

APPENDIX B

Southwark Housing and Planning Act communication and engagement plan

Key messages

To make residents aware of the changes in the Housing and Planning Act, particularly:

- To inform residents about the changes to lifetime tenancies for new lettings.
- To make residents aware of the changes with pay to stay, that the Council will be required by Government to make the introduction of an additional tapered charge to tenants that the Government defines as having a high household income from April 2017.
- To make residents aware that the Council may be forced to sell some of its higher value council homes, with the exception of newly built homes. This is likely to cause a reduction in the number of homes to rent.

Communication methods

- A letter from Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing, to accompany the July rent statement letter to all tenants.
- Further information concerning ‘high income social tenant’ pay to stay requirements in the October rent statement letter.
- A webpage on the Southwark Council website explaining the changes.
- Articles in Southwark Life Housing News magazine.
- A council assembly meeting on the housing crisis
- Press releases.

Future resident engagement

- The council will continue to engage with residents on the changes due to the Housing and Planning Act as the regulations are published. There will be areas where the regulations are likely to be very restrictive about what the council can do. However, where there is flexibility, the Council will work with residents to maximise any opportunities presented by the Act and to minimise the negative aspects.
- The main forms of resident engagement will be through existing tenant structures such as Tenant Council, Homeowner Council, the Future Steering Board, Area Housing Forums and tenants & residents Associations. The engagement will also reach out more widely to tenants who are impacted by the changes following the council’s Approach to Community Engagement.
- Key points of engagement will include:
 - Reviewing the council’s tenancy strategy
 - Reviewing tenancy agreements
 - Reviewing the allocations policy
 - Designing the processes for implementation of ‘high income social tenant’ pay to stay
 - The refresh of the Council’s housing strategy
 - Changes to the Council’s planning policies, such as the New Southwark Plan.