

# The [REDACTED] estate Residents Charter

## 1. Scope and purpose

**1.1** The [REDACTED] estate Residents Charter seeks to establish the principles that will guide the regeneration of the area and the redevelopment of the [REDACTED] estate.

**1.2** By setting out aspirations, priorities and our concerns, it will provide a framework for what should be done on the estate and how it should be done. In other words, it will sets out what residents want, anticipate and expect from the redevelopment.

**1.3** This Charter also enshrines the commitments of the Council/Landlord to provide for residents over the course of any redevelopment. The entitlements of residents to benefit from the redevelopment, to receive adequate compensation, to have affordable choices, to be treated sensitively and to be taken seriously.

The charter is structured under four main headings:

1. Scope and purpose of the Charter
2. Working together
3. Statement of the key principles
4. The housing offer to residents

## 2. Working Together

**2.1** This Charter acknowledges that the more residents are involved in the regeneration of the estate and the wider area, the more likely it is that that change will be experienced positively. We want to see our community placed at the heart of the redevelopment process.

**2.2** The government's [Estate Regeneration Guidance](#) says that:

*"Residents are key partners in any regeneration scheme, particularly where they are personally affected. They should be given opportunities to be involved throughout the process, including developing the vision, initial decisions, options appraisal, design, procurement and delivery of schemes."*

*"Where residents need to assess options, all financial and other information they need to make informed decisions should be made available to them."*

*"All approaches to regeneration should have the support of a majority of the residents whose lives will be affected by the scheme."*

**2.3** This is reiterated by the Mayor's requirement that residents are balloted on any options involving the demolition of their homes. This Charter goes further to commit to a ballot being held before the beginning of the decant of the estate – i.e. before any rehousing of residents has begun and it will offer a choice between the preferred option (resulting from the options appraisal) and full refurbishment of the estate.

**2.4** This Charter agrees that in order to secure the full involvement of residents on the estate - private renters and temporary tenants (who have been on the Council's waiting list for at least one year) must also be included in the ballot.

## **3. Key Principles**

### **Design/Sustainability**

**3.1** Given that shortcomings in the design of the existing estate are cited as the main justification for its redevelopment, it goes without saying that all new homes in the redevelopment need to be well designed, with generous space allocation and built to the best possible construction standards–The Mayor's London Design Guide should be set as a minimum and not adopted as an optimum.

**3.2** Similarly, given that energy efficiency is cited as another justification for the redevelopment, it follows that all replacement homes must meet the highest energy efficiency standards (zero carbon) and the redevelopment as a whole must be carbon neutral – in line with the Mayor's commitment to make London carbon neutral by 2030.

### **Options Appraisal**

**3.3** The options appraisal exploring different options for the regeneration, will be carried out according to the principles set out in the government's 'Green Book' on how to conduct project appraisals: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

**3.4** The options appraisal will take into account the embodied carbon of the existing buildings where demolition is considered as well as the carbon emissions resulting from demolition and construction of any new buildings. Each option will be accompanied by a circular economy statement drafted in accordance with the Mayor's Circular Economy Guidance:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/implementing-london-plan/planning-guidance/circular-economy-statement-guidance-pre-consultation-draft>

**3.5** The options appraisal process must also take into account all decant and rehousing costs of any proposal involving demolition, as well as loss of rent and other associated revenue to the Council (not just during decant but ongoing).

**3.6** Similarly, any refurbishment appraisal must take into account the return on such investment – i.e. the retention of the capital asset value of the land and buildings as well as future rental income. They must also include any grant funding

where available and discount the proportion of major works costs recoverable from leaseholders or freeholders.

**3.7** All proposals should include a forecast, taking into account the likely programme of decanting and demolition, and of the likely impact of the scheme on the forward lettings plan. This will assess the impact on the Council's ability to meet local housing need in the short, medium and long term.

**3.8** These requirements are in line with the Mayor's estate regeneration guidance which says that: *'Residents should be closely involved in shaping the priorities for estate regeneration and options for achieving these priorities. To achieve this, options appraisals should be open and transparent. They should assess the full range of social, economic, and environmental costs and benefits of different options. Include technical and financial appraisals that have influenced any decisions on options. These should be available in an accessible format with non-technical summaries.'*

### **Tenure/affordability**

**3.91** The Mayor's Good Practice Guide to Estate Regeneration (Feb 2018) says that estate regeneration schemes must not result in any net loss of social rented housing.

**3.92** It also requires schemes to follow the 'Viability Tested Route', which requires a minimum of 50% affordable housing on public land, a 'late stage review mechanism' to ensure that any increased viability results in an improved affordable housing and a requirement to seek grant funding in order to maximise affordable housing provision.

**3.93** This charter reiterates these policy requirements and agrees that all redevelopment options will comply them as a bare minimum and that full account of them is taken during the costings of the options appraisal process.

## **4. The housing offer to residents**

### **Tenants**

**4.1** Existing council tenants should have the right to remain council tenants whether they choose to remain living on the estate or move away to alternative accommodation.

**4.2** Either way, tenants will remain on their current rent levels and will retain the same tenancy conditions as they have now. The Council will still be the landlord, and they will still have a secure lifetime tenancy. The Right to Buy will still apply in the new property

**4.3** The rents will be pegged to and increase only in line with the Council's current rent setting policy for its social rented housing.

**4.4** Service charges will be capped in line with the average service charges for its social rented housing stock in the borough.

**4.5** Any tenant that wishes to move away from the estate will be given decant priority when bidding on the Council's choice based letting system

**4.6** All council tenants will be entitled to a statutory HomeLoss compensation payment, which is currently £6,400.

**4.7** The Council will, in addition, cover all reasonable costs relating to moving including:

- Providing boxes and people to help with the move.
- Covering the costs of reconnections.
- Setting up mail forwarding to the new address.

## Leaseholders

**4.8** Leaseholders will be offered a shared equity 'home swap' scheme enabling them to swap their current home for a new-build replacement.

**4.81** The minimum required equity share in the new home will be 25% and there will be no rent payable on the share retained by the Council/Landlord.

**4.82** The equity share retained by the Council/Landlord will take the form of an interest-free loan, which will be registered as a charge against the property - only to be repaid if the leaseholder sells the property within 7 years of purchase. This is in conformance with advice in the government's Estate Regeneration National Guidance<sup>1</sup>.

**4.83** Any disagreement about the valuations of the existing homes or that of the new-build replacement is referred for determination by the District Valuer (at the Council/Landlord's cost).

**4.84** Finally, there will be a fall-back for those leaseholders in severe financial hardship who cannot afford the minimum 25% equity share. These will be offered rehousing on the same terms offered to secure tenants on the estate and their right to full compensation will not be affected.

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1 See page 9 (Home-Swap model) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575578/Estate\\_Regeneration\\_National\\_Strategy\\_-\\_Resident\\_Engagement\\_and\\_Protection.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575578/Estate_Regeneration_National_Strategy_-_Resident_Engagement_and_Protection.pdf)