

17th April 2013

Dear [name],

Re: South Kilburn Regeneration Programme – Clarifications regarding Formal Consultation with Secure Tenants with homes in Phase 2b, South Kilburn

On 27th March 2013 the Council wrote to all Secure Tenants living in homes within Gloucester House, Durham Court, Masefield House and Wordsworth House, which form Phase 2b of the South Kilburn regeneration programme, about the following three proposals which are the subject of formal consultation:

- 1) Statutory consultation in connection with seeking approval of the Secretary of State for use of Ground 10A of the Housing Act, 1985**
- 2) Consultation in connection with Intention to make a Compulsory Purchase Order on properties currently occupied by Secure Tenants**
- 3) Consultation in connection with draft Allocation Policy for Secure Tenants with homes Phase 2b, South Kilburn**

A booklet, entitled *Formal Consultation with Secure Tenants with homes in Phase 2b*, explaining each of the three proposals as well as a comment sheet to enable Secure Tenants to make comments about the Council's proposals, were enclosed with the letter you received on 27th March 2013.

Clarifications

Since the letter and booklet were sent out on 27th March 2013, the Council has received some comments on certain parts of the proposals which the Council needs to make clear or explain in more detail.

a) Rent Levels of New Affordable Homes on South Kilburn

The first point that the Council wants to make clear relates to paragraph 9 of the draft Allocation Policy for Secure Tenants with Homes in Phase 2b, South Kilburn. This paragraph is about the rent levels of the new affordable homes on South Kilburn and reads as follows:

Current wording of Paragraph 9.1 of the draft Allocation Policy, Phase 2b:

9.1 Secure Tenants who are allocated a new replacement home in South Kilburn will pay higher rent than Council rent in the short term, as, at present, the rents charged by Registered Providers, known as target rents, are higher than those charged by the Council. However, the Council has set rents in accordance with its policy that will lead to Council rents and target rents becoming more equal by 2016. Secure Tenants relocated under this policy will pay the relevant target rent from the date of relocation.

The government introduced a rent restructuring policy to ensure that Council rents and the rents charged by Registered Providers (housing associations) become equal by 2015-16, as Council rents and rents charged by Registered Providers should be similar for homes of a similar size, location and condition.

However, rents charged for new affordable homes on South Kilburn will be different to Council rents in the same area, even after 2015-16. This is because the formula to calculate the amount of rent to be paid on a property is based on a combination of individual property values and average earnings in each area. As the value of a new affordable home on South Kilburn is higher than that of an existing Council property, the rent charged for new homes in South Kilburn will always be higher than Council rent, even after 2015-16. This point was not made clear in the draft Allocation Policy included in the booklet, for which the Council apologises. Therefore, the Council proposes the following amendments to Paragraph 9.1 of the draft Allocation Policy:

Proposed new wording of Paragraph 9.1 of the draft Allocation Policy, Phase 2b:

9.1 'Secure Tenants who are allocated a new replacement home in South Kilburn will pay higher rent than for their existing Council property.

This is due to two reasons:

- 1. Council rents are below the rents charged by Registered Providers, which are known as target rents*
- 2. The higher value associated with a quality new build home, compared with an existing Council property, will be reflected in a higher target rent*

The Council has set rents in accordance with its policy that will lead to Council rents and target rents for properties of a similar size, location and condition becoming more equal by 2016. However, even after 2016, there will be a difference in the rent charged for existing Council properties in South Kilburn, compared with new homes for rent from Registered Providers, built as part of the South Kilburn regeneration programme. Secure Tenants who are allocated a new replacement home in South Kilburn under this policy will pay the relevant target rent from the date of relocation'.

b) Re-housing Process and Options – how allocations are made

The second point that the Council wants to make clear relates to how replacement homes are allocated to Secure Tenants, which is at the Council's discretion. Paragraph 7 of the draft Allocation Policy, Phase 2b explains the re-housing process and the different types of Suitable Offers that will be made to Secure Tenants, depending on the size replacement home that Secure Tenants and their households need i.e. one bedroom or two bedrooms or more. What the draft Allocation Policy didn't explain was how the Council decides which Secure Tenant should be allocated which replacement home. The Suitable Offer of a replacement home made to Secure Tenants, which is at the Council's discretion, depends on the following three factors:

- 1) The re-housing need of the Secure Tenant e.g. one bedroom or two bedrooms or more, medical or other needs; then
- 2) The preference of the Secure Tenant recorded at the Housing Needs Assessment Visit by the South Kilburn Re-housing Team e.g. if a Secure Tenant wants to move outside South Kilburn; and lastly:
- 3) The length of tenancy: priority will be given to those Secure Tenants with the longest tenancies.

This explanation of how allocations are made will be included within paragraph 7 of the Allocation Policy, Phase 2b.

c) Children of different sexes sharing a bedroom

The third point that the Council wants to make clear relates to the age children of different sexes will be expected to share a bedroom. Paragraph 5.3.2 of the draft Allocation Policy, Phase 2b, sets out that children of different sexes will be expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 7. In assessing the number of bedrooms required by a household, the Department of Work and Pensions applies the criteria that children of different sexes will be expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 10 years. The Council is seeking to change its borough wide Allocation Policy so it applies the same criteria as the Department of Work and Pensions. The Phase 2b Allocation Policy, will also be amended to align with the borough wide Allocation Policy. Therefore, the Council proposes the following amendments to Paragraph 5.3.2 of the draft Allocation Policy:

Proposed new wording of Paragraph 5.3.2 of the draft Allocation Policy, Phase 2b:

5.3.2 'Children of different sexes will be expected to share a bedroom up to the age of 10. Where children of different sexes are above the age of 10, they will be allocated separate bedrooms'.

d) Numbers of new Affordable homes to be delivered along Cambridge Avenue, Chichester Road and Rupert Road

The final point that the Council wants to make clear relates to pages 3 and 6 of the *Formal Consultation with Secure Tenants with homes in Phase 2b* booklet, which provides information on the number of new affordable homes to be built in Phase 2 of the South Kilburn regeneration programme. There was a mistake in the booklet; Phase 2 is expected to provide 225 high quality new homes which will be made available for existing tenants (not 224, as printed). 122 of the new homes to be delivered along Cambridge Avenue, Chichester Road and Rupert Road will be made available for existing tenants (not 107, as printed).

Your comments & representations

Secure Tenants have until **Thursday 25th April 2013** to make comments about the Council's three proposals. If you have any comments on the proposals or on the points explained above, please fill in the comments form enclosed with the letter you received on 27th March 2013 or write them on your own paper, with your name and address, and return it to the Council at the following address:

Noreen Twomey,
South Kilburn Regeneration Team,
South Kilburn Area Office, Community Resource Centre,
William Dunbar House, Albert Road, South Kilburn, London, NW6 5DE

Further information or advice

If, after you have read this letter or the letter and the booklet you received on 27th March 2013, you are unsure about anything or you want advice or further information you can contact the following:

Brent Council Noreen Twomey, South Kilburn Regeneration Team, Tel: 020 8937 6482
Linda Beasley, South Kilburn Regeneration Team, Tel: 020 8937 2512

Independent Advice If you would like to speak to someone independent of the Council then you can obtain information and advice from:
First Call (Independent Resident and Tenant Advisor),
Freephone: 0300 365 7150

Citizens Advice Bureau Kilburn Citizens Advice Bureau, 200 Kilburn High Road,
Kilburn, London, NW6 4JD
Freephone: 0300 330 0646

You do not have to take any action in response to this letter unless you wish to.

Yours sincerely



Noreen Twomey
South Kilburn Regeneration Team
London Borough of Brent