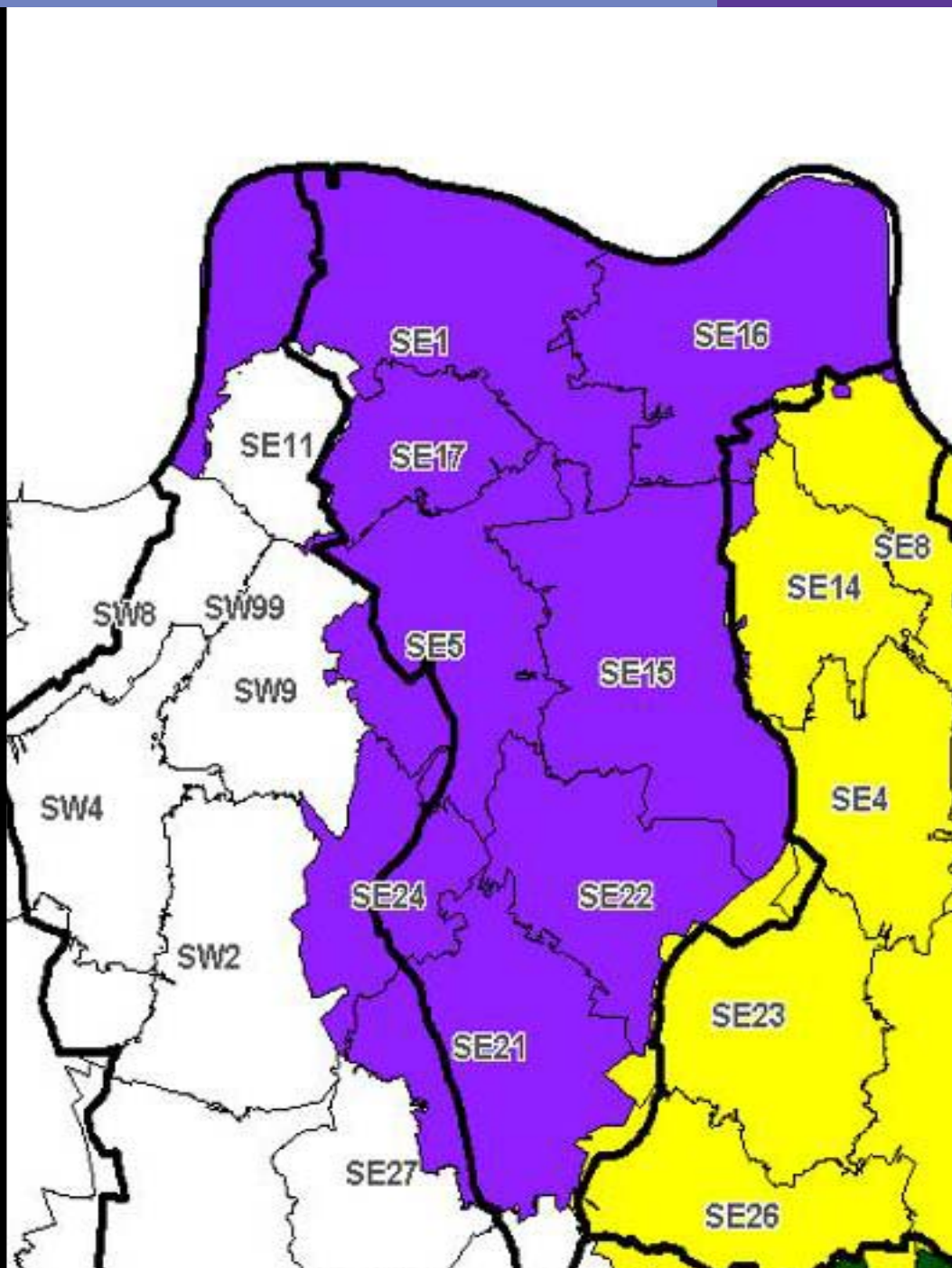


Southwark affordable rent product study December 2014

December 2014

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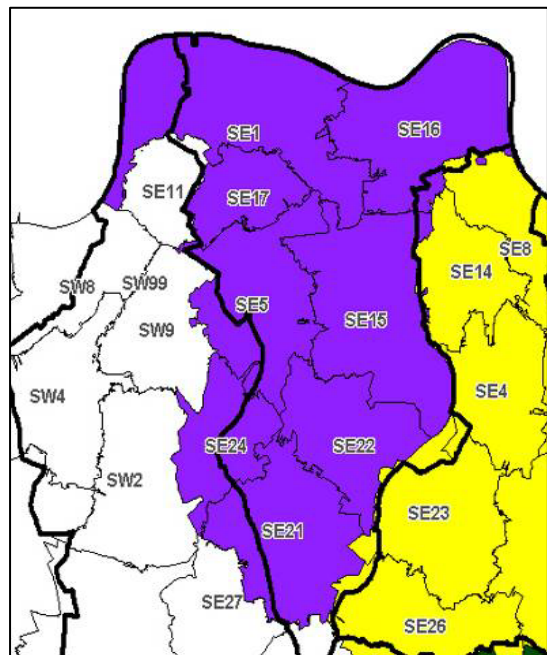


Introduction

National government introduced a new type of affordable housing through a revision to Planning Policy Statement 3 in June 2011. The new type of affordable housing is called "affordable rent". Affordable rent sits alongside social rent and intermediate housing as a third type of affordable housing. The product allows up to 80% of market rent to be charged and is allocated to housing applicants in the same way as social rented housing.

As a council we were concerned about the potential impact of the affordable rent product and felt that it was important to assess how affordable it would be in Southwark. We therefore brought together information on market rent levels, average incomes, and benefit levels into a study which looked at the affordability of the new affordable rent product. The study covered the whole borough and used postcode areas as shown on the map below. Please note that the postcode boundaries don't align exactly with the Southwark borough boundary.

The study modelled a range of scenarios from 40% to 80% of market rent, across a range of bed sizes. The data in the study has been, and continues to be, used to inform our approach to affordable rent, both in terms on new build homes and conversion of relets. Using the data on affordability within the study, council officers proposed three different scenarios for varying proportions of affordable rent for different bed sizes. These were then tested using the data. The Council clarified its approach to the new product in a planning committee report from December 2011. The report stated that we will continue to apply our existing affordable housing policy and the affordable rent product will only be accepted where financial viability can show that the policy cannot be met. In the instances where the affordable rent product is proposed it should follow one of these three options:



- **Option 1** - Developing properties at a percentage of market rent that is significantly less than 80%, by use of cross subsidy.
- **Option 2** - Providing the majority of new build (e.g. 75%) at 'affordable rent', to enable the provision of some social rented homes (e.g. 25%)
- **Option 3** - Concentrating on providing one and two bed homes at up to 80% market rent level on the basis of providing three bed plus homes at social rent.

It is important to note that this affordable rent product study does not set or vary existing planning policy and developers are advised to check current planning policy with the planning team. The Core Strategy (2011), saved Southwark Plan (2007), area actions plans, and the Affordable Housing supplementary planning documents (adopted 2008 and draft 2011) set out the council's planning policies for affordable housing. We are intending to review our planning policies in the Core Strategy and saved Southwark Plan through the preparation of a local plan called our New Southwark Plan and further details are available on our website.

http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/856/planning_policy/3315/the_new_southwark_plan

Any developer/landlord considering developing an affordable rent product in Southwark is advised to explore the data in the appendix to consider appropriate levels of market rent. We also advise that you contact the housing development team to discuss the levels of rent you may be proposing.

This document provides an introduction and explanation to the study as well as a summary of the main conclusions. We have used the SE1 and SE15 postcodes for the examples within the summary as these are two extremes in the Borough in terms of average property price. The full data, covering all the postcodes, is available as an appendix to this report in an excel spreadsheet.

This full data set is updated every 6 months.

Median weekly market rent October 2014				
Area	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	353.72	448.47	573.13	680.30
SE1	395.35	518.16	720.09	677.77
SE5	298.98	358.78	471.47	647.87
SE11	348.89	413.52	595.43	0.00
SE15	256.20	344.98	425.47	683.98
SE16	341.30	418.58	574.05	824.73
SE17	298.98	368.67	458.36	652.93
SE21	284.26	321.98	419.73	632.46
SE22	278.05	343.83	482.74	689.73
SE24	278.97	344.75	520.69	850.95

Overview of the three methodologies used

The study used three different methodologies to explore the impacts of the new "affordable rent" tenure.

1. The first approach was to start with **different proportions of market rents (40%-80%) and the income required to afford these, at varying proportions of use of gross household income** (as households have other living costs).
2. The second approach looked at what **proportion of affordable rent would be affordable for those affected by the benefit cap**, which began to be introduced from August 2013. The benefit cap has imposed a limit on the total benefit payable to working age, non-working households (those not in receipt of working tax credit) of £350 a week for single adult households and £500 for couples and lone parent families. Initially the benefit cap is being implemented through deductions made from housing benefit. In the longer term, the cap will form part of the universal credit assessment as this is rolled out by government from October 2013. There are some exemptions from the cap, such as for those receiving disability living allowance and war widows (the full list of exemptions is included in the final tab in the excel spreadsheet). This part of the study made use of figures from a South East London Housing Partnership study. This has been updated in this document. The modelling assumes that only housing benefit is used towards rents and that other benefits are used for other costs such as food, heating, care etc. The report looked at what

benefits different household groups were likely to be already receiving (child benefit, child tax credit and income support). It then looked at how much potential housing element could therefore be remaining within the benefit cap. In the private sector this housing element would be capped to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels, as set by the Valuation Office Agency but for the new affordable rent tenure the housing benefit/element can exceed the LHA level, though developers are unlikely to do affordable rent at levels above LHA. This potential housing benefit/element figure can then be compared to proportions of market rents by postcode, to see the maximum proportion of market rent that each different household type (affected by the cap) could potentially afford.

3. The third approach was to look at the **proportion of market rent that different households could afford using household income data from the Housing Requirements Study 2008 (published in 2009)**. The full data set is included in the appendix in the data tabs.

Scenario testing - Using the data and findings from these methodologies, three scenarios were tested using varying proportions of market rents, LHA capped market rents and social rents:

1. Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, with social rent for 3 bed plus
2. LHA capped market rents of 80% for 1 bed, and 70% 2 bed, and social rent for 3 bed plus
3. LHA capped market rents of 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, and social rent for 3 bed plus

Summary of key findings

1. Proportions of market rents and the income required to afford these

In the excel spreadsheet in the appendix, the first tab looks at varying proportions of market rents between 40% to 80% and shows where these are higher than the local housing allowance rate for the area. For rents in the private sector, households can only receive up to local housing allowance rate which was set at the 30th percentile for the broad rental market area (BMRA) and has then been updated annually by either CPI or the new 30th percentile rent (whichever is lower). The BRMA for Southwark is "Inner South East London". Rents under the affordable rent product are not officially capped at the LHA rate (this was not in RPs contracts with the HCA) but the GLA indicated they would not expect affordable rents to exceed this. The tested scenarios included some options of affordable rent capped at the LHA rate. So this sheet shows where this would be likely to apply and at what proportions of market rent.

The following extract from the spreadsheet shows that at 80% of market rent, most of Southwark's postcode areas have rents exceeding the LHA rate (the orange cells). At 60% of market rent (the second table), a larger number of postcode areas would have rents lower than the LHA rates.

80% Market Rent				
Area	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	282.98	358.78	458.50	544.24
SE1	316.28	414.53	576.07	542.22
SE5	239.19	287.02	377.18	518.30
SE11	279.11	330.81	476.35	
SE15	204.96	275.98	340.38	547.18
SE16	273.04	334.86	459.24	659.78
SE17	239.19	294.93	366.69	522.35
SE21	227.41	257.58	335.78	505.97
SE22	222.44	275.06	386.19	551.78
SE24	223.18	275.80	416.55	680.76

60% Market Rent				
Area	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	212.23	269.08	343.88	408.18
SE1	237.21	310.90	432.05	406.66
SE5	179.39	215.27	282.88	388.72
SE11	209.33	248.11	357.26	0.00
SE15	153.72	206.99	255.28	410.39
SE16	204.78	251.15	344.43	494.84
SE17	179.39	221.20	275.02	391.76
SE21	170.56	193.19	251.84	379.48
SE22	166.83	206.30	289.64	413.84
SE24	167.38	206.85	312.41	510.57

The first tab then looks at what income would be required to afford varying proportions of market rent. The tab provides figures for both 25% and 30% of gross income used up as rent.¹

If a household could afford to spend 30% of their income in rent, an annual income of **£79,744** would be required to afford a 3 bed 80% market rent property in Southwark (up from £59,520 in the April 2011 study). However it is sometimes argued that spending 25% of gross income on rent is affordable. Under this assumption an annual income of **£95,693** would be required for a three bed property (up from £71,424 in the April 2011 study). At 60% market rent, spending 30% of gross income, an annual income of **£59,808** is required (up from £44,640 in the April 2011 study). This data demonstrates how affordability issues with affordable rent at higher proportions of market rent will intensify if house prices increase as they have over the past few years.

The spreadsheet can be used to check the figures for a large range of options such as different proportions of market rent and/or percentage of gross income spent on rent.

Annual Income required to afford 80% market rent 30% gross income				
30%	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	49,216	62,400	79,744	94,656
SE1	55,008	72,096	100,192	94,304
SE5	41,600	49,920	65,600	90,144
SE11	48,544	57,536	82,848	
SE15	35,648	48,000	59,200	95,168
SE16	47,488	58,240	79,872	114,752
SE17	41,600	51,296	63,776	90,848
SE21	39,552	44,800	58,400	88,000
SE22	38,688	47,840	67,168	95,968
SE24	38,816	47,968	72,448	118,400

Annual Income required to afford 80% market rent 25% gross income				
25%	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	59,059	74,880	95,693	113,587
SE1	66,010	86,515	120,230	113,165
SE5	49,920	59,904	78,720	108,173
SE11	58,253	69,043	99,418	
SE15	42,778	57,600	71,040	114,202
SE16	56,986	69,888	95,846	137,702
SE17	49,920	61,555	76,531	109,018
SE21	47,462	53,760	70,080	105,600
SE22	46,426	57,408	80,602	115,162
SE24	46,579	57,562	86,938	142,080

¹ 25% gross income is the figure suggested in the previous Governments Housing Market Assessment Guidance but it said that higher proportions may possibly be considered if people were on higher incomes or in particular local circumstances.

Annual Income required to afford rent 60% market rent 30% gross income				
30%	1	2	3	4+
Southwark	36,912	46,800	59,808	70,992
SE1	41,256	54,072	75,144	70,728
SE5	31,200	37,440	49,200	67,608
SE11	36,408	43,152	62,136	0
SE15	26,736	36,000	44,400	71,376
SE16	35,616	43,680	59,904	86,064
SE17	31,200	38,472	47,832	68,136
SE21	29,664	33,600	43,800	66,000
SE22	29,016	35,880	50,376	71,976
SE24	29,112	35,976	54,336	88,800

2. Proportions of affordable rent that could be afforded by property size within the benefit (universal credit) cap

The second tab looks at the affordability of the affordable rent product for a non-working with the benefit cap. It made use of a South East London Housing Partnership study, this has since been updated. The key part of the spreadsheet is the section on the right of the main table (as included on the following page).

From mid August 2013, a maximum cap on the total amount of benefit which a working age non-working household can claim began to be introduced. The cap is currently £350 per week for single person households and £500 per week for all others. The cap will also apply to Universal Credit, a new single benefit for working age people which will be introduced in phases from October 2013 to 2017. It will replace most means tested benefits e.g. job seeker's allowance (income-based), employment support allowance (income-related), income support, housing benefit, and child and working tax credits.

The cap does not apply to households eligible for working tax credit, households in receipt of certain disability benefits and war widows. A full list of exemptions is included on the final tab of the appendix. We are particularly concerned about the impact of this change for some families in Southwark, especially larger families. Universal credit will be made up of various elements similar to the current arrangements.

For the table below, we have looked at the current benefits that different sized households are likely to receive for income support, personal allowance, child tax credit and child benefit. This figure was then subtracted from the maximum benefit cap to see how much would potentially be remaining that could cover rent under housing benefit or the housing element of the universal credit. The relevant proportion of market rent for that household size was then subtracted. Where this new figure is positive it just shows the proportion of market rent that could be fully covered by the housing benefit/element. The household would not actually receive this extra figure, unless they were entitled to some other benefit element. However where figures are negative this shows where other elements would have to be used to cover rents. So the household would have less money for other living costs.

The final column gives the maximum proportion of market rent that each type of household could afford within the cap, without having to use up some of their other non-housing elements (which would currently be used for food, heating costs, clothing etc). The colour

coding shows for smaller household sizes the housing element (assuming it is not capped, except by the total universal credit cap) could cover more than 80% market rent within the universal credit cap (shaded dark green). As the household gets larger the proportion reduces to somewhere between 80% and 40% (light green). They are all shaded green as it means an affordable rent at somewhere over 40% of market rent is possible, but only to the proportion stated. Once you get to larger families with 4 children plus, the household would not be able to even reach 40% market rent within the housing element of the universal credit cap and would have to use up other elements of the cap, or not be able to afford it at all.

With the total benefit cap, a working household in an affordable rent property in Southwark is still likely to be having some of their rent paid through housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit, based on the low average incomes in Southwark. This would not be capped if they were working. But if they then became unemployed, even through no fault of their own, the benefit will apply (unless any other exemption applied). So they might struggle to pay the rent and could enter rent arrears or become homeless. DWP have indicated that people who have lost their job but were employed for 12 months or more prior to claiming, have 9 months before the benefit cap applies to them (50 out of 52 weeks).

Potential proportion of market rent that could be covered by housing benefit/element within the benefit cap for non working households after removing estimates for elements for income support, personal allowance, child tax credit and child benefit, and the applicable proportion of Southwark market rent

* The final column is the maximum % of market rent the household could afford (assuming no cap on the housing element, except the total benefit cap), assuming only the housing benefit/element of benefits is used on rent.

Southwark									
	Bed rooms	Bed spaces	After target rent plus service charge	After 40% market rent	After 50% market rent	After 60% market rent	After 70% market rent	After 80% market rent	*
Single under 25	0	1	£195.77	£151.16	£115.79	£80.42	£45.05	£9.67	83%
Single over 25	1	1	£180.72	£136.11	£100.74	£65.37	£30.00	£-5.38	78%
Couple with no dependants	1	2	£290.57	£245.96	£210.59	£175.22	£139.85	£104.47	110%
Couple with 1 child	2	3	£192.82	£124.20	£79.35	£34.50	£-10.35	£-55.19	68%
Couple with 2 children	2	4	£126.39	£57.76	£12.91	£-31.93	£-76.78	£121.63	53%
Couple with 3 children	3	5	£46.54	£-58.54	£-115.85	£-173.16	£-230.47	£287.79	30%
Couple with 4 children	3	6	£-19.90	£-124.97	£-182.28	£-239.59	£-296.91	£354.22	18%
Couple with 5 children	4	7	£-101.84	£-234.27	£-302.30	£-370.33	£-438.36	£506.39	6%
Couple with 6 children	4	8	£-168.28	£-300.71	£-368.74	£-436.77	£-504.80	£572.83	-4%
Single parent with 1 child	2	3	£232.97	£164.35	£119.50	£74.65	£29.80	£-15.04	77%
Single parent with 2 children	2	3	£166.54	£97.91	£53.06	£8.22	£-36.63	£-81.48	62%
Single parent with 3 children	3	4	£86.69	£-18.39	£-75.70	£-133.01	£-190.32	£247.64	37%
Single parent with 4 children	3	5	£20.25	£-84.82	£-142.13	£-199.44	£-256.76	£314.07	25%
Single parent with 5 children	4	6	£-61.69	£-194.12	£-262.15	£-330.18	£-398.21	£466.24	11%
Single parent with 6 children	4	7	£-128.13	£-260.56	£-328.59	£-396.62	£-464.65	£532.68	2%
Lone parent under 18	1	2	£345.77	£301.16	£265.79	£230.42	£195.05	£159.67	125%
Lone parent over 18	1	2	£330.72	£286.11	£250.74	£215.37	£180.00	£144.62	121%

The data in the second tab is interactive so you can change the postcode and see how affordability changes for particular areas. There is a yellow shaded drop down box where you can enter your chosen postcode. For example in SE15 households can afford a higher proportion of market rent as the market rents are lower. In SE1 the opposite is true.

3. Proportions of market rent different households could afford using household income data from the Housing Requirements Study 2008 (published in 2009)

Southwark Council carried out a Housing Requirements Study in 2008, which was published in 2009. This looked at median household incomes. In the affordable rent study, the data was compared to varying proportions of market rent to see what different household types would be able to afford. The figures below assume 30% of gross household could be used to pay rent. The results are shown in tab 3 of the spreadsheet. The final column gives the maximum proportion of the market rent that the average household of that size could afford.

In Southwark an adult couple with no children can afford quite a high proportion of market rent on a one bed and a fairly high proportion on a two bed. But on average, couples with children will be able to afford a maximum of 40% market rent a two bed. So this shows that the affordable rent product is most suitable for couples with no children.

Again, the data in the spreadsheet is interactive and you can enter different postcodes to see how affordability changes across the borough. As per the universal credit methodology (explained in 2. above), people can afford higher proportions of market rent in SE15 due to lower average property prices, and again in SE1 the opposite is true.

	40% Market	50% Market	60% Market	70% Market	80% Market	90% Market	100% Market	Maximum % of market rent that average could afford
Southwark								
1 bed Market Rent	141.49	176.86	212.23	247.60	282.98	318.35	353.72	
30% Single person median income	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	27%
30% Lone parent median income	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	15%
30% Adult couple median income	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	75%
30% Median income	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	27%
2 bed Market Rent	179.39	224.24	269.08	313.93	358.78	403.63	448.47	
30% Lone parent median income	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	12%
30% Adult couple with children median income	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	38%
30% Adult couple median income	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	£264.48	59%
30% Median income	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	22%
3 bed Market Rent	229.25	286.56	343.88	401.19	458.50	515.81	573.13	
30% Lone parent median income	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	9%
30% Adult couple with children median income	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	29%
30% Median income	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	17%
4 bed+ Market Rent	272.12	340.15	408.18	476.21	544.24	612.27	680.30	
30% Lone parent median income	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	£52.32	8%
30% Adult couple with children median income	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	£169.04	25%
30% Median income	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	£96.59	14%

4. Scenario testing

Using the data and findings from the previous three methodologies, three scenarios were tested using varying proportions of market rents, LHA capped market rents and social rents:

1. Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, with social rent for 3 bed plus
(Though this scenario should not apply as rents should not exceed the LHA rate)
2. LHA capped market rents of 80% for 1 bed, and 70% 2 bed, and social rent for 3 bed plus
3. LHA capped market rents of 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, and social rent for 3 bed plus

The tables below give figures for each scenario (capped as required) for Southwark, SE1 and SE15. Please refer to the full spreadsheet for the other postcodes. The light green shading shows where the value has been capped to LHA instead of the higher market rent figure. For Southwark both 80% and 70% of market rent would be capped at LHA under option 2. For SE15 neither would be capped. The tables also explore what incomes would be required for these options using 25% and 30% of gross household income as rent.

Key to shading below

Orange= Greater than LHA rate for inner SE London

Green= Set to LHA rate

Blue= Set at target rent plus service charge

Purple= Greater than or equal to universal credit cap

Southwark data

Summary of the proposed options for	Southwark			
WEEKLY	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	283	359	124	140
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	255	124	140
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	255	124	140
ANNUAL	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	14765	18720	6479	7289
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	13310	6479	7289
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	13310	6479	7289
Annual income required at 25% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£59,059	£74,880	£25,917	£29,154
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£53,239	£25,917	£29,154
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£53,239	£25,917	£29,154
Annual income required at 30% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£49,216	£62,400	£21,598	£24,295
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£44,366	£21,598	£24,295
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£44,366	£21,598	£24,295

SE15 data

Summary of the proposed options for		SE15			
WEEKLY	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	205	276	124	140	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	241	124	140	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	207	124	140	
ANNUAL	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10694	14400	6479	7289	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	12600	6479	7289	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	10800	6479	7289	
Annual income required at 25% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£42,778	£57,600	£25,917	£29,154	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£50,400	£25,917	£29,154	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£43,200	£25,917	£29,154	
Annual income required at 30% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£35,648	£48,000	£21,598	£24,295	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£42,000	£21,598	£24,295	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£36,000	£21,598	£24,295	

SE1 data

Summary of the proposed options for		SE1			
WEEKLY	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	316	415	124	140	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	255	124	140	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	196	255	124	140	
ANNUAL	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	16502	21629	6479	7289	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	13310	6479	7289	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	10239	13310	6479	7289	
Annual income required at 25% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£66,010	£86,515	£25,917	£29,154	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£53,239	£25,917	£29,154	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£40,955	£53,239	£25,917	£29,154	
Annual income required at 30% of gross income	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed plus	
Option 1- Unrestricted 80% market rent for 1 and 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£55,008	£72,096	£21,598	£24,295	
Option 2- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 70% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£44,366	£21,598	£24,295	
Option 3- LHA capped 80% 1 bed, 60% 2 bed, social rent 3 bed plus	£34,129	£44,366	£21,598	£24,295	

Conclusions

The key conclusions of this December 2014 update are the same:

1. That as market rents are very high in Southwark, significant incomes are required to afford high proportions of market rent. But average incomes of people living in Southwark are low.
2. Therefore if the affordable rent product is trying to meet the housing need of people on the housing register, these households are extremely likely to be dependant on housing benefits to pay their rent.
3. For households using housing benefits to pay rent, the introduction of a benefits cap for non-working households means there will be very little benefits/element remaining within the cap to cover rents for larger households.
4. Therefore households who can afford affordable rent with benefits while working are likely to really struggle if they lose work and the benefit cap applies. This could lead to increased debt, rent arrears and in the longer term, homelessness. This represents a risk for the tenant as well as the landlord. Since the original affordable rent study was released, the DWP announced that that people who have lost their job but were employed for 12 months or more prior to claiming, may have 9 months before the benefit cap applies. So this risk has been slightly reduced.
5. As a result, in Southwark, the affordable rent product is not really that well suited for 3 and 4 bedroom properties (especially at higher rents close to 80% of market rent). It is only really affordable for some household types for 1 and 2 bedroom properties at high proportions of market rent.