

Equity Share Schemes Are not mentioned.

Current waiting time on register should be taken into account when transferring to new scheme.

Local people with local connections should be given priority first and not people immigrants or people who purposely get themselves pregnant to get socially housed.

I would have said it was unfair to offer housing for a person who is a homeowner or able to find alternative housing. However, since I find I may have a need to be housed under those circumstances I have had a change of heart. If someone has a long history of having a local connection there shouldn't be a restriction on them that is too great. I feel in the future it may be necessary to sell my home simply to afford 'general' living expenses. This is purely in case I cannot work full time (I am 53) in the future and this would act as my safety net.

My main concern is that I should be able to make fast contact to raise my banding/priority if I should find my health problems have deteriorated.

With rent arrears every case should be looked at on an individual basis.

Some tenants may have got into debt due to delays in receiving benefits and I don't believe they should be penalised in this way.

Would be helpful to be informed asap when properties become available.

Agree with suspension and reduced preference for ASB but not for debt

I am concerned that I may lose all the waiting time I have accrued

We feel this system will be unfair to us and that we could be placed in a low band. We were told 2 years ago we were 12th on the list. We also have lots of local connections.

On financial restrictions, shared ownerships are too expensive when you calculate the mortgage and the rent. More help should be given to people who have lived in the area all their life. Also need more feedback on position in the waiting lists.

Re Q8: I don't think people should be penalised because they have got into debt and cannot pay their rent. Everyone deserves a second chance. Re ASB, then I agree that these people should be penalised and given reduced preference. Re Q9: I think affordable housing should be made available for all.

It sounds like a sale rail or jumble....the best ones (more knowledgeable) will get in front and the needy ones left behind because they don't understand. However, it does sound like a brilliant idea.

Scheme seems to offer a clearer view of the housing situation. However care needs to be taken to ensure people do not miss out because the onus is now placed on the customer.

As with the current scheme, this one makes no sense unless there are enough homes. Need more homes in all areas.

What's wrong with the old letting system?

Financial assessments should be based on disposable income not Net income especially given UK debt levels.

The points system is due for an overhaul.

People should not be given reduced preference because of debt...most people have debt today. ASB is different though. Definitely reduced preference for this group of people.

1) Should be a road show for people to become acquainted with the new scheme. 2) HO's should identify potentially vulnerable people who may need assistance. 3) Accumulated debt should not be used for excluding people from the scheme. 4) Non-tenants of the Council/RSL's should be given some sort of extra consideration.

Vet people before moving them to a neighbourhood, try to blend people together - class if need be.

1) How do I know when and if I can bid? 2) Can everyone on the housing list bid (Bands A-D)? 3) When will it come into action and how will I know?

Re assessing overcrowding I am not sure I agree with 2 children under 10 being allowed to share the same bedroom.

Having been on the housing list for over two years. I think the new scheme can only improve things.

To closely monitor vulnerable groups as to accessibility of service, and closely monitor changes of circumstances of applicants.

Don't penalise people for outstanding debt. Help them by offering a home where rents are cheaper. They can then pay off their debt, save up and move on.

Because I am renting privately I will be stuck in the lowest band and not given the opportunity to get a property. Because I am in a property large enough for me I will be pushed to the bottom of the pile even though I am struggling financially.

An excellent scheme!

Forms and processes need to be in plain English please.

Full investigations should be made into applicants housing needs to ensure they are eligible for a property.

You must ensure that changes to circumstances are dealt with quickly ensuring that people are aware if there has been a change to their level of banding.

All printed information should be easily understood, plain and simple so that elderly customers can clearly take on board what is being asked and explained.

All seems pretty fair to me!

I think you are doing a great job with housing people.

Homefinder

No opportunities to access shared equity if you live outside of the district

Care should be taken to ensure that those who have difficulty accessing the scheme are offered support.

I think the present policy works well.

I agree with your direct lets policy. I would also like to see more robust checks made on peoples circumstance so that people offered a home are actually getting the home because their circumstances are correct!

Will time in waiting be taken into account when I am moved across to the new scheme?

Ref Q9, Income and savings are not the only reason people may need help with housing. Re-assess overcrowding.

It appears all applicants in Band A take priority. Is there a common list covering all four bands. Is it possible to learn what ones priority is and what ones status is?

If a person has limited savings they will soon be absorbed by paying the rent of a private property.

It's unfair to penalise people who have savings, for retirement, or emergencies.

We are not sure if we understand this book!

If you can afford to rent privately, priority should go to those who can't, NOT those who have been waiting the longest.

I am concerned that anyone over the age of 70 & living on their own might find all of this new information very daunting. I think it would be a great improvement but would like to think there will be some way of helping all vulnerable people.

Remember the single young adults needing a first home. These always seem to be "low priority " because they live with parents

Instead of leaving houses empty for a long time when there are people waiting to be rehoused. It doesn't matter what scheme is used, people will still be waiting for a long time.

People need to live where they work, this helps to reduce traffic/motoring costs etc, & is more environmentally friendly.

It is unclear whether supporting correspondence from parents/relatives etc will be encouraged & taken seriously when assessing needs. Will all of the time previously spent , waiting , before CLB be disregarded, surely this is important and offers should reflect this ! We hope that the new system works better than the old, leaving many with a sense of despair & abandonment, at worse.....and that it does not turn out to be a lottery !!!!

I do not have access to a computer, local papers (I live in Cumbria) and am now going to be making long distance telephone calls (if you include this service) costly, time consuming and more complicated than waiting for an offer of housing.

Officers from the housing team should come to the persons house , personnel contact is very important.

I love CBL, as there will be no time wasted being offered unsuitable properties. I hope there will be lots of ad's and pic's on the internet.

I do not feel qualified to comment on the proposed new arrangements, as I've never had contact with the council about housing or been a council tenant. My application is purely for sheltered housing now I'm nearly 84yrs of age. It seems to me that the "points" system was fair and the main issue is that all applicants are dealt with fairly according to their circumstances.

Although some applicants may appear to be earning sufficient for alternative housing, I feel that their outgoings ie) child support should be taken into account, as they may earn too much to qualify for housing benefit, but once child support is deducted they struggle to rent privately.

9 Financial restrictions, How can you decide whether a customer has enough income or savings to afford alternative accommodation? Or even whether they would want to go down that path in life which could involve moving away from friends & family and the structure of security that it affords. How would it sit with your "Equal Opportunities" policy?

More in depth questions need asking re income, as income may not mean able to afford alternative housing. If a person has savings they should not have priority for housing. Local connection is important to allow families to remain near to each other, also if direct families have rented with SCDC for several years.

Larger houses are needed for larger families.

Any new project should be advertised ONLY within S Cambs-not by any other council.

I can find no mention of exchange schemes

Will welfare reports be carried out & how easy is it to transfer between bands.

It would be helpful if the forms could be simplified.

It should not become a "short cut " for anybody waiting for housing without urgent need. An update/review should still be done regularly.

This consultation document is incredibly complex; The writing is very small and cross-referencing very hard work. I understand the need to consult but I hope this is not the only form of consultation you are undertaking on this as you would not be fulfilling your equal opportunities criteria.

Re Q8. anti-social behaviour and debt. These issues can occur through no fault of the person. ie neighbours can misunderstand Travellers who are placed in unsuitable homes for their families/ pets and create a situation that prompts bad behaviour on both sides. Also debt can build up without the person's knowledge or fault due to housing benefit errors or when fleeing domestic violence and one partner is left behind who doesn't pay the rent.

APPENDIX 7

Scheme Names

Name
homelet
Right Connections
"Home Shop"
1st Steps Housing
A Step Up
Affordable Housing
Ahome2suitU
At home with us
B happy Homes
b with us
Banding Together
Best Choice Homes
Better Home
BidAHome
Budget Housing
Building Our Future
Busyhomes
Cam House U
Cambandhome
Camblet
cambridge housing partnership
Cambridge Housing Provider
Cambridge Lights
Cambridgeshire Homefinder
Cambridgeshire Homes For You
Cambridgeshire Mutual Housing Exchange
Cambs Happy Homes For All
Cambs Homechoice
Cambs Homes
Cambs Housing 4U
CambsHome Searcher
Cambuylet Housing Association
Camchoice
CamHomes
Camhomes-Plus
CAMHOUSE4U
Cams Choose To Let
CBL Is Your Friend
central homes
Choice Homes
Choice Homes 4 U
Choice Homes In Cambridgeshire
Choice Housing

Choice Let
Choices
Choose & Move
Choose a Home
Close To Homes
Closer To Home !
Community Housing Trust
Correct Housing Scheme
Cosy Homes
Council Homes
Create New Communities
Direct Homes
eastern region lettings
Easy Housing
Easy Let
Easy Way 2 Home
Efficient Homes
Equal Choice
Fair & Simple Housing
Fair Homes
Fair Homes or Home From Home
Fair-Let-Housing
FairLett
Far-Away Places
Find A Home
Find A Home 4 Us
Find A Home -Help
Find Me A Home
Findahome
Findaplace/Startalife/My Place/Ah...at Last
Finding Homes For You!
First (Or 1st) Start
First For Homes
Fobber Off!
fresh start homes
Fulfilling Dreams
Future Homes
Give Me A House Please
GR8 HOMES 4 U
Grant-A-Home
H.E.L.P Housing Environment Lettings Policy.
halfway letting
Happiness @ Home
Happy Homes
Happy Housing
help with homes
Help4Us
Helpful Housing
Helping houses become homes
Helpinguhome
HOME - RIGHT
Home 4 Life
Home 4 Me

Home 4 U
Home At Hand
Home at Last
Home Choice
home choice/ select housing
Home Comfort
home convenient
home finder
Home For All
Home for life
Home From Home
Home Guardians
Home Happy.Happy Homemaker.Happy Homes.
Home Help For You
Home Helper
Home in Cam
Home Lander
Home Let
home link
Home Maker
Home Match
Home Options
Home Search
Home search 4 all
Home Select
home selector
Home Shop
Home Solutions
home start
Home Support Service
Home Sweet Home
Home To Home
Home Watch
Homechoice
Homefinder
HomeHelping
Homelink
Homes "R" Us
Homes 4 All
Homes 4 U
Homes 4 Us
Homes are Us
Homes Around
Homes Choice
Homes Connection
Homes Direct
Homes For All
homes for u
Homes From Homes
Homes not Houses
Homes R Us
Homes R Us. Places 2 Live.Houses R Us.
Homes To Fit People
Homes2choose

Homes4All
Homes4Choice
Homes4U
Homesearch
Homesearchers.
Homeseeeker
Homeselecta
Homesone
HomesRUs
Homestart
Homesuits
Homesure
Homeward Bound
Homeward Found
Hope4AHome
Hopeful Homes In Cambridgeshire
House & Home
House 2 Home
House 4 Home - Home is where the heart is
house and home
House Hunters
House Lettings
House of Hearts
House Proud NOT House Crowd
House Remedy.Home Safe.Home Solutionz.Space Place
House Shop
House to Home
Houses R Us
Housing for you
Housing needs for u
ideal homes
In your home
Journey's End
JustRightHomes
Labelled 4 Living
Let 4 U.or Let us Let 4 U. or 4 Let by You.
Let it Be
Let Us Home
Let4U
Let-Buy Us
Lets "B" Good
lets be homed
Let's House You!!
Lets Move
letting live
letting u home
Lifes Abode
Live Living
Local Homes
Make a House a Home
Moving On
Moving On Up
Need A Home

New Future
New Homes
New Start
Next Move?
No Place Like Home
On The Ball Lettings
Open County Housing
options @ cbl home request
our house your home
PAD'S
Park Lane
Perfect Places
Pick A Place
Pick Your Home
Pick'n'Mix
Pik- A- Pad
Real Home Improvements
Rehouse Choice
rent a home
Revelation For Housing
Right Abode or Safe Abode
Right Choice Homes
Rightmove
Roof Finder
Safehaven
Searchin' Homes
secure homes
Secured Homes
Seek 4 Homes (Motto Seek & U Shall Find)
Select A Home
Settle Down
South Cambs Lettings Scheme
South Homes
Step Up
Syghcenter (sygh as in sigh of relief)
The Peoples Choice
The Peoples Society
the right bid for you
The right home for you !
There's no place like home
Time2Live or Living The Let
U Choose
UreHomes
U-Select
Wayhome
WE R HERE 2 HELP U
Welcome Home
We're on the move
You Choose
Your Choice
Your Choice - Your Home
Your Choice Homes
Your Choice Let
Your Home

APPENDIX 8**Consultation Plan**

<u>Consultation With</u>	<u>Type of Consultation</u>	<u>Responsibility For Task</u>	<u>Consultation Timetable</u>	<u>Status</u>
Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)	RSL Forum – launch of consultation. Team meetings/ board meetings if needed Use RSL newsletters/ focus groups to consult with their own applicants/ tenants	*SRPM SCDC Shared	February 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007	Completed Completed Completed
Tenants	South Cambs Magazine Leaflets in communal areas: sheltered schemes, housing offices libraries etc. Tenants forums	SCDC SCDC SCDC	August 2006 – April 2007 November 2006 – April 2007 December 2006 – April 2007	Completed Completed Completed
Supported Housing Providers	Invite to Consultation forums Focus group with SP clients Use direct access hostels etc for information to SP clients Local consultation events Homeless Focus Group	Shared SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC	February 2007 February 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007	Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed
SCDC Members	CBL Members Advisory Group formed CBL Information leaflet sent to all SCDC Members Members Advisory Group x 3 meetings (November 2006/ January or February 2007 and early April 2007 following the end of consultation. Report to Cabinet December Consultation documents to all Members	SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC	October 2006 October 2006 November 2006 – April 2007 December 2006 February 2007	Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed

<u>Consultation With</u>	<u>Type of Consultation</u>	<u>Completed Locally</u>	<u>Consultation Timetable</u>	<u>Status</u>
Staff	In-Site – SCDC Internal website Staff Briefing Sessions Team Meetings Opportunity to comment and ask question	SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC	October 2006 – Ongoing November 2006 – Ongoing November 2006 – Ongoing October 2006 – Ongoing	Completed Completed Completed Completed
Applicants	Write to applicants (will include a questionnaire) Focus Groups	SCDC SCDC	January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007	Completed Completed
Residents	Focus Groups Information in Council offices, libraries etc Travellers Community South Cambs Magazine Promote in website Parish Councils Newspaper- press release. Radio	SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC SCDC *SRPM *SRPM	January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 August 2006 – April 2007 October 2006 – April 2007 January 2007 – April 2007 February 2007 – April 2007 February 2007 – April 2007	Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed Completed
Voluntary Agencies	Sub-regional Voluntary Group Forum Local groups South Cambs Voluntary Agency	All Partners SCDC SCDC	To be held February 2007 January 2007 - April 2007 January 2007 - April 2007	Completed Completed Completed

*TBA = To Be Announced

*SRPM = Sub-regional Project Manager

Last updated 11.06.2007

APPENDIX 9**Consultation Contacts**

Organisation	Email	 Post	Date Sent	Reminder Sent
Registered Social Landlords				
Orbit Housing Association	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Kelsey Housing Association	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Hanover Housing Association	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Hereward Housing Association	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Hundred Houses Society Limited	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
The Papworth Trust	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Circle Anglia	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
BPHA	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Housing Society Limited	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Granta Housing Society Ltd	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Suffolk Housing Society Ltd	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Guinness Trust	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Raglan Housing Association Limited	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Nene Housing Society Ltd	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
King Street Housing Society	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
South Cambridgeshire DC				
Members	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Parish Councils	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Finance & Resources	X		08/02/2007	
Planning	X		08/02/2007	
Housing Services	X		08/02/2007	
Sheltered Housing	X		08/02/2007	
Chief Executives	X		08/02/2007	
Community Services	X		08/02/2007	
Environmental Health	X		08/02/2007	
Housing Strategy	X		08/02/2007	
Cambs County Council				
Children & Families	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Learning Disability Partnership	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Supporting People	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Young Persons Disability Team	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Domestic Violence	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
16+ Team	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Adult Protection	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Director of Children & Young Peoples Services	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Director of Adult Support Services	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Education	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Other Voluntary Groups, Agencies etc				
Womens Aid	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
2Care	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Ormiston Trust	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Emmaus Cambridge	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
John Huntingdons Charity	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Probation Service/MAPPP	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Connexions	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge & District Mediation Service	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
YMCA	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Centre 33	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007

CMHT	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Organisation	Email	Post	Date Sent	Reminder Sent
Occupational Therapists	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Shelter	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
CAB	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
CIAC	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridgeshire ACRE	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Suffolk ACRE	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Ethnic Community Forum	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Care Network	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Young Lives	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Directions Plus	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Age Concern	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Salvation Army (Norwich)	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge PCT	X		08/02/2007	24/04/2007
Housing Corporation		X	08/02/2007	
Government East of England	X		01/02/2007	24/04/2007
Police		X	08/02/2007	
RNIB	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
RNID (South East & Anglia	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
CINTRA	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Cyrenians	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Access Surgery		X	08/02/2007	24/04/2007
Turning Point	X		05/02/2007	
Minority Ethnic Network East of England	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
EERA (Housing Team Leader)	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Refugee Support Group	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge CVS	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Camtad (Campaign for Tackling Acquired Deafness)	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Open Out Scheme	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Black Womens Support Group		X	08/02/2007	Returned 21/02/07 - Moved Way
Cambridge Womens Resource Centre	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
Jimmy's Night Shelter	X		05/02/2007	24/04/2007
SexYOUality	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Older Peoples Enterprise	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
East Of England Faiths Agency	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
East Of England Faiths Council	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Drinksense	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Wintercomfort	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
DAAT	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Dhiverse	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Communities & Local Government	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Home Office	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Refugee Council		X	08/02/2007	
Cambridge Deaf Association	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Camsight	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Indian Culture & Community Association	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Lesbian Line	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007

Sister Act	X		07/02/2007	24/04/2007
Organisation	Email	Post	Date Sent	Reminder Sent
Cambridge Inter-Faith Group	X		08/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge & Ely Victim		X	08/02/2007	
Cambridge Samaritans		X	08/02/2007	
Cambridge Talking News		X	08/02/2007	
Camread		X	08/02/2007	
Sean Risdale CRE Policy & Programmes Advisor Commission for Racial Equality c/o Go-East Eastbrook Shaftesbury Road Cambridge CB2 2DF	X		09/02/2007	24/04/2007
Welcome Home From Hospital	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007
STRADA Cambridgeshire	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge Volunteer Centre	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007
OWL Café	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007
West Anglia Crossroads	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007
Cambridge CC Disability Team	X		21/02/2007	24/04/2007

APPENDIX 10

South Cambridgeshire DC Consultation Events

- 6 February 2007** **CBL Consultation Presentation at Arrington Sheltered Complex, Royston**
Attended by both residents of the complex and other tenants and residents in the area.
- 7 February 2007** **CBL Consultation Presentation at Acacia Court Sheltered Complex, Shelford**
Attended by both residents of the complex and other tenants and residents in the area.
- 20 February 2007** **CBL Consultation Presentation at Chalklands Sheltered Complex, Linton**
Attended by both residents of the complex and other tenants and residents in the area.
- 23 February 2007** **Cambridge Sub-regional CBL Scheme Registered Social Landlords Forum at Huntingdon**
All RSL's across the sub-region were invited to this event as part of the consultation process. This is one of a number of meetings being held and others are planned in the future.
- 27 February 2007** **Cambridge Sub-regional CBL Scheme Voluntary Groups and Support Agencies Forum at Huntingdon**
A large number of groups across the sub-region were invited to this event as part of the consultation process. Other consultation events and focus groups are planned on a local basis also.
- 8 March 2007** **CBL Consultation Discussion With The Cambridge Housing and Occupational Therapists Liaison Meeting held at Doddington, March.**
Attended by both housing and health professionals from across the sub-region. Previous CBL meetings have been held with this group.
- 19 March 2007** **CBL Consultation Focus Group With Tenants Participation Group held at Franklin Gardens, Cottenham.**
Attended by representatives of Tenant Groups from across the district. A previous CBL meeting had been held with this group.
- 29 March 2007** **CBL Consultation Focus Group With The Cambridgeshire Inter-agency Forum, held at South Cambs. DC Offices, Cambourne.**
Attended by hostel managers and support staff from RSLs across the district. Previous CBL meetings had been held with this group.
- 11 April 2007** **CBL Consultation Focus Group held at South Cambs. DC Offices, Cambourne.**
Attended by a cross section of home-seekers who responded to the consultation questionnaire.

18 April 2007

CBL Disability Consultation Focus Group held at South Cambs. DC Offices, Cambourne.

Organised by South Cambs DC in co-operation with Huntingdon DC and Cambridge C C on behalf of the Cambridgeshire sub-region. Attended by a cross section of service users, housing providers and support groups.

18 April 2007

CBL Consultation Focus Group held at South Cambs. DC Offices, Cambourne.

Attended by a cross section of home-seekers who responded to the consultation questionnaire.

25 April 2007

CBL Consultation Focus Group held at South Cambs. DC Offices, Cambourne.

Attended by a cross section of young people and homeless home-seekers that responded to the consultation questionnaire.

APPENDIX 11

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The Guinness Trust

- The trust fully supports CBL
- Pleased that regional mobility will be addressed.
- Raised issues about internal CBL processes that have yet to be resolved.

Other RSL's/Stakeholders

Please refer to **Appendix 12**

Shelter

- Should be an initial interview with applicant to cover an effective assessment of need, an explanation of how the system works and advice on alternative housing options. This would also help to support vulnerable customers. Continuing contact with applicants should also be encouraged.
- Clarification required as to whether or not multiple needs and housing needs will apply to all in the household and not just the applicant (Chapter 4).
- 3 month 'emergency' status is inadequate (Chapter 5). Should be at least 6 months to ensure time for suitable range of properties to become available.
- Unclear how labelling will work (Chapter 8) and to be made clear labelling will not be used to undermine the assessment of housing need.
- There is a lack of detail in the local lettings policy section (Chapter 9).

Ormiston Trust

- Agreed with the options on how clients would find out about available homes. Also made a suggestion that a trusted third party could act as an advocate for a client to allow accessibility to the scheme.
- Would prefer to see a 'weekly' advertising cycle.
- The scheme should promote the continued development of equal access to the scheme for **all** customers.
- Agree with the main principles of CBL but not at the cost of the exclusion of vulnerable or potentially vulnerable people.
- Would like to see the use of symbols for those who have difficulty reading.
- Include as much information as possible about the individual properties being advertised.
- Have concerns about how Travellers will be able to show a local connection if they have been moved around.
- The scheme should make Direct Lets available to those customers who have difficulty accessing the system through vulnerability. If not, this group of people would be less likely to be successful in being accommodated.
- Antisocial behaviour and debt are issues that can occur through no fault of the person. ie neighbours can misunderstand Travellers who are placed in unsuitable homes for their families/ pets and create a situation that prompts bad behaviour on both sides. Also debt can build up without the person's

knowledge, due to housing benefit errors or fleeing domestic violence and one partner is left behind who doesn't pay the rent.

-

Member/s

- “I like the culture change in applicants being proactive, though vulnerable people and those without access to computers will need to be carefully kept in the loop. I am also slightly concerned that by sharing the 10% of stock with other partners, when stock is already failing to meet demand, the squeeze will be increased”.
- “I am happy to support a policy that makes it easier for people to find homes to live in or to move from one property to another. I would hope that this scheme will help to achieve more flexibility and, hopefully, reduce waiting times”.

Parish Councils

- Ickleton Parish Council – “Local connection criteria should be pertinent to the location of the letting, not just within the local authority boundaries. i.e. A letting in Ickleton should be made available to an Ickleton connection, not just a SCDC connection.”
- Hardwick Parish Council – “It is important that any new scheme for managing housing lettings protects the interests of local people such as people with strong local connections in respect of houses in their area. Parish Councils should have a role in vetting lettings in their own area. If the proposed Choice Based lettings scheme fails to give that assurance it should not be adopted”.
- Linton Parish Council – “The Council are disappointed that local connections will no longer be part of the criteria for allocating homes. Please could you confirm that there is nothing in the policy which affects current S106 agreements particularly relating to Paynes Meadow, Linton”.

Appendix 12

RSL Forum Feedback

Cambridge Sub-Regional CBL Scheme

Summary of the RSL Workshop: 23rd February 2007.

1. Introduction

The second workshop on the Cambridge Sub-regional CBL scheme was held on Friday 23rd February at Luminus Homes, Huntingdon. Delegates attended representing thirteen RSLs and the four LSVT housing associations from the Cambridge Sub-region.

2. Presentations

Presentations were delivered on the future management of the scheme, the IT and service requirements and an explanation of the lettings policy. Copies of the presentations are available if required.

The presentation on the management of the scheme outlined the present situation, and that the responsibility for the development of the scheme (and the financial responsibilities) rest with the Local Authorities. Future contracting options were discussed and RSLs were asked to consider how much of a role they would like to play in the future management of the scheme. The presentation on the IT and service requirements gave an update on the procurement process and likely timescales. It outlined some of the IT and service requirements including the housing register, housing options, accessibility of the system and services required beyond merely IT

The event was part of the formal consultation process on the Lettings Policies produced by the Local Authorities. Each association has been sent a copy of the policy, and is encouraged to respond formally in writing. The comments made at the workshop will be taken as part of the formal consultation.

3. The Discussion Groups

The notes from the discussion groups are attached as appendixes.

The main issues raised were:

- General approval of the lettings policy and banding structure.
- Most RSLs interested in principal in advertising vacancies not subject to nomination agreements through the scheme, as long as there is an element of control through labelling, and the ability to make direct lets where necessary.
- Control could be required to ensure a proportion of existing tenants are housed.
- In principal, most RSLs would like to consider using the common register and not maintaining their own register – although not all landlords could commit to that.
- Would like a consistent approach to dealing with rent arrears and ASB across the sub-region, including RSLs.
- Importance of labelling to create sustainable communities – may label sensitive lets as available to customers in lower housing needs groups.
- Variation on the use of starter tenancies – mixed views on whether the property should be labelled the tenancy would be starter/ introductory.
- Consideration for a proportion of RSL properties to be advertised sub-regionally in line with the Local Authority properties – and how the system would respond to this.

- There is a continuing debate and concern about the impact of CBL on void times, and the merits of the weekly/ fortnightly bidding cycle – and also the potential impact on costs to advertise each property if advertising is more regular.
- Viewing of properties – RSLs would have different approaches to allowing multiple/ single viewings, but as long as the process is fair to customers, and it is made clear to the customer when they view the home, such variations would be the decision of the individual landlord.

4.Future Work

Following the day, it was clear some additional work is required:

- A summary of the differences between the lettings policies to be produced.
- Partner Local Authorities to agree a shared crib sheet of issues to raise with RSLs
- The partnership agreement with RSLs on CBL to include the nominations agreement.
- Development of an information sharing protocol between all partners, including RSLs

Some issues, such as the estimated costs for RSLs in advertising homes, will not be known until the IT supplier is in place and the full costs of the scheme can be calculated.

5.Conclusions

The session was very positive, especially the response to the lettings policy and the possibilities of RSLs using the CBL scheme and housing register for all allocations, not just transfers. The presentations also gave some context to the management structure in place and future management of the scheme, and the IT requirements.

Although the Luminus venue itself was ideal for the workshop, some delegates had difficulties with the location due to heavy traffic on the A14, and a shortage of suitable parking in Huntingdon, so a more central venue will be used at the next event – possibly the Meadows Centre in Cambridge. Transport difficulties accounted for some organisations not being represented at the meeting.

The next Workshop will be held once the IT supplier is in place, and a demonstration of the system will be held on the day.

Appendix 13

Cambridge Sub-Regional CBL Scheme

Summary of the Support/Voluntary Groups Workshop: 27th February 2007.

CBL Open Day Consultation Event Feedback

1 Introduction

An open day was held on Tuesday 27th February, to consult with voluntary, statutory and other agencies on the Cambridge Sub-regional CBL scheme.

In addition to staff representing the partner organisations, 52 people attended from thirty two agencies. Details of the organisations represented on the day are in Appendix 1.

The local authorities and LSVT housing associations had stalls and information available to delegates. Delegates were able to feed back their views of the scheme in discussion groups held throughout the day. A summary of the discussion groups is outlined below.

Additionally, the delegates were asked to formally respond as part of the lettings policy consultation - the discussions held throughout the day will have given more information to delegates and encourage informed responses to be made.

2 Comments From the Discussion Groups

General Comments:

- Will there be a common housing register? Would like to see one sub-regionally
- Approved the concepts of choice and partnership working
- How will RTB with RSLs fit in with this?

Lettings Policy:

- Concern that no consistency at the moment on how prisoners are allowed to apply for housing – need to add this to the procedures.
- How does the banding/ assessment process encourage tenants with low needs, as part of the drive to create sustainable communities
 - Reduced preference: need to ensure that treat on case-by-case basis.

The Banding Structure:

- All groups fed back that the policy and the banding structure were generally clear and easy to understand.
- Two groups felt it was positive that people leaving supported housing are placed in Band A, but an appeal mechanism is required. There was a concern that different SP providers will have different views on when customers are ready to move on into permanent accommodation.
- Is the homeless prevention award in band B an incentive for people to apply as homeless - would it be better also in band A?

- Commented in two groups that rough sleepers should be placed in be in Band B rather than Band C.

Medical Assessments/ Adaptations:

- Concern that if rely on GPs to assess medical priority; there is a cost to provide letters etc. Also, GPs recommendations are not always relevant, and often do not consider housing issues only medical. Need to ensure consistent decision making on medical assessments.
- Will there be consultation with relevant groups on the criteria used for medical assessments in the procedures, i.e. the level of medical need which would justify a specific priority band.
- DLA levels should be taken into account when undertaking medical assessments.
- Need to consider long-term medical needs as well as the current needs when offering properties to customers with medical conditions – do not want to move/ adapt the property in 5 years time.
- Will the system allow improved recording of adapted properties –type of adaptation, when it was put in place etc. Some concern now that there is a lack of accurate information.
- Will there be a record of adaptable properties as well as adapted?
- OTs would like to be involved in assessment of need and the suitability of offers (although resource implications).

Direct Lets:

- More explanation required in the policy on the circumstances where Direct Lets are made.
- Will direct lets be used for people in hostels?

Shortlisting:

- Need to ensure the shortlisting process contributes to sustainable communities as well as meeting need.
- Lack of chance for people in low housing needs.
- Need to clearly advertise labelling.

Housing Options:

- How will the scheme signpost various housing options for customers?
- Could the website have a housing options wizard, where customers add their details, and the options available to them are shown?

CBL Processes:

- Concern if variable closing dates for different properties
- Labelling important to stop the negative cycle of difficult tenants being housed in certain areas.
- Possible advertising mechanisms:
 - GPs
 - Shops/ supermarkets

- Automated telephone service
- Free paper
- Other methods are required to reach hard to reach groups, especially those with reading difficulties, such as the radio.
- Need paper coupons for expressing interest – especially for the elderly
- The system must be accessible for people living in rural areas.
- Prefer the use of the term expression of interest rather than bid.

Supporting Vulnerable People

- Important that supported housing agencies link in to the scheme and provide a good level of support and information.
- All groups raised the need for ongoing development and training of CBL for the support agencies
- Concern if the support worker is off work, who will provide that support.
- Is there funding available for computers / mobile phones for hostels etc?
- Each customer should have a named advocate where required
- Cambridge CAB has a screen to advertise CBL – could this be used for information/consultation?
- Requirement for IT system to pick up those who are not expressing an interest

3 Key themes

Key themes from the day include:

- General consensus that the lettings policy and CBL processes are clear.
- Agreement with the banding structure, with queried in specific issues such as those sleeping rough.
- Need for consistency sub-regionally in key issues, such as medical assessments, shortlisting etc.
- The importance of support for vulnerable customers.
- The need for support providers to receive full training and support once the scheme goes live.
- The obvious enthusiasm of delegates to work with the scheme once in place, and to help shape of the scheme during its development.

4 Conclusions

The response of the delegates was very encouraging, with an agreement with the principals of choice, sub-regional working and the principals of the lettings policy, whilst providing very good points on the details of the scheme and policy. The issues raised on the day will be considered as part of the formal consultation process, and a formal response will be made available as part of the response to the consultation, and sent to all those who attended.

The delegates who attended the group will be added to a mailing list, and given more information about the CBL process throughout the year. Many in the group were also interested in commenting on the Access Strategy, so this group will be used to consult on that piece of work. It was clear that the organisations represented here would like training and support during the launch of the scheme. It is proposed that just before the scheme is launched, an event will be held demonstrating the IT processes and outlining the lettings policies that have been introduced.

Organisations Represented at the Open Day

Partner Organisations:

Cambridge City Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council
Fenland District Council
Forest Heath District Council
Hereward Housing
Havebury Housing Association
Huntingdonshire District Council
Kings Forest Housing Association
Luminus Group
South Cambridgeshire District Council
St Edmundsbury District Council

Voluntary and Support Agencies:

Age Concern Cambridge
Axiom
Cambridge and Peterborough Mental Health Trust
Cambridge Drugs Intervention Programme
Cambridge Interpreting and Translating Agency
Cambridgeshire Drug & Alcohol Action Team
Cambridgeshire Primary Care Trust
Cambridgeshire Supporting People
Care and Repair
Care Network
Citizens Advice Bureau
Communities and Local Government
Diverse
English Churches Housing Group
Housing Support Service: Cambridge CC
Home Aid: Cambridge City Council
Jimmy's Night Shelter
Learning Disability Partnership
Mencap
OPTUA Care Division
Orbit Housing Association
Ormiston Trust
Papworth Trust
Spurgeon's Child Care
Suffolk Mental Health Partnership
Suffolk Supporting People
The 16+ Advisers Service
The Regard Partnership
The Salvation Army
Together Working for Wellbeing
Travellers Support: South Cambridgeshire DC