Let’s talk about...
The future of housing

The council is looking at how over the next 30 years we can make our borough’s council homes and housing services sustainable for the future at the quality our residents deserve. We’re looking to all our residents to help us shape the future of council housing over the long term.

Everybody’s view is important. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and tell us what you think. Your response is confidential and will help feed into the council’s future housing policy.
1. Who should council housing be for and for how long?

The Independent Housing Commission said:

Council housing is a big issue for Southwark. About half the households in the borough live in a property owned by the council and everyone else lives near to a property owned by the council.

Southwark has more housing than any other borough, 39,000 homes with tenants living in them, another 14,500 with leaseholders and homeowners who have bought under things like the right to buy.

Good quality low rent council housing contributes to better lives and is essential to the well being and life chances of tens of thousands of local residents young and old. If Southwark is to remain a successful borough with a mixed income community we will continue to need to provide significant amounts of council housing at below the market rents that many of our residents cannot afford.

Many council tenants and leaseholders are on very low incomes (70% below £20,000 and many below £10,000 five times less the average for homeowners). If they did not live in council housing they would have to live in poor quality private housing or leave the borough. While the number of private homes is increasing most are unaffordable to those on low income.

Housing impacts on people’s health, education and employment and shapes the landscape of the borough.

Even at the current levels there is not enough council housing available – we have over 20,500 people on our waiting list and severe shortages of one bedroom and family homes. Population growth will increase the demand for council homes and an ageing population will mean more specially adapted homes are needed for older people.

Most of our tenants are known as secure tenants – this means unless they do something wrong their tenancies last for life.

The council needs to prioritise who council housing should be for in the future.

Please write your answer in the box below
2. How much council housing should there be and to what standard of quality?

The Independent Housing Commission said:

The council housing stock is set to decrease if nothing is done including through continuing sales by people exercising their right to buy. This increases the pressure on the waiting list.

A lot of council housing is old, nearing the end of its life and in need of major repair or replacement. This is very costly for the council. It is very unlikely that the council will be able to significantly increase the amount of homes it has, nor is large scale stock transfer an option.

The commission suggested three options for the period from 2045:

A slow decline to 30,000 homes to rent, happening through things like the impact of the right to buy. This would release extra funds to improve the homes the council keeps but do nothing to address the shortage of affordable low rent housing.

Keeping about 39,000 homes to rent – this would mean building and refurbishing a large number of council homes. This would mean the council borrowing significant sums of money and building somewhere between five and 9,000 new homes (about two and a half times the whole Aylesbury Estate).

A careful reduction to 20,000 homes to rent. This would cut management and maintenance costs and make money available to improve the remaining homes to a good standard. However with the high level of demand for council homes it means more pressure on other social and private housing providers.

The commission suggested these options and also said the council should consult the public on how much housing there should be among other things.

Please write your answer in the box below
3. How should council housing be managed?

The Independent Housing Commission said:

Parts of the housing service are not good enough. While this is getting better more radical steps need to be taken to improve customer care.

There are opportunities for more tenant involvement in how housing is managed.

The council could remain a large scale landlord providing housing management and developing new homes in-house, providing a wider range of homes to rent or part own.

The council could devolve more housing services to tenant management organisations and neighbourhood housing organisations with tenants involved in directly managing their local housing.

The council could look to work more in partnership with other social and private housing providers like housing associations playing more of a steering role than directly managing housing.

In all these cases the council would remain the landlord.

Please write your answer in the box below
4. Any other comments? Please write your answer in the box below

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you would like to be kept up to date with information about this consultation or future community conversations please provide us with the following information.

First name _____________________________________________________________

Surname _____________________________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________________________

________________________________________ Postcode ______________________

Email address ________________________________________________________
Are you a resident of the borough?

Yes................................................................. No.................................................................

Housing tenure?

I am a council tenant ................................................................. I am a council leaseholder .................................................................
I own a property in the borough ................................................................. I rent privately .................................................................
I am a housing association tenant ................................................................. I am living in temporary accommodation .................................................................
I prefer not to say .................................................................

Gender?

Male ................................................................. Female .................................................................
Prefer not to say .................................................................

Ethnicity?

White British ................................................................. White European .................................................................
Mixed/dual heritage ................................................................. Asian or Asian British .................................................................
Black or Black British ................................................................. Latin American .................................................................
Arab ................................................................. Chinese .................................................................
Other ................................................................. Prefer not to say .................................................................

Age group

16 to 24 ................................................................. 25 to 34 .................................................................
35 to 44 ................................................................. 45 to 50 .................................................................
51 to 60 ................................................................. 61 and above .................................................................
Prefer not to say .................................................................