

# Central East Local Housing Forum

June 2021 Highlights Report

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# New Homes



On site are Daniels Road, Meeting House Lane [1-29 Lillac House, Dene Community Centre], Tustin Hidden homes, Copeland Road car providing 85 new council homes.

Started on site: Rye Hill Garages, redevelopment to create 23 new dwellings in two linked buildings of 4/6 storeys with associated landscaping and children's play space.

Started on site: Commercial Way. This scheme will provide 109 residential units of which 74 will be available at Council Rent (including 8 wheelchair-adapted /accessible units) and 35 as other genuinely affordable homes.

## Planning Achieved:

Fenham Road site, providing 5 new council homes

35-41 Nunhead Lane, providing 12 new council homes

66 Linden Grove, providing 27 new council homes

Cator Street Extra Care Phase 2, providing 50 new council homes (extra care)

# New Homes



In Planning: Lindley Estate 157-177 Commercial Way and Bells Gardens Community Centre proving nearly 160 homes, 120 at council rent.

Ledbury Towers, the ballot ended in March with residents voting in favour of redevelopment, with proposals planned to go to July Cabinet.

Other schemes at earlier stages in the programme include: Astley Estate, Old Library Site (opposite Regen Flaxyard & Peckham Library) and 55-77 Fenwick Road.

Rooftop schemes have been added to the programme at Clifton Estate, Nunhead Estate, Pennack Road, Latona Road, Unwin Close, Haymerle Road, Glengall Road and Denstone House

# New Homes



Land at Angel Oak Academy, Chandler Way SE15 is a Mixed tenure residential scheme being built on land being bought from Angel Oak Academy. Currently occupied by school buildings. Works to include the addition of a new school extension providing a new dining hall, kitchens, toilets, admin facilities and a playground on the roof that will go into planning in 2021/22

# Asset Management



In line with government guidance, the Repairs Services is moving towards the resumption of a full service in a phased manner and hopes to be fully operational again from 21 June, subject to the progress of the pandemic and available resources.

Communal / Emergency Lighting Installations are now complete at Tappesfield Rd, Sassoon House, Blackthorne Court, Adys Rd, Blanch Close and Pennack Rd.

Communal / Emergency Lighting Installations are progressing on Penrose St and Ightham House.

Lift refurbishments at Wickway 6205, Russell Court 3023, Witcombe Point 3116-7 East Surry Grove 6033, Cronnin Street 6034, Quarley way 6035 Pentridge way 6036:

# Asset Management



- Wickway 6205 works commencing in June 21 completing in August 21.
- Russell Court 3023: Stairlifts fitted and lift unit looking to commence Aug 20 to Dec 21
- Witcombe Point 3116-7 lift cars commencing July completing in September 2021.
- East Surrey Grove 6033 starting mid Aug to Sept 21
- Cronnin Street Sept to Nov 21
- Quarley Way Nov to Jan 22
- Pentridge Way Jan to March 22.

# Asset Management



Pelican Estate QHIP – Finalising designs and costs ahead of works commencing.

Nunhead Estate QHIP Works – feasibilities issued to New Build Team to proceed with alongside proposed roof top homes. Should roof top homes not proceed QHIP works will return to investment delivery.

Priory Estate QHIP – Structural monitoring complete, pilot works to external balcony planters are complete, design options to be considered with residents and then finalise costs ahead of any works commencing.

Tappesfield Estate QHIP – Currently reviewing feasibilities ahead of main design elements.

Brenchley Gardens QHIP – Estate houses only at feasibility/survey stage. Blocks moved to New Build Roof Top Homes as proposed for RTH.

# Asset Management



Linden Grove - Currently reviewing feasibilities ahead of main design elements.

Rye Hill Estate – Main QHIP works are essentially complete, additional health and safety works were agreed to provide safety walkways within the loft spaces, due to a history of previous and recent incidents where operatives would accidentally damage ceilings below. Loft boarding works are due to complete in June/July this year.

Arnold Dobson, Lugard & Magdalene QHIP works – Works to Lugard and Magdalene are complete and works to Arnold Dobson will be complete by end of May 2021.

Attwell Estate QHIP works – All works complete and now in defects liability period.

Brookstone Court QHIP Works – All complete and in defects liability period.

Oakhill Court QHIP works – All complete and in defects liability period.



# Resident Services



Resident Services Officers continue to contact all vulnerable residents on our estates for welfare checks. They carry out welfare checks and signpost residents to supporting agencies.

They also conduct weekly estate visual audits and monthly estate inspections to ensure the estate remain a clean and safe place for residents.

We have signs in the lift lobby and communal areas to remind residents to follow government guidelines on social distancing, use of masks, washing of hands etc.

Although the government has started easing lockdown, most of our residents still spend more time at home and this is generating increased low level nuisance and anti social behaviour complaints on some of our estates. Most of the complaints involve domestic noise nuisance including loud footsteps, people talking etc, we are asking residents to be more considerate of neighbours and keep noise however caused to a minimum.

# Resident Services



Officers are working with partners including social services, Police, surrounding Schools, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit etc to resolve the issues.

The Police are carrying out robust patrols in the areas identified. There are regular meetings with residents to reassure and update the community.

Cleaning - The cleaning team have resumed normal cleaning service on our estates and managers are monitoring the effect of this on their staff.

The Resident Services Officers will continue to monitor and pick up any issue during their weekly visual audits and monthly estate inspections and liaise with the cleaning accordingly.

# Resident Services



There has been a reduction in the number of Rough sleepers found on our estates. Residents are encouraged to continue to use STREETLINK to connect people sleeping rough with local services that can support them. The outreach team also carry out frequent patrols to provide drug and alcohol support where needed.

19 New Build properties in Daniels Road which consist of flats and houses are nearing completion and due to be handed over to residents services in July 2021.

67 New Build apartments in Copeland Road of which 24 will be at social housing rent is nearing completion and due to be handed over to residents services in July 2021

28 New Build units in Meeting House Lane – including 2 disabled units and a community hall nearing completion.

# Communities



Work continues implementing the new Resident Participation structure. Since March, this has included: developing the forward plan for resident participation (the business to be addressed by residents and the council); refining the new strategic bodies (Tenant Forum, Homeowner Forum and Joint Tenant and Homeowner Forum); and consulting with residents and other stakeholders in respect of independent advice contracts for residents (currently provided by the Southwark Group of Tenants organisations and the Citizens' Advice Bureau).

Approval has been given for a project to commence looking at the council's support offer to residents, in the light of financial challenges imposed by the Covi-19 pandemic. The council will be convening a working party of residents who – supported by officers from Exchequer Services, and serviced by the Smith Institute – will produce a report later in the year on ways in which the council can best support residents in relation to council income recovery measures.

# Communities



Following successful completion of a Digital Innovation Fund project on the use of digital tools to engage younger and harder-to-reach residents, the council has consented to the Tenant and Homeowner Involvement team commissioning a project in the current financial year aimed at developing some specific tools in this regard. The aim of the project is to ensure that those residents who want to utilise digital technology for the purposes of making their voices heard can do so.

# Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



In March the gm teams will have resumed grass cutting operations across all estates, also attending to shrubs according to type and time of year, dead heading roses on each visit when needed.

The teams have also been working with the Great Estate Programmes for residents at Brandon 3 and Elmington Estates, giving advice and supporting these groups where possible, storing plants and Mulch and delivering to the gardening groups. green waste disposal when needed.

Also working with TRA gardening residents on Lindley Estate and Scueax Gardens Estates, advice and supporting the groups.

We are replacing all petrol driven equipment e.g. mowers, strimmers, hedge cutters etc. with electric items which will significantly reduce the amount CO2 emissions. This will take time as we will only be replacing when defective or broken, and more of a gradual phasing out.

# Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



## ASB:

We saw significant demands on our service from the year of April 2020 to the end of March 2021. COVID was a main factor of this especially in relation to lockdowns during the year.

SASBU continued to manage increased levels of legal cases and across the borough we obtained, closure orders, injunctions, served Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and warning letters. We also issued Notices of Possession for the most serious of tenancy breaches when the law allowed us to do so given changes in legislation, again in respect of COVID.

# Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



ASB cont:

We also saw an increase in Community Trigger requests. The Trigger is an application within the Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which enables an applicant to call a review on their reports to the partnership over a six month period.

Another key area for us was the Halloween and Bonfire period of which we saw an increase in disorder within the SE16 area. Working with communities and partners, we were able to identify those who were committing ASB with regards to firework misuse and all those identified were visited at their homes and appropriate actions and interventions were taken by the unit.



# Anti social behaviour, grounds maintenance



ASB cont:

14 Notices of Possession

21 Injunctions

3 Court Undertakings against persons

19 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts

30 Community Triggers

31 Premises closed due to significant and serious behaviour

# Exchequer Services



## Homeowners

**Leasehold building insurance contract** – the council has extended the current contract with Zurich for a further twelve months from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. After assessing current insurance market conditions and a benchmarking exercise carried out with other local authorities, the Council decided to recommend a twelve-month extension with Zurich rather than procuring a new contract. Zurich offered to fix premiums at their 2021/22 rates and only apply the normal 4% uplift relating to building cost inflation (not including any changes to Insurance Premium Tax currently 12%). We think this is good news for homeowners. The proposal was put to the Leasehold Task and Finish group who supported the council's recommendation.

**New Homeowner Loans Policy** – the council has changed its discretionary loans policy for homeowners to bring it up-to-date with advances in technology and to allow more flexibility in the range of products available. It also allows for a regular review of the interest rates charged. The new policy also includes a new loan product for non-resident homeowners. The full report and decision can be found here

<https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7301>

# Exchequer Services



## Homeowners continued

**Improving Section 20 Notices** - Many day-to-day repairs requiring section 20 consultation cannot be properly costed until the scaffolding is erected and an inspection carried out. This often leads to leaseholders receiving multiple section 20 notices for the same job. Homeownership Services will shortly begin trial issuing *a single notice* describing the work that is believed to be necessary with a budget estimate. The actual costs will be billed as part of the actual service charge as usual. We are interested to hear from homeowners participating in the trial about what they think about this change

# Exchequer Services



## Tenants

**Paying Rent During COVID** Although rent collection remained challenging during the pandemic, tenants had paid 97.58% of rent due for 2020/21 by the end of the year. We thank all those who paid their rent in what we know were difficult circumstances for many. But despite the efforts of tenants and the teams who collect rent, total council tenant rent arrears increased, rising by £3.8m to £16.8m by the end of the year.

**Help to Claim Universal Credit** Many more tenants claimed *Universal Credit* to help pay their rent during the pandemic. If you need to claim *Universal Credit* but face difficulties in doing so for whatever reason the Citizen Advice *Help to Claim* service can support you with your claim.

[www.citizenadviceSouthwark.org.uk/helptoclaim](http://www.citizenadviceSouthwark.org.uk/helptoclaim)

# Exchequer Services



## Tenants continued

**New Rent Payment Options** One positive change in a very difficult year was that many more tenants paid their rent by direct debit. About six thousand more tenants switched to direct debit - the easiest, least costly, and, during the pandemic, *safest* way to pay. From April we've added bar codes to rent letters – offering another simple and convenient option to pay rent.

**A Supportive Landlord** If you're a tenant and need help with paying your rent or are affected by COVID-19 please visit our website: [www.southwark.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/coronavirus) where you will find further information about how we can help you.

# Modernise



Digital inclusion is about making sure our residents and community can take advantage of the opportunities the internet affords and we are working to ensure that “Nobody Is Left Offline”. As part of this programme, we are recruiting volunteer digital champions to support residents with their digital skills. Digital Champions will receive accredited training, support and more as part of this programme and can apply for the opportunity below:

[https://forms.southwark.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm\\_fid=1864](https://forms.southwark.gov.uk/ShowForm.asp?fm_fid=1864)

For any further queries please contact  
[Digital.Inclusion@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:Digital.Inclusion@southwark.gov.uk)

# Customer Experience



## MySouthwark Homeowners Service

Residents told us they wanted more information on how your estates are managed so we have set up a new webpage on how we manage your estates which gives you a range of information from our cleaning schedules to how to join an estate inspection. You will find it at <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/home-owners-services/how-we-look-after-your-blocks-and-estates>

Our office at the Blue in Market Place still remains closed but we are now providing face to face verification meetings with tenants going through the right to buy process at our Service Point in Peckham.

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