

### Consultation responses summary

#### Residency comments

- All three connections should have the same time frame. Residency minimum time period is too short at 6 months. Minimum period needs to be 3 years.
- Most of our members are recruited from Oxford and we understand the wish to restrict self-build opportunities to those with a local connection. However:
  - If associations must prove that everyone they recruit satisfies the Local Connection Test, we think this would constrain Oxford Cohousing unreasonably and potentially force out long-standing members. For example one family who have been members for many years had to move from Oxford to a nearby town because they could not afford Oxford prices while they waited for Cohousing to start building here.
  - The potential exclusion of certain members is a major problem for a cohousing organisation, which relies on relationships built over a long period in order to develop a site where we can live as supportive neighbours.
  - Oxford's Local Plan policy H7 singles out community-led collective self-build as a type of development to be supported: it would be unreasonable for the terms of the Local Connection Test to exclude a locally-based organisation simply because some of its members currently live outside the city.
  - We note that a key intention of the Test is to “ensure that suitable land remains available for other types of residential development within the city”. Our plan is for a completely new type of residential development for Oxford, aiming for an integrated community of 20-40 open-market, shared-ownership and social-rented homes. We want to build these tenure types in equal proportions, and we aim to make as many as possible permanently affordable. It would not be a development reserved for relatively wealthy self-builders of the kind the proposed policy seems designed to limit.
  - We are talking to Oxford City Housing Limited about being included on one of their sites. If we can manage this whilst retaining our status as registered custom-builders, this would represent a significant self-build achievement for Oxford.

#### Employment Comments

- Our objection is to the requirement that every member of an association must satisfy the Local Connection Test, as explained above under Residency.  
We would be happy if the Test specified that a majority must demonstrate a local connection.

#### Family

- All three connections should have the same time frame.
- Our objection is to the requirement that every member of an association must satisfy the Local Connection Test, as explained above under Residency.  
We would be happy if the Test specified that a majority must demonstrate a local connection.
- Suggest a family connection of this type, in these times, is too restrictive and a bit inward looking. Families move around more these days. Not all councils are using this tie. A more applicable family tie is suggested, where preference be given to families who are already renting continuously for minimum 3 years in the local council area. In addition preference given to those who and do not own a house in the UK. Also preference given to families where children go to, or have gone to local schools in Oxford.
- For what is apparently a very long list for very few plots, this is a very large criteria for people that could potentially be included in the same group of people that have lived and worked in Oxford for many years and struggling to get on the housing ladder due to the 'Oxford

bubble'. This clause appears to be copied from the standard form where councils may be trying to encourage people to move long-term to an area. Oxford doesn't have this issue, the opposite, it can't keep the young professionals it needs to run key sectors in the city as even areas that used to be affordable are now over the threshold for using a Help-to-Buy scheme from a bank.

### **Armed forces comments**

- All three connections should have the same time frame.
  - Have no objection to an armed forces connection provided they grew up in the local Oxford City Council area and do not own a home in the UK.
- Preface given to families with children. Where the children go to or will go to local schools.