

APPENDIX 1

Southwark Great Estates Programme - Vision and Approach

Southwark wants everyone to have a place that they are proud to call home. Whether you own your own home, rent privately or are a social tenant, everyone should have somewhere to live that's safe, clean and cared for. That is why the council has made quality housing a top priority - investing in council homes, raising standards in the private rented sector and building more homes of every kind including the country's biggest and most ambitious new council home building programme.

Southwark is London's largest council landlord – but we want to be the best landlord too. In the last eight years this means that we have started the work to transform our estates, investing in quality kitchens and bathrooms, making every council home warm, dry and safe, investing in more security doors and doing deep estate cleaning.

Eight years ago, tenants were not guaranteed a home that met the decent homes standard. We had to get the basics right, and now a decent home is the standard – with almost every one of our 55,000 council homes achieving the decent homes standard.

We now want to go further – making a decent home the beginning not the end of our vision for Southwark's estates. It is now time for a new ambition for every estate to be a Great Estate – places where community thrives, places where genuinely mixed communities can live work and play, places upheld as properly privileged parts of the city.

The Great Estates programme presents a new way of talking about, thinking about and making decisions about our council estates, as part of a new contract where the council and estate communities can come together and work together to make sure all Southwark estates are great estates.

Our estates include council tenants, council homeowners and private tenants. Together we know what it takes to make estates great places to live but also the challenges that we face together. The Great Estates programme will work with residents to identify new ways of improving the look, feel and lived experience of our estates and caring for the physical fabric of our estates. This programme will provide a long-term vision for upholding Southwark council estates as great places to live and properly privileged parts of the city.

We want to expand and enrich our estates, and make every estate a great estate. Our vision is:

- Celebrate our council estates – We will celebrate our estates and be ambitious about their future. We will always be honest about the challenges, and challenge ourselves to make Southwark estates the best they can be.
- Encourage integration – Our estates are part of the bedrock of Southwark. Mixed communities playing their part in the borough's economy and life are integral to

the future of the borough. We want to expand and enrich our estates, with redevelopment always a last resort.

- Respect where we live – Working with residents every estate should be clean, safe and cared for. Communities should have ownership over their estate and a shared stake in its future. High standards of repair and maintenance will mean Southwark’s estates are great places to live.

We will set high standards for our existing stock and our new housing. Our approach will be to:

- Be responsive, transparent and accountable.
- Work closely with residents to improve the look, feel and lived experience of our estates.
- Create a new set of standards to improve the management and maintenance of our estates, which have people’s wellbeing at its heart.

The Great Estates Programme will include the following components:

1. The “Expand and Enrich” approach

The council’s commitment to world class regeneration is often mistaken for a lack of commitment to existing estates. This is wrong. We believe that both are needed to ensure our residents have the homes they need at the quality they deserve.

The Great Estates programme will make clear that – our first instinct will always be to expand and enrich our existing estates. We will:

- *Expand* the numbers of council homes through our new homes programme identifying suitable infill plots to rehouse local people on our housing register.
- *Enrich* the shared living environment of our estates, working closely with residents to engender a sense of pride of place through day-to-day repairs and maintenance decision as well through more wide-ranging estate improvement plans.

The circumstances around ‘estate regeneration’ have changed from 10, 15 or 20 years ago. The circumstances of redevelopment have changed too, in terms of health and safety standards for housing stock, finance for investment in council homes, and higher density requirements for a growing population with increasingly levels of housing need.

We want to restate our approach to any redevelopment proposal, restating the terms and circumstances of any redevelopment proposal, through the following five tests/terms:

- i) a net increase in social rent homes alongside increased density, to meet the acute need of families on our waiting list;
- ii) a right to remain for all rehoused tenants and leaseholders, for keeping communities together;

- iii) intensive co-design of redevelopment proposal, to become co-authors of a new estate plan;
- iv) a positive ballot on any new estate regeneration (as per the commitment in the Council Plan 2018-2022).
- v) a clear rationale for any redevelopment proposal, including an explanation of how this would increase housing supply (based on comprehensive density modelling) and/or a transparent stock condition survey.

2. Great Estates Guarantee and Commitments

We will work with our tenants to develop a new set of standards and guarantees for day-to-day management and maintenance of housing services. This will place new priorities at its heart including: pride of place; a focus on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents; and projecting the council (and its representatives) as a caring and conscientious landlord.

The basis of this commitment is that our estates are clean, safe and cared for:

Clean With regular cleaning and prompt clearance of rubbish, graffiti, fly tipping, flyposting, and pests.

Safe With very high standards of fire safety, where any anti social behaviour is tackled, where estates are well lit, and where arising health and safety issues are dealt with promptly.

Cared for Where residents have a strong sense of ownership over their estates, with high levels of respect for one another, where the blocks are well decorated, where repairs are completed promptly within our promised target timescales, and with attractive gardens and landscaping.

3. Estate Improvement Plans and the Great Estates Guide

We will embark on a wide-ranging series of resident centred Estate Improvement plans. This will include identifying new opportunities for improving the living environment of our estates. These opportunities will be enabled either through voluntary initiatives from estates residents; partnerships with neighbouring or donor institutions; formal relationships with neighbouring developers; or with resident designers/enablers working intensively with the community over a period of time.

This approach will start with a series of pilots. We will then work estate by estate, block by block, to develop a long term plan for improving the look feel and lived experience of our estates. This will include proactively identifying new opportunities to build new council homes as part of commitment to “expand and enrich”.

The estate improvements will follow on from closer engagement with residents. These could identify an ideal wish list that might include new landscaping, bin stores, pram sheds, lighting, painting, estate signage, gardening and food-growing opportunities and so on.

The Council will also produce a live Great Estates guide to showcase what other estates are doing and to highlight what is possible. This will include case studies of the kinds of initiatives that go beyond day-to-day and cyclical repairs and maintenance to help bring our estates communities together, as well as generate a feeling of an estate that's properly safe clean and cared for. While many of the examples that will be in the guide were created from bespoke or ad hoc funding sources and partnerships, they will be used to demonstrate the art of the possible, and highlight the opportunities which could be explored elsewhere in the borough.

Desired outcomes

- That people living on estates, feel proud to call their estate home and be confident that the council is on their side, managing the estate in partnership with them to make sure their estate is a great place to live.
- To identify opportunities for broader resident involvement and developing the social stewardship of each estates.
- To ensure residents are in control of their own space - capturing long-term aspirations, with a transparently costed and programmed resident-led 'wish list schedule' for estates.
- To ensure that the great estates programme contributes to improving the mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents.
- That "Pride of Place" principles are firmly established and embedded. Every intervention on the built fabric of an estate should enhance and dignify the estate.
- To ensure Great Estates in the city - Where major regeneration and development is taking place adjacent to a Southwark council estate, there will be a focus on ensuring planning gain and development/design expertise is utilised to ensure an accompanying improvement in the look, feel and lived experience of our estates, to ensure a tenure blind approach.