

<b>Report title</b>	Southwark Council's approach to engagement with council tenants and homeowners
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected</b>	All Wards, council tenants and homeowners
<b>From</b>	Stephen Douglass, Director of Communities
<b>To</b>	Housing & Community Safety Scrutiny Sub-Committee
<b>Date</b>	5 December 2016

### **Executive summary**

1. This paper sets out the council's current approach to engagement with its 55,000 tenants and homeowners.

### **Context**

2. Southwark is the largest council landlord in London and the sixth largest in the UK. There are approximately 38,000 council tenants and 17,000 council homeowners in the borough.
3. The council intends to remain a large landlord for many years to come; it has invested £326 million to improve the standard of existing council homes under the 'Warm, Dry and Safe' programme, and pledged to build 11,000 new council homes by 2043.
4. The council is similarly committed to engaging with residents and giving them a genuine say in the decision-making process. This commitment is affirmed in the council's 'Approach to Community Engagement', which was formally adopted in December 2012.
5. The council's relationship with tenants and homeowners is governed by statute and there is a formal engagement structure for this group.

### **The current structure**

6. The current engagement structure is set out in full in *Appendix #1*.
7. The structure is based on consultation with formally recognised groups of tenants and homeowners, which meet in person on a regular basis to discuss housing issues in their neighbourhood and across Southwark.
8. The groups sit within a hierarchical structure. There are three levels to the hierarchy. In ascending order, these are:
  - Tenant and Resident Associations
  - Area Housing Forums
  - Tenant Council/Homeowner Council.

### Tenant and Resident Associations

9. A Tenant and Resident Association (TRA) is a group of residents from an estate or neighbourhood, who volunteer their time to meet regularly, discuss local issues and represent the area.

10. Not every estate is represented by a TRA. There are approximately 130 TRAs in Southwark and 703 estates.
11. Each TRA is different. Some have high-levels of membership and meet regularly. Others gather on an ad-hoc basis and may even remain dormant for long periods of time.
12. At least 118 TRAs are thought to be currently active. Please see *Appendix #2* for the full list.
13. Each TRA nominates one representative to attend the nearest Area Housing Forum.

#### Area Housing Forums

14. Area Housing Forums (AHFs) discuss housing issues affecting a larger geographical area.
15. There are 12 AHFs in Southwark. Please see *Appendix #3* for the full list. AHFs meet approximately every four to six weeks.
16. Each AHF nominates two representatives and two deputies to attend Tenant Council and two representatives and two deputies to attend Homeowner Council.

#### Tenant Council & Homeowner Council

17. Tenant Council is the main link between the council and its tenants. Homeowner Council fulfils the same role for Homeowners.
18. Tenant Council and Homeowner Council both meet approximately once a month.

#### Working groups

19. Tenant and Homeowner Council also oversee 13 working groups, formed to review specific issues. Please see *Appendix #4* for the full list.

#### **Support for this structure**

20. These volunteer-led groups need professional support.
21. The council has a dedicated Tenant and Homeowner Involvement Team consisting of nine members of staff. Please see *Appendix #5* for a structure chart.
22. Alongside the council's own staff, the council commissions an independent voluntary organisation called Southwark Group of Tenants Organisation (SGTO) to support groups in the current structure.
23. SGTO consists of five members of staff. SGTO send representatives to Tenant Council and some AHFs.

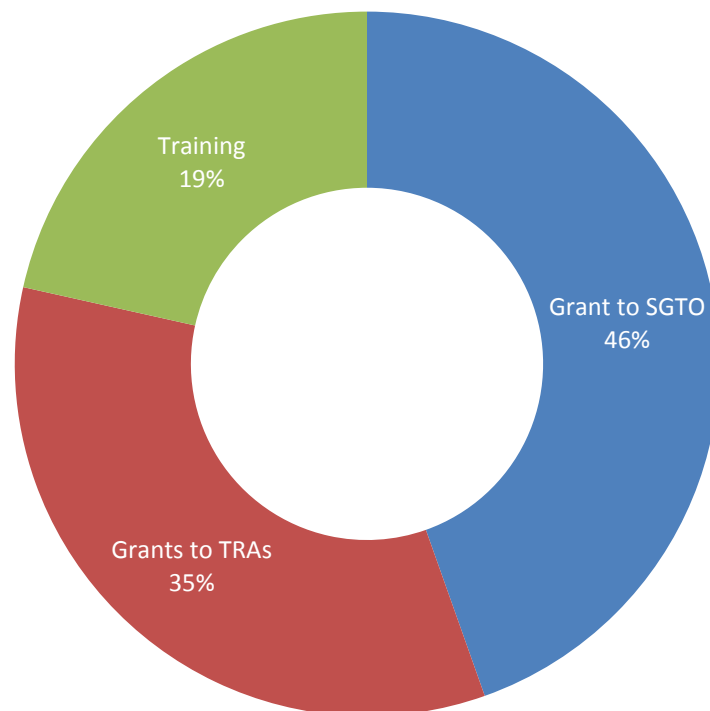
#### **Funding for this structure**

24. The council pays for this structure by setting aside a portion of the rent collected from tenants and a portion of the service charges collected from homeowners.

- 25. This equates to approximately £14.34 a year from each tenant and £10 a year from each homeowner.
- 26. This year the combined Tenant & Homeowner Funds, including reserves, amount to £1,380,482
- 27. The Tenant and Homeowner Fund also have dedicated working groups (Tenant Fund Management Committee and Homeowner Fund Management Committee) that make recommendations on how the funds are allocated.

Tenant Fund

- 28. The 16-17 Tenant Fund budget is £537,988. There are reserves of £336,092, increasing the total Tenant Fund budget to £874,080. £537,988 is allocated to one of three areas:



- 29. The 'Grant to SGTO' (46%) pays for their organisational costs and five members of staff (£249,630).
- 30. The 'Grants to TRAs' (35%) mean that each TRA receives a minimum of £1,200 a year to cover their running costs (£189,971).
- 31. The 'Training' budget (19%) pays for two Community Training Officers in the council's Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Team. These officers provide dedicated training and support to council tenants and homeowners.
- 32. Please see *Appendix #6* for a full breakdown of the Tenant Fund budget for the past two years.
- 33. Please see *Appendix #7* for a full breakdown of the SGTO budget for 2016/17, as allocated from the Tenant Fund.

### Homeowner Fund

34. The Homeowner Fund 16-17 budget is £150,090 and the 16-17 reserves are £356,312. The 16-17 projected expenditure is £283,550 and the reserves at the end of 16-17 would then be £222,852.
35. Every year the Homeowner Fund makes a contribution (27% of the total grants made) to the Tenant Fund which is around £51,000.
36. The majority of the remaining funding is allocated for the independent Home Owners Information Centre proposed by Homeowners Council (£106,800).
37. Please see *#Appendix 8* for a full breakdown of the Homeowner Fund budget for the past two years.

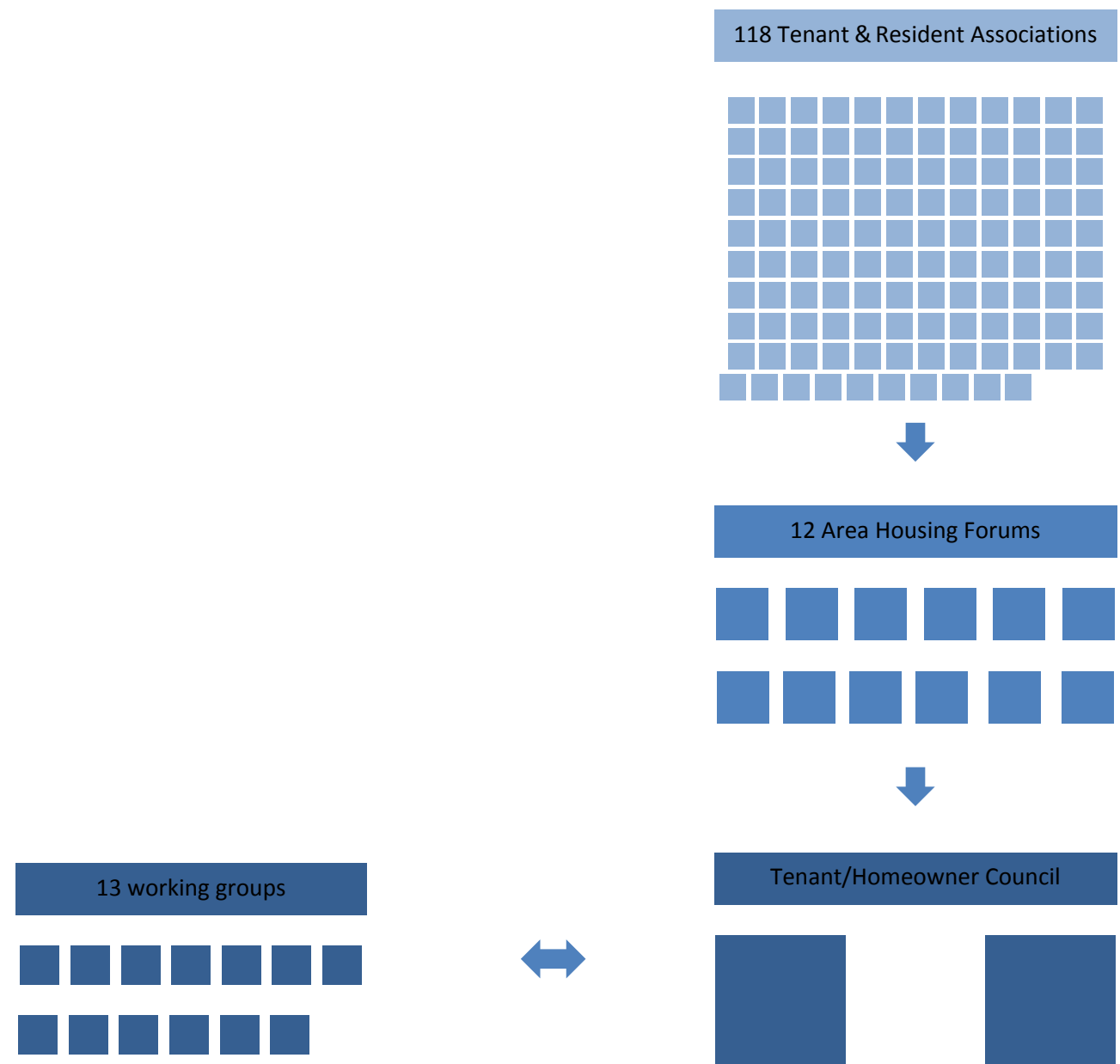
### TMOs

38. Council tenants also have the option of taking over the management of their housing services by forming a Tenant Management Organisation (TMO).
39. There are currently fifteen TMOs in Southwark, providing services to more than 3,500 residents.

### Other engagement activities

40. In keeping with the aforementioned '*Approach to Community Engagement*', the council consults residents on all major decisions. Tenants and homeowners can also participate in this wider engagement programme.
41. The council runs approximately 100 consultations every year, covering everything from the parking restrictions on a particular street to the regeneration of an entire area.
42. These consultations are delivered through a number of different engagement methods, including public events, focus groups, mail-outs and online surveys.
43. Examples of recent consultations that have received a significant number of responses from the public include
  - 11,000 new council homes – 2,016 responses
  - Old Kent Road regeneration – 991 responses
  - Providing more secure cycle storage – 923 responses
  - Launching a new service for council homeowners – 665 responses
44. In 2015, the council launched a new online Consultation Hub so residents could view and respond to all of the council's consultations from one location. Since launching, residents have submitted more than 12,500 responses through the Consultation Hub.
45. The Communities Division supports teams across the council to deliver high-quality consultation and engagement.

**Appendix #1 – Tenant and Homeowner Consultation Structure**

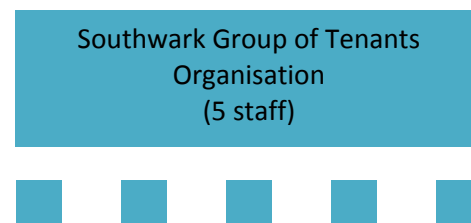
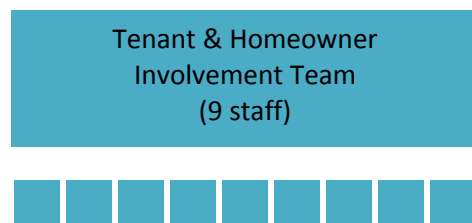


A Tenant & Resident Association (TRA) is a group of residents from an estate or neighbourhood, who volunteer their time to meet regularly, discuss local issues and represent their area.

Each TRA sends 1 representative to the nearest Area Housing Forum (AHF). AHFs discuss housing issues affecting a larger area. There are 12 AHFs, covering the entire borough geographically.

Each AHF sends 2 representatives to Tenant Council, which is the main link between the council and its tenants. Homeowner Council fulfils the same role for homeowners. They also manage 10 working groups looking into specific issues.

**Support for the engagement structure**



These volunteer-led groups need professional support. The council commissions the independent Southwark Group of Tenant Organisations (SGTO) to assist them. The council also has a dedicated Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Team.

## Appendix #2 – Currently active TRA list

Name
72 Grove Lane
Acorn TRA
Albert Barnes TRA
Alberta TRA
Alvey TRA
Arnold Estate TRA
ASCO TRA
Astbury Road Resident Association
Atwell TRA
Aylesbury Estate TRA
BARA (Barry Area Residents Association)
BATRA (Bricklayers Arms)
Bells Gardens TRA
Bermondsey Street TRA
Bonamy and Bramcote TRA
Brandon 1 TRA
Brandon 2 TRA
Brandon 3 TRA
Brayards Estate TRA
Brimtonroy TRA
Brook Drive Sheltered Housing Unit
Brunswick Park Neighbourhood TRA
Buchan Tenants TRA
Canada Estate TRA
Caroline Gardens TRA
Castlemead TRA
Cherry Garden TRA
Comus House
Conant & Rutley TRA
Congreve & Barlow TRA
Consort TRA
Cossall Estate TRA
Cossall Golden Oldies
Crawford
Crosby Lockyer and Hamilton TRA
Croxted Road TRA
Decima TRA
Dickens Estate TRA
Draper Estate TRA
East Dulwich Estate TRA
East Dulwich Grove Estate TRA (EDGE)
Elizabeth TRA
Elmington TRA
Four Squares TRA

Gateway TRA
Gilesmead TRA
Glebe North and South TRA
Gloucester Grove TMO
Goschen TRA
Grosvenor TRA
Hawkstone TRA
Hayles TRA
Hughes House
Juniper House TRA
Keetons TRA
Kennington Park House TRA
Kennington Park Road (KPR)
Kinglake TRA
Kingswood Estate TRA (KETRA)
Kipling TRA
Lant and Bittern Streets TRA
Ledbury TRA
Lettsom Move Forward
Limes Walk TRA
Lindley TRA
Longfield TRA
Lordship Lane and Melford Court TRA
L'sborough and Scovell TRA
Manor Estate TRA
Mardyke House TRA
Mayflower TRA
Meadow Row TRA
Neckinger Estate TRA
Nelson Square Gardens TRA
Nelson, Portland & Kingston
Newington Estate TRA
North Peckham & Commercial Way North TRA
Northfield House TRA
Oliver Goldsmith TRA
Osprey TRA
Pasley Estate TRA
Pedworth TRA
Pelican Plus TRA
Pelier Estate TRA
Pennack TRA
Penrose Estate TRA
Perronet House TRA
Poets Corner TRA
Pullens TRA
Rockingham Community Association
Rodney Road TRA

Rouel Road Estate TRA
Rye Hill TRA
Salisbury TRA
Sceaux Gardens TRA
Setchell Estate TRA
Silverlock Hall TRA
Southampton Way TRA
Southwark Park Estate TRA
SPAM TRA
St Crispins TRA
St Helena and Oldfield TRA
Sumner TRA
Surrey Gardens TRA
Sydenham Hill TRA
Tabard Gardens Central TRA
Tabard Gardens North TRA
Tabard Gardens South TRA
Thurlow Lodge TRA
Tustin TRA
Unwin and Friary TRA
VETRA TRA (Vauban)
Webber and Quentin TRA
Wells Way Triangle TRA
Wendover TRA
Wrayburn Resident Together
Wyndham and Comber TRA



### Appendix #3 – AHF list

Name
Aylesbury
Bermondsey East
Bermondsey West
Borough, Bankside & Walworth
Camberwell East
Camberwell West
Dulwich
Nunhead & Peckham Rye
Peckham
Rotherhithe
Walworth East
Walworth West

#### Appendix #4 – Tenant and Homeowner Council working groups

Name
Allocation Policy Review
Contact Centre Working Party
Constitutions Working Party
Future Steering Board
Garage Working Party
Home Owner Council Agenda Setting
Home Owner Fund
Home Owner Major Works Service Improvement Group
RELEASE (Resident-led Housing Services)
Repairs and Maintenance Core Group
Tenant Fund Management Committee
Tenants Conference
Tenant Hall Review Implementation Working Party

## Appendix #5 – Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Team Structure

Post	Grade	No of posts
Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Team Leader	12	1
Tenant & Homeowner Involvement Officer	9	6
Community Training Officer	9	2

## Appendix #6 – Tenant Fund Budget

Item	2015/16 Budget	2016/17 Budget
Salaries	£97,216	£98,188
National Insurance	£7,924	£8,003
Pensions	£14,097	£14,238
Training	£5,000	£5,050
Cab fares	£500	£500
Equipment leasing	£7,000	£7,000
Refreshments for meetings	£1,200	£1,200
Marketing & publicity (Tenants conference)	£10,000	£10,000
Telephones	£500	£500
Printing & stationery	£5,000	£5,000
Grants	£214,260	£189,971
External agencies and bodies (SGTO)	£235,290	£249,630
General recharges (Home Owners' Levy)	-£53,565	-£51,292

## Appendix #7 – SGTO Budget (allocated from the Tenant Fund)

Item	2016/17 Budget
Staff salaries	£144,549
Employer NIC	£14,310.35
Employer pension	£7,400
Part time outreach worker	£7,500
Advertising & recruitment cost	£0
Replacement & renewal – furniture	£500
Insurance	£650
Cleaning & maintenance	£0
Office stationery	£8,000
Photocopier – Lease and maintenance	£12,800
Printing & publicity material including newsletter	£8,000
Hall hire (e.g. away day)	£650
Computer maintenance	£2,500
Meeting expenses	£1,500
Volunteer expenses	£1,560
Water (drinking)	£400
Subscription and fees	£400
Legal advice cost/support	£5,000
H.R. support	£1,000
Audit & accountancy fees	£3,500
Sage	£1,600
Bank interest/charges	£280

Travel, motor and subsistence	£1,310
Parking permit	£250
Postage and franking machine	£3,060
Telephone (land & franking machine)	£1,550
Mobile phones	£2,400
Internet charges/domain name/websites for TRAs	£2,425
Resource room – Repairs & renewal – ICT	£0
Furniture & fittings replacement	£500
Training costs – Staff & board	£5,000
Heating costs	£10,000
Youth participation project (research & conference)	£250
Books & resources	£0
BME or Repairs Conference 2014	£0
Campaign	£0
Refuse collection (Veolia)	£285
Events	£500
Management/support/hours	£0

## Appendix #8 – Homeowner Fund Budget

Item	2015/16 Budget	2016/17 Budget
Staff costs	£150,360	£25,000
Payment to Tenant Fund for 2014/15	£22,000	£5,000
Payment to Tenant Fund for 2015/16	£10,000	£10,000
Payment to Tenant Fund for 2016/17	N/A	£30,000
CAB Project	N/A	£40,000
Home Owners Information Centre	£100,000	£106,800
Refreshments for meetings	£1,500	£2,000
Election costs	£5,000	£5,000
Meeting room hire	£2,000	£2,000
Conferences/seminars	£10,000	£20,000
Travel expenses	£1,000	£500
Printing	£5,000	N/A
Postage	£1,800	N/A
Website/marketing	£15,000	£15,000
Contingency	£15,000	£5,000