

## Council Assembly - 23 January 2013

### Community views – Affordable and social housing

- I am on ESA with three children and can only afford my rent because I get housing benefit. I don't have access to the internet, so I don't what is going on.
- I am a pensioner, I don't get anything to do with affordable housing.
- I think that the rent is too high for what we get, and with Council tax and water rates it's all getting too much. I don't see it changing much in the future, not with the present government, especially pensioners.
- It's very hard these days, most people are having to rent anyway, it's too expensive to buy your own house...I don't think the government is doing enough to make housing cheaper. I'm a working man in my 30s (and though I earn a decent salary) I still can't afford to get on the housing ladder....we're all getting into this poverty trap really. I have a friend and they're taking benefits off him, he's becoming suicidal because he feels like he's working to replace his benefits and he can barely get by, he's not sure whether he will be evicted in the next few months and he's been there years. The council can only do so much....it's a lot of responsibility to take on, to look out for your neighbour, though.
- There is not enough affordable housing.
- I work 70 hours a week, and rent a room for £300, a week which was the cheapest I could find! Probably £200 and £250 would be better...I have to budget more and more, but I think that I am actually doing rather well. I am from Bulgaria and came to live here after travelling when I completed my degree. I am registered as self-employed and many of these jobs are available but you have to put the effort in, benefits are good but there are many people taking advantage.
- Where people have/earn enough money or where the rent is low enough, without people having to claim housing benefit. Hexagon Housing recently upped my rent by 10%, yet I'm not claiming housing benefit, so my increased rent is difficult to afford.
- [Housing] is so expensive; people who were able to buy once upon a time can't even buy now. That's disgusting; the prices are disgusting. They should bring it down so the average person can buy and live. People are suffering.

Affordable house prices used to be about £70,000 to £80,000. [Nowadays] it's okay around £100,000 or maybe 120,000, because that's what the average person or 2 people working can afford to buy, but when it's £300,000, £400,000, £500,000 no average person can buy, yet they are the ones who are on the streets.

- Affordable housing is something most people can afford, I guess, regardless of their situation. It shouldn't matter if in a job or no job or on a minimum wage there should be a house available for everyone really. In London there definitely is not enough affordable housing. Affordable housing single parent should be able to afford own property.
- My rent arrears are not a lot only £80 but it's a lot when you think about it. Where am I going to get £80 from when I don't work? Not bad when you don't sign on and pay full housing benefit, so can't complain, my house is affordable but I messed up.

- [Affordable housing is] about having enough money to rent somewhere. Cause I can't. Price range, renting a property, well myself, I'd say £700 a month maybe, but with a child I think it should be lower, being honest with you, because, it in fact goes up higher, even a one bedroom. I've looked at that and I can't afford it, they charge too much nowadays. And I don't want to go into a hostel with my child, so I'm staying with my parents. And I've got sisters that live there too, so it's too much, as it is. But I can't afford to move out, and I won't go into hostel because you get dangerous people who live in hostels. It is a step backward in your life. I work part time, so I can't afford £700 a month.
- People can't afford housing now, there is no money. Some people can't find a suitable place to rent; it is expensive renting around here. It is very hard around here getting a room to rent, it is very expensive. Well the council has to build more houses ain't it, obviously you have to build more houses. Some people find it hard to rent. I own my own home there. So it's good for me, but the younger generation it is very hard. The most important thing is to get a job, if you don't get a job how are you going to afford to pay the rent, it's impossible. The younger age group have it hard.
- I guess affordable housing means different things to different people, but I guess it means that people on low incomes, or even ordinary incomes, should be able to afford to live in Southwark, and not have to move out to other places that are less expensive. People are being priced out all the time, from all areas of London. My feeling is that these days nothing can really be described as affordable. Council housing is, but then who can ever get a council house to rent. If councils aren't building stuff that can only get worse, and it has been the same way for years. It's been building up, building up, and then the government say; oh look we have a lot of people who can't find somewhere to live, how strange!
- I work on the buildings and I rent a flat in Camberwell, but it is getting impossible. The wages we are getting paid keep going down not up, as there are always many more people than are needed. I was thinking of moving out but then I would only have to pay a fortune in train fares to get to work. It's important what the council here is doing, it's important work, you need to do it, good luck to you.